



FBI International Human Rights Unit Factsheet

Executive Summary

The mission of the International Human Rights Unit (IHRU) is to mitigate the most significant threats posed by international human rights violators by leading effective intelligence collection and targeted enforcement action in collaboration with both domestic and international accountability efforts.

In fiscal year (FY) 2010, Congress recognized the FBI as uniquely positioned to conduct traditional and joint investigations in support of priority human rights violation cases and provide select assistance to international partners by funding the FBI's International IHRU. This support has been a major contributor to the FBI's tactical capacity and successes aimed at identifying and investigating perpetrators of serious human rights violations. While some cases include the involvement of U.S. persons, other cases entail the search for individuals indicted by foreign courts and international tribunals, most of which involve foreign nationals who committed crimes overseas and fraudulently gained access to the United States. All the investigations are distinctly complex, saturated with transnational connections, and highly relevant to U.S. foreign policy objectives.

The FBI has also partnered with the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at the Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center (HRVWCC), which facilitates a whole-of-government approach to combating human rights violations. The FBI aggressively pursues human rights law enforcement through its role at the HRVWCC, traditional investigative methods in the field, intelligence-driven initiatives, and coordinated efforts with both civil society and domestic and foreign law enforcement partners.



Program Mission and Resources

The IHRU leverages the FBI's investigative expertise, techniques, and legal authorities to identify, locate, investigate, and prosecute perpetrators of serious human rights or humanitarian law violations, including genocide, torture, war crimes, female genital mutilation, and the recruitment or use of child soldiers. The IHRU leverages the law enforcement and intelligence efforts of all 56 FBI field offices and 76 Legal Attachés in order to investigate and hold perpetrators of mass atrocities and serious human rights violations accountable to the rule of law in a U.S. or foreign country's judicial system. The IHRU conducts this mission in close collaboration with the Department of Justice (DOJ) Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section (HRSP), ICE/HRVWCC, the Department of State (DOS), and the U.S. Intelligence Community (USIC).

The IHRU routinely coordinates with foreign counterparts on human rights investigations, and participates in numerous interagency and NGO meetings and trainings. The IHRU's participation in interagency training-related exercises has increased the USIC's awareness of these atrocities and the FBI's role investigating human rights violations.

Over the past few years, the IHRU achieved further integration with U.S. Government counterparts under the auspices of the Presidential Study Directive-10 and the National Security Staff-led Atrocities Prevention Board in support of a whole-of-government approach to preventing mass atrocities and serious human rights violations.

The FBI's public awareness campaign and subsequent web pages serve as an information portal for the IHRU to inform victims, civil society groups, and other government agencies about the threat from human rights violations and the FBI's efforts to combat it. The site contains, among other items, links to partner agency homepages, reference material, publications, and press releases, and provides victims or witnesses an opportunity to report any information to the FBI.

Any information about a person who committed war crimes or other human rights abuses may be submitted to the FBI anonymously at tips.fbi.gov.