



International Service
for Human Rights



Human Rights
Institute

Organization: Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful
Assembly and of Association

Date: 18 June 2025

Speaker: Catherine Morris

Oral Statement to the 59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, and the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), NGOs in special consultative status

United States: Halt crackdowns against peaceful assembly

Mr. President,

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, and the International Service for Human Rights, share the Special Rapporteur's concern about governments' attempts to consolidate power through crackdowns on dissenters' freedom of peaceful assembly.¹

The United States government is conducting a concerted attack on the rule of law, threatening human rights defenders, lawyers, judges, and civil society groups that uphold human rights. Peaceful pro-Palestinian protests have led to thousands of sometimes-violent arrests, cuts of funds to universities allowing peaceful protests, and deportation proceedings against foreign students and academics lawfully in the US. Lawyers who challenge the administration, and judges whose rulings protect rights of detained protestors have been subjected to public vilification and threats.

During recent civil society protests against militarized crackdowns against migrants, hundreds of individuals have been arrested and falsely labeled as "insurrectionists." Violence during arrests has been reported, and many detained protesters have been denied prompt access to lawyers. Workers' rights and migrant rights advocates have been arrested, threatened with surveillance and investigations, and subjected to violence.

Universal human rights standards apply equally to all countries. We urge this Council to avoid double standards and condemn these deplorable acts that are now becoming widespread and systematic.

Thank you.

¹ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, A/HRC/59/44, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/59/44>.