

***"We need to act today, to promote
gender equality and gender
justice, because tomorrow
may be too late!"***

Bir Duino - Kyrgyzstan, www.birduino.kg

Global Forum: Generation Equality: Women Human Rights Defenders from Mexico to France, Lessons and Perspectives

I am inspired that on the twenty-sixth anniversary of the Beijing Conference, this Forum has become the largest global feminist movement since 1995 and has brought together heads of state and government, representatives of international organizations, civil society, youth and the private sector to make concrete commitments to advance gender equality in a world in global crisis.

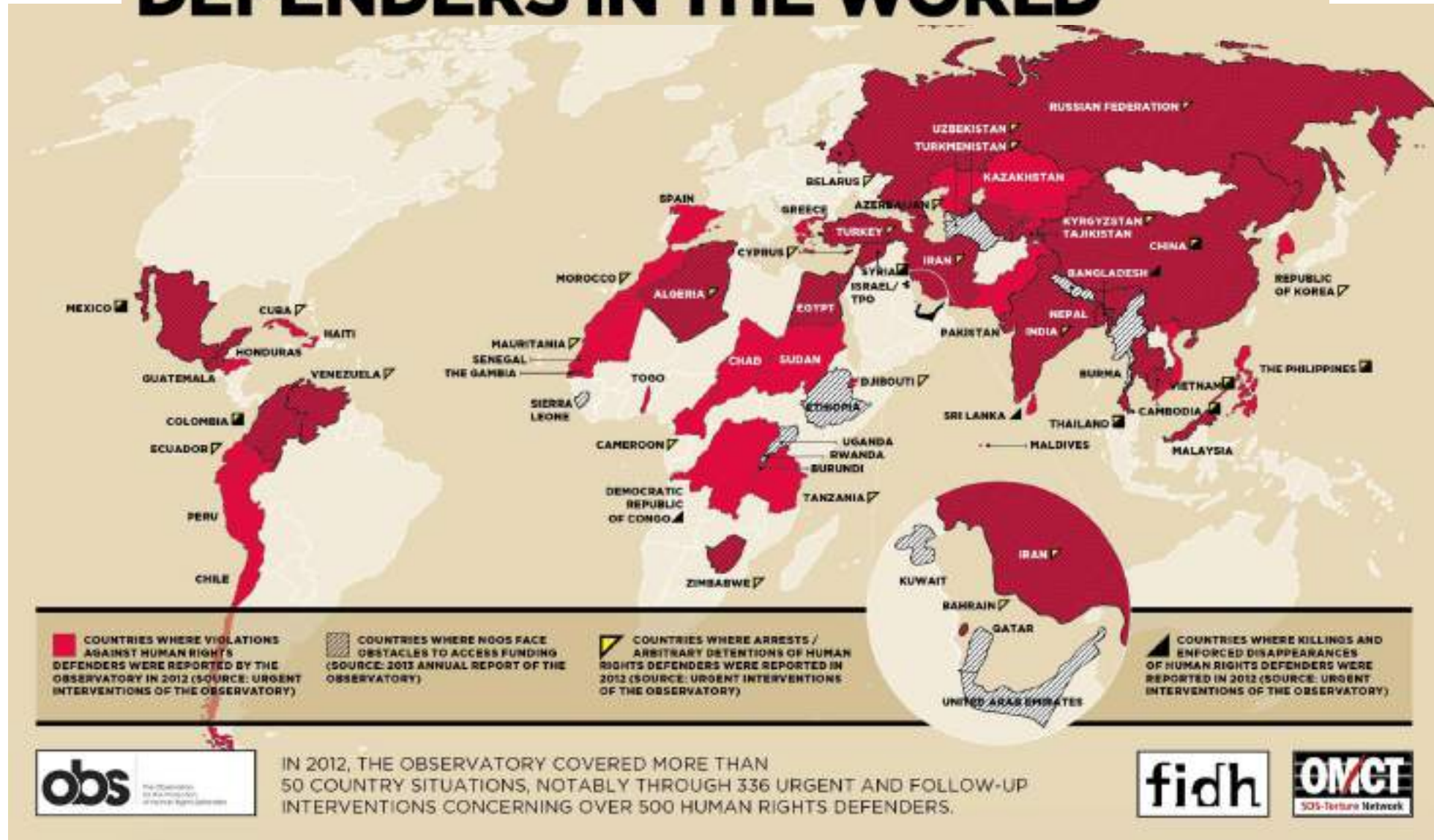
Hopefully, a Global Plan for Accelerating Gender Equality in the World will be presented and included in the Forum's Key Documents to guide and implement key decision makers' recognition of women human rights defenders, their support and new tactics to empower them to protect and promote the universality of human rights and freedoms as set forth in the founding international instrument of the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Photo of girls from KR communities

New risks and threats, conflicts and disasters

We come together at a time when sustainable development faces enormous challenges. Billions of our citizens continue to live in poverty and are denied a life of dignity. There are growing inequalities within and among countries. There are huge inequalities of opportunity, wealth and power. Gender inequality remains a key challenge. Unemployment, especially among young people, and discriminatory policies regarding women's access to jobs and decent wages are serious concerns. Many countries have not abolished banned lists of women's occupations. Women's human rights defenders are expelled from countries, harassed with various instruments of discrimination and violence.

Military conflicts and military aggression against peaceful countries and civilians are escalating. The environment for human rights defenders, especially for women human rights defenders remains dangerous, the authorities narrow the space for civil society organizations by adopting legislative acts and repressive restrictions, while remaining unpunished.

HARASSMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE WORLD



IN 2012, THE OBSERVATORY COVERED MORE THAN 50 COUNTRY SITUATIONS, NOTABLY THROUGH 336 URGENT AND FOLLOW-UP INTERVENTIONS CONCERNING OVER 500 HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS.



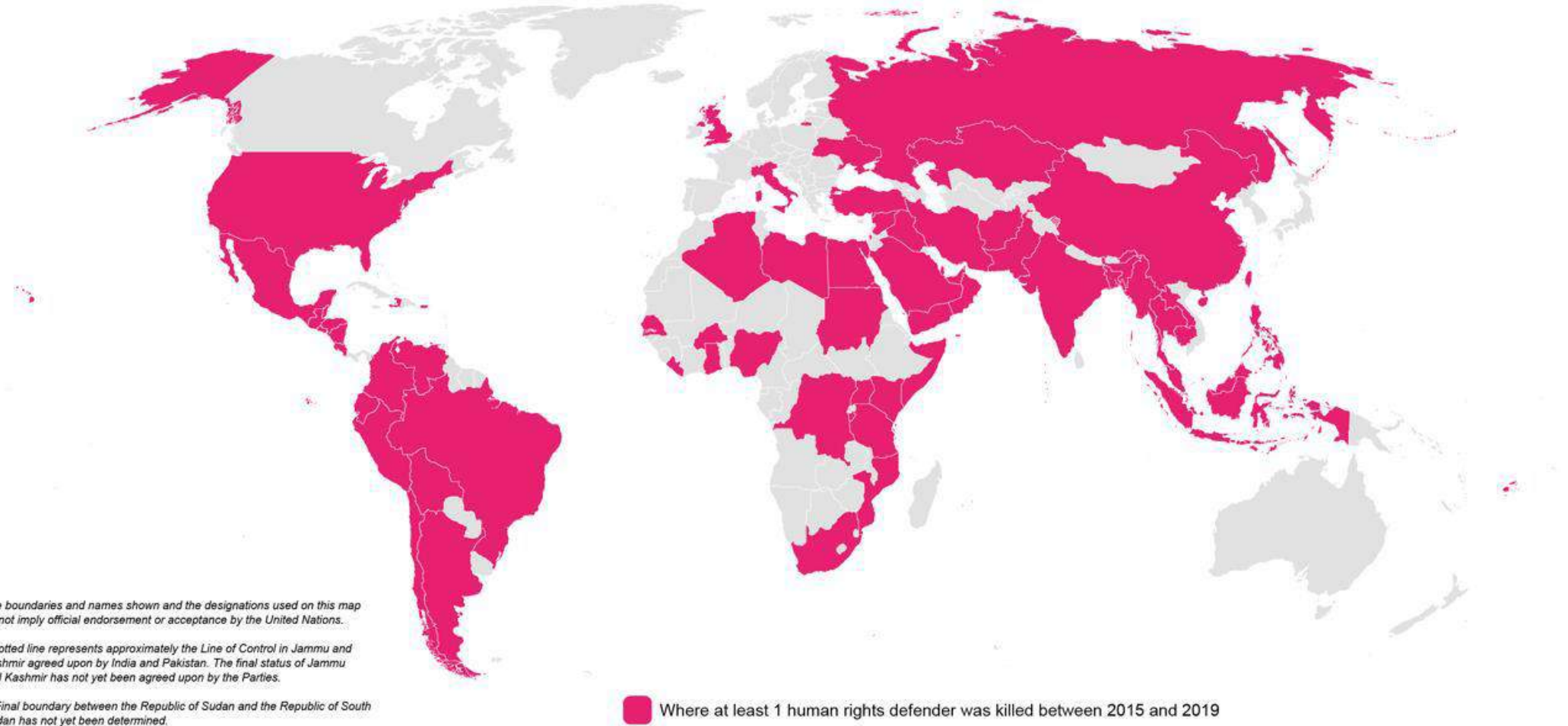
Situation with women human rights defenders

All human rights defenders face risks of threats, attacks and violence. Women doing this work face additional, unique risks. They lack protection and proper access to justice. In addition, their organizations have inadequate financial resources, "hate speech" is used against them, and there is little prevention of their safety.

In addition, discrimination against women is fueled today by a growing fundamentalism of all kinds, political populism, unchecked authoritarian rule, and unchecked greed, all of which increase the obstacles human rights defenders face. For example, those working on sexual and reproductive health and women's rights issues, as well as those denouncing the actions of extractive companies and businesses, are at heightened risk of attacks and violence, the incidence of female human rights defenders being murdered is growing worldwide.



Killings of Human Rights Defenders: A global view



Source: OHCHR (SDG indicator 16.10.1)

Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border conflict, more than 36 civilians were killed, among them a girl, Madina, 12, was killed by mortar fire, her mother and sister were wounded, 10 civilians were captured, suffered torture in Tajikistan in a police station.



Pressure on human rights defenders

Human rights defenders face a range of attacks by state and non-state actors, including stigmatisation, criminalisation, physical attacks, arrest and torture. Human rights defenders report that defamation and other abuses can escalate into physical attacks and killings. Other initiatives, including the UN Secretary General's call for human rights action, call on states to develop policies to protect human rights defenders that include investigations of threats.

Human rights defenders working on certain issues appear to be particularly vulnerable to attack. These include environmental defenders protesting against land grabs or defending the rights of people, including indigenous peoples, by objecting to governments that impose business projects on communities without free, prior and informed consent



Business and Human Rights

The UN Guiding Principles have played an invaluable role in setting the international agenda, becoming the international benchmark for business and human rights. However, achieving accountability for business-related human rights abuses still remains a challenge.

Although states and businesses have embarked on a framework to prevent and remedy the harm caused by business to people and the planet, commitments have largely remained on paper. The experience of FIDH and its member organizations over these 10 years shows that:

Violations of human rights and the environment by large corporations have not only continued but worsened, especially with regard to the situation of women human rights defenders;

Limited civil society participation in public and business policy development



Necessary measures:

States should take special measures to protect human rights defenders, in particular their right to life and humane treatment, when specific threats or pre-existing patterns of violence exist.

Failure to take such measures to meet heightened obligations should be taken into account by international bodies when determining the legal consequences of non-compliance

Some violations are closely related to killings. Many HRDs are subjected to enforced disappearances. Other HRDs with serious medical problems die in prison despite calls for their release on health grounds. The case of Azimjan Askarov in Kyrgyzstan



It is important to take urgent action:

Sanctions should be imposed on countries with repressive laws that increase restrictions on freedom of expression, participation, assembly and association and contribute to narrowing the political space for civil society.

Attacks, including killings of human rights defenders, often occur in the context of structural violence and inequality, including in conflict societies, and are the product of patriarchal and closed systems, while remaining unpunished. It is important to strengthen and expand the ICC's mandate to combat systemic impunity.

Practical application of the guidelines on the protection of human rights defenders according to the UN Declaration and the OSCE and EU Guidelines, giving them a binding rather than recommendatory status, and developing national documents guaranteeing the rights and support of women human rights defenders on the basis of these guidelines is necessary. Particularly given their role in peacemaking, it is important to promote gender equality through free media and women's participation at all levels of decision-making through UN General Assembly Resolution 1325.

Promote the participation of women human rights defenders in the monitoring and adoption of business and human rights action plans at the global level, including community leaders working in risk and conflict areas.

Promote the adoption of the Global Action Plan for Women Human Rights Defenders in authoritarian and war-torn countries, as in Afghanistan, to localize international initiatives and ensure gender equality in action, from community, national, regional and global levels.

Thank you for your attention

Tolekan Ismailova, Director of Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan

www.birduino.kg



- Sources:

- <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-56955467>
- <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/31257550.html>
- <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/genprokuratura-tadzhikistana-vozbudila-ugolovnoe-delo-v-otnoshenii-gruppy-voennosluzhaschih-i-grazhdan-kyrgyzstana/31235539.html>
- <https://www.dw.com/ru/konflikt-tadzhikistana-i-kyrgyzstana-voda-narkotiki-zemlja/a-57392981>
- <https://www.gov.kg/ru/post/s/19975-okmt-kyrgyz-tazhik-chek-arasyndagy-konflikttin-zhrshnd-zhabyrkagan-kalkka-kmk-krst-chn-akcha-karazhatyn-chogultuu-esebin-achty>
- <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/120000/ior400252002ru.pdf>
- <https://kg.akipress.org/news:1700222/?from=portal&place=nowread&b=2>