



Obama Admin Indicts U.S. in Human Rights Report

President Barack Obama's first-ever report to the United Nations Human Rights Council asserts that the United States has committed a variety of human rights offenses, even citing the state of Arizona as a violator of human rights. According to the report, minorities continue to be victims of discrimination and progress still needs to be made. The United States joined the Human Rights Council just last year, and as such, is required to submit regular reviews of human rights records.



Compiled after a series of meetings across the country dating back to January, and resting on reports provided by civil rights activists, the twenty-nine page report reads, "Although we have made great strides, work remains to meet our goal of ensuring equality before the law for all."

Yahoo News explains, "High unemployment rates, hate crime, poverty, poor housing, lack of access to health care and discriminatory hiring practices are among the challenges the report identified as affecting blacks, Latinos, Muslims, South Asians, Native Americans and gays and lesbians in the United States."

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Likewise, the *Washington Times* adds that the report includes "the expected pandering to Muslims, noting that the government is committed to 'challenge misperceptions and discriminatory stereotypes, to prevent acts of vandalism and to combat hate crimes', offenses that the American people evidently keep committing."

It also naïvely and inaccurately blames the current housing crisis on "discriminatory lending practices." According to the *Washington Times*, "The implication is that if Americans had only been less racist, they would be enjoying prosperity today."

In addition to these issues, the report references concerns related to immigration and racial profiling by law enforcement agencies. The report specifically cited Arizona's immigration law as an example of a human rights violation:

"A recent Arizona law, S.B. 1070, has generated significant attention and debate at home and around the world. The issue is being addressed in a court action that argues that the federal government has the authority to set and enforce immigration law. That action is ongoing; parts of the law are currently enjoined."

While the report accused Arizona of infringing upon human rights, it cited the Justice Department's lawsuit against the state as a safeguard against human rights violations.



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 30, 2010

In response, Arizona's Governor Jan Brewer demanded that references to the state of Arizona be removed from the report. In a letter addressed to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Brewer claimed that the report was "downright offensive."

Brewer wrote, "The idea of our own American government submitting the duly enacted laws of a state of the United States to 'review' by the United Nations is *internationalism run amok and unconstitutional.*" (Emphasis added.)

Brewer received no response for her letter, though her request was clearly dismissed as references to Arizona appeared in the published report.

As Joe Wolverton, II noted in "[State Department Submits to UN Human-rights Review for the First Time](#)" on August 25:

President Obama ratified the coalition's [including Stephen Rickard and Wendy Patten of George Soros' Open Society Institute, Devon Chaffee from Human Rights First, Andrea Prasow from Human Rights Watch, etc.] assessment of S.B. 1070's effect on human rights. The UPR [Uniform Periodic Review] report declares, "President Obama remains firmly committed to fixing our broken immigration system" and to work "with fellow members of the Human Rights Council." In light of the President's commitment to cooperate with the Human Rights Council, it should be noted that the final step on the path to UPR fulfillment is the "voluntary compliance" with the recommendations of that body.

Critics contested the United States decision to join the Human Rights Council, asserting the irony of the United States being judged by countries that are well-known violators of human rights, including China and Cuba. Nevertheless, the report asked for "observations and recommendations" from members of the council "that can help us on that road to a more perfect union."

To boot, the American Civil Liberties Union praised the administration's decision to enter into the council but criticized the report's failure to address additional alleged human rights violations like "inhuman prison conditions, racial disparities in death penalty cases, and abuses in the immigration detention system."

ACLU Director Jamil Dakwar remarked, "It is time for the U.S. to match its human rights rhetoric with concrete domestic policies and actions and create a human rights culture and infrastructure that promote American values of equality and justice for all."

The *Washington Times*, on the other hand, calls the report "a strange combination of left-wing history and White House talking points."

Photo: Ambassador Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe (wife of eBay CEO and President John Donahoe), the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council: AP Images



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