The Political Terror Scale (PTS) Codebook

Version 2.00

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Updated: Thursday 25th August, 2022

http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/

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Data and Citation:

The PTS dataset and this codebook can be found at http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/. Please cite this codebook when appropriate. When using the PTS data, please cite:

> Gibney, Mark, Linda Cornett, Reed Wood, Peter Haschke, Daniel Arnon, Attilio Pisanò, Gray Barrett, and Baekkwan Park. 2022. The Political Terror Scale 1976-2021. Date Retrieved, from the Political Terror Scale website: http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/.

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Contents

The Political Terror Scale (PTS) **1**

Introduction . . . 1
Definition of "Political Terror" . . . 1
Violations of Physical Integrity . . . 1
Agents of the State . . . 2
Motivations . . . 3
Sources . . . 3
Unit of Observation . . . 3
Timing . . . 4
Scaling . . . 4
Scope, Intensity, and Range . . . 5
Coding Procedure . . . 5
Identifying Allegations . . . 5
Violation Timing Requirement . . . 5
State Actor Requirement . . . 6
Territoriality Requirement . . . 7
Physical Integrity Requirement . . . 8
Scoring Reports . . . 11
Scope: Violation Types . . . 11
Intensity: Violation Frequency . . . 11
Range: Violation Selectivity . . . 13

General and ID Variables **13**

PTS Variables **15**

New PTS Variables **15**

Index of Variables **17**

Bibliography **18**

The Political Terror Scale (PTS)

Introduction

This document describes the Political Terror Scale (**PTS**) dataset, a data collection project housed by the Political Science Department at the University of North Carolina, Asheville. The dataset is described in detail in Wood and Gibney (2010). The **PTS** measures violations of physical integrity rights carried out by states or their agents – covering some 200 countries or territories from 1976 to 2021. The dataset is available for download at: http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/.

Definition of "Political Terror"

The **PTS** seeks to measure *political terror*. We define political terror as *violations of basic human rights to the physical integrity of the person* by *agents of the state* within the territorial boundaries of the state in question in a particular year. It is important to note that political terror as defined by the **PTS** is not synonymous with *terrorism* or the use of violence and intimidation in pursuit of political aims. The concept is also distinguishable from terrorism as a tactic or from criminal acts.

Violations of Physical Integrity

Violations of physical integrity rights – also referred to as *violations of personal integrity or security* – constitute the scope of violence that is captured by the **PTS**. Violations of physical integrity rights considered within the scope of the **PTS** include:

- torture and cruel and unusual treatment and punishment;
- beatings, excessive use of force, and brutality;
- rape, sexual assault and violence, and forced sterilization;
- intentional neglect, withholding of food and medical care (typically in prisons);
- killings, custodial deaths, and unlawful use of deadly force;
- summary or extra-judicial killings and executions;
- political assassinations and murder;

- arbitrary arrest and detention and political imprisonment;
- incommunicado and clandestine imprisonment and detention;
- forced disappearances and kidnappings;
- forced relocations and removal;
- forced labor, slavery, and child soldiering;

Not considered are corporal and capital punishment in the context of legal proceedings assumed to conform to international standards. Extra-territorial violations (such as those perpetrated by soldiers abroad) are excluded as well.

Agents of the State

Physical integrity rights violations are only captured *if* they are perpetrated, sanctioned, or ordered by *agents of the state*. Domestic, societal, or criminal violence, or violence ascribed to insurgent groups or criminal syndicates are not considered. Examples of state agents or actors acting on the behest, or on the authority or with implicit consent of agents of the state, include:

- police, law enforcement, guards, and security personnel
- military and paramilitary organizations
- executives and members of executive agencies and bureaucracies
- members of the criminal justice and penal systems (e.g., prison guards)
- intelligence agents
- militias
- death squads
- political parties and their organizations
- mercenaries and private military contractors
- foreign personnel such as peace-keepers supplementing domestic capacity

Identifying agents of the state and distinguishing them from non-state actors is often difficult. Where violations cannot be attributed to state agents, these violations are not coded.

Motivations

It is important to note that the PTS does not exclude "non-politically motivated violations" of physical integrity rights by state agents. The PTS captures any violation of physical integrity rights by state agents, regardless of reasons or motivation for the violation. The assassination of a political challenger, for example, is counted the same way as the killing of a suspected criminal or a random by-stander. General police brutality, for instance, will be taken into account even in the absence of explicit repressive policies.

As such, it is worth to point out that the PTS does **not** exclusively measure repression. Repression as understood in the literature is the use of violence and intimidation in pursuit of political aims (Tilly, 1978; Goldstein, 1978; Gurr, 1986; Haschke, 2018). The PTS captures the use of violence by state agents for any aim – political, personal, or monetary.

Sources

Three separate indicators of *political terror* as defined above are coded – PTS_A, PTS_H, and PTS_S. Each indicator is coded based on information contained in the annual human rights reports published by Amnesty International (PTS_A), Human Rights Watch (PTS_H), and the US Department of State (PTS_S):

1. Amnesty International: The State of the Worlds' Human Rights (URL: latest report)
2. Human Rights Watch: World Report (URL: latest report)
3. US Department of State: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (URL: latest report)

Unit of Observation

The unit of observation or unit of analysis of the PTS-data project is the *report-year*. The annual publications on human rights conditions published by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the US State Department contain a large number of separate reports on human rights practices across countries, territories, and other entities. We treat these constituent reports as our units of observation and code a separate score for each constituent report each year.

Our unit of observation is technically the *report-year* as opposed to the *country-year*, as each reporting agency publishes reports on entities that do not constitute 'countries.' (We define 'country' as a full United Nations member state.) Human Rights Watch, for example, publishes a constituent report for the European Union. Amnesty International and the State Department report on the Occupied Territories or the State of Palestine. Other non-country reports include Puerto Rico, Taiwan, or Western Sahara.

Timing

Only violations that occur during the year covered by the report are considered. Reports frequently mention or recount violations that occurred in prior years. A report covering the year 2016, for example, could mention developments of a court case involving a extra-judicial killing from 2008. Similarly, reports often discuss developments over time (e.g., "Allegations of torture have increased over the last 5 years."). Coders are instructed to only consider violations and allegations that correspond to the year the report is covering (i.e., violations that took place during the *report-year*).

Scaling

Political terror, is measured on a 5-point ordinal scale. At least two experienced coders are assigned to read and code any given report for a given year and tasked to assign a score between one and five.[1] The coding scheme was adopted and is loosely based on a scale published by Freedom House in its 1980 yearbook (see Table 1).

Table 1: Political Terror Scales – Coding Scheme

Level 1	Countries under a secure rule of law, people are not imprisoned for their view, and torture is rare or exceptional. Political murders are extremely rare.
Level 2	There is a limited amount of imprisonment for nonviolent political activity. However, few persons are affected, torture and beatings are exceptional. Political murder is rare.
Level 3	There is extensive political imprisonment, or a recent history of such imprisonment. Execution or other political murders and brutality may be common. Unlimited detention, with or without a trial, for political views is accepted.
Level 4	Civil and political rights violations have expanded to large numbers of the population. Murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life. In spite of its generality, on this level terror affects primarily those who interest themselves in politics or ideas.
Level 5	The terrors of Level 4 have been extended to the whole population. The leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals.

Adapted from Gastil (1980)

[1] After each person codes (separately), scores are compared. In approximately 80% of the cases, the coders' scores match. However, when there are differences, disagreement is resolved in an informal discussion between coders. If, after determining how a particular score was assigned, discrepancies cannot be resolved, a third coder serves as the tie-breaker.

Based on the evidence found in reports only, coders are asked to assign scores such that a score of 5 indicates the maximum of highest level or *political terror* and a score of 1 the minimum. A score of 3 ought to imply fewer violations (or less *political terror*) than a report coded 4. In addition, coders must only consider evidence found in the reports and are instructed to ignore their own knowledge, biases, and feelings about a country (or other entity) under consideration. Coders are also asked to give the country (or entity) covered in the report the benefit of the doubt. Thus, if a coder thinks that a report could be scored as either a 2 or a 3, the report is to receive the lower score. Finally, when coding reports, coders are asked to consider three dimensions of 'political terror' – its *scope*, its *intensity*, and its *range* (Wood and Gibney, 2010).

Scope, Intensity, and Range

Scope pertains to the type of physical integrity rights violation that is described in a given report (e.g., arbitrary arrest, rape, killings). Violations must be perpetrated by an agent of the state (or at his or her behest) *and* within the territorial boundaries of the state or entity in question. Coders are asked to count an instance of a more severe type of violation (e.g., an extra-judicial killing) more heavily than a less severe one (e.g., an instance of excessive use of force, an arbitrary arrest). *Intensity* refers to the frequency with which violations occur (e.g., isolated and rare instances, common or routine practice). Coders are asked to weigh evidence of multiple violations (e.g., mass arrests) more heavily than a single instance. Similarly, rare or isolated events are to be considered less, compared with reports of systematic abuse. Finally, *range* is the proportion of the population subjected to abuse (e.g., targeted and selective violence, indiscriminate abuse). Coders are expected to assign worse or higher scores if violence is indiscriminate (e.g., affecting the whole country, the entire population) rather than selective (e.g., targeting select members of a particular group).

Coding Procedure

As outlined above, coders are asked to assign a score (1 through 5) to a report based on evidence contained in the reports as to the *scope*, *intensity*, and *range* of physical integrity rights violations perpetrated by state agents within the boundaries of the country (or entity) covered by the report. This is a complex undertaking and requires careful reading and evaluation of reports that often differ vastly in length and detail from country to country, year to year, and importantly from one reporting agency (i.e., Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the US Department of State) to another.

Identifying Allegations

For every allegation contained in a report coders must first determine whether the allegation falls within the **Scope** of the **PTS**. This task typically requires coder to answer the following **four** questions:

1. Violation Timing Requirement

> **Was the alleged act or violation perpetrated during the year covered by the report? See: Unit of Observation: Timing**
>
> **Example**: US State Department Report, Turkey 2019

– *"The HRA [Human Rights Association] reported separately that in the first 11 months of the year, it received 840 complaints of abuse by security forces, including 422 complaints alleging torture and inhuman treatment."*

Yes: The HRA received these complaints in the first 11 months of the year (2019) and we treat those allegations as having taken place during the same year (2019).

– *"In December the minister of interior reported the ministry had received 31 complaints in 2018 alleging abuse while in custody."*

No: This sentences references that the ministry of the interior received 31 complaints in 2018. The alleged abuse thus occurred prior to 2019 (i.e., prior to the time period under consideration) and falls outside of the scope of Turkey's PTS score for 2019 even though the abuse only came to light in 2019.

2. State Actor Requirement

Was the alleged act or violation perpetrated by a state actor or a third party acting on behalf or with the implicit consent of a state actor? See: Agents of the State

Example 1: US State Department Report, Afghanistan 2019

– *"There were several reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings."*

Yes: The statement explicitly references state or government agents.

– *"The number of civilian deaths attributed to progovernment forces increased from 717 to 1,149, a 36 percent increase from the corresponding period in 2018."*

Yes: The statement explicitly references state or government agents or forces acting on behalf or with the implied consent of the state actors.

– *"There were numerous reports of politically motivated killings or injuries by the Taliban, ISIS-K, and other insurgent groups. UNAMA reported 5,117 civilian casualties from antigovernment element attacks that deliberately targeted civilians."*

No: The Taliban, ISIS-K, and other insurgent groups are not state actors and do not act on behalf of the Afghan government.

Example 2: US State Department Report, Chad 2019

– *"On May 25, Yaya Awad, arrested for allegedly stealing a motorcycle, died in custody at the 7th police district of NâĂŹDjamena after police fatally beat and otherwise injured him during interrogation."*

Yes: The statement attributes the abuse to the police who are considered a state agent.

Example 3: US State Department Report, Ukraine 2019

– *"There were reports that state actors ordered or took part in targeted attacks on civil society activists and journalists in connection with their work, which in some cases resulted in death."*

Yes: The statement explicitly references state or government agents.

– *"There were reports that Russia-led forces in the 'people's republics' of Donetsk and Luhansk systematically committed numerous abuses, including torture, to maintain control or for personal financial gain."*

No: Russia-led forces are not considered a state agent within the territorial boundaries of the Ukraine.

Example 4: US State Department Report, Yemen 2019

– *"In March, AI reported three cases of child rape, including children as young as eight, in addition to a fourth case of threatened child rape, perpetrated by Islah-aligned militiamen supported by the Saudi-led coalition."*

Yes: Islah-aligned militiamen backed by the Saudi-leg coalition are considered state agents in-so-far as they are operating on behalf or with the implied consent of the internationally recognized Yemeni government.

– *"Human Rights Watch (HRW) also reported during the year the Houthis continued to carry out arbitrary arrests and kidnappings."*

No: Although Houthi rebels have taken control of Yemen's capital Sanaa and large parts of the countryside, the Ansar Allah government is not internationally recognized.

Example 5: US State Department Report, Honduras 2019

– *"Prison conditions were harsh and sometimes life threatening due to pervasive gang-related violence and [...] criminal activity within the prisons."*

No: Gang and criminal violence, as well as prisoner-on-prisoner abuse are not considered to be state perpetrated.

– *Prisoners suffered from overcrowding, insufficient access to food and water, violence, and alleged abuse by prison officials.*

Yes: Prison officials are considered agents of the state.

3. Territoriality Requirement

Was the alleged act or violation committed inside the territorial boundaries of the state in question?

Example 1: US State Department Report, Israel 2019

– *"Israeli forces killed 132 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, including 33 at the Gaza perimeter fence with Israel, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OCHA)."*

Mostly No: Of the alleged 132 victims 99 were killed outside of Israels territorial boundaries and as such are not accounted by the PTS. The 33 victims who were killed "at the Gaza perimeter fence" which could be considered Israeli territory would be accounted in Israel's PTS-score.

Example 2: US State Department Report, Russia 2019

– *"[...] German federal prosecutors announced they had concluded that Russian intelligence was behind the August 23 killing in Berlin of Zelimkhan Khangoshvili, an ethnic Chechen from Georgia."*

No: The killing of Khangoshvili occurred outside of Russia.

– *"Physical abuse and hazing, which in some cases resulted in death or suicide, continued to be a problem in the armed forces. On February 10, Stepan Tsymbal, a 19-year-old conscript, died at the Pogonovo military base in the Voronezh region. His family reported that his unit initially informed them that he had died naturally of a heart attack, although his arms and legs had been taped together and a plastic bag was wrapped around his head. According to the human rights organization Zona Prava, TsymbalâĂŹs commanding officer beat him and accused him of stealing vodka on the day he died, threatening that Tsymbal would face consequences if the vodka did not reappear by the evening."*

Yes: The Pogonovo military base in the Voronezh region is located in Western Russia.

4. Physical Integrity Requirement

Does the alleged act or violation under consideration fall within the scope of physical integrity rights violations coded by the PTS? See: Violations of Physical Integrity

Example 1: US State Department Report, Saudi Arabia 2019

– *"[...] Reporters Without Borders stated that authorities were holding Abdel Rahman Farhaneh, a Jordanian journalist who disappeared in the east of the country in February, and Marwan al-Muraisi, a Yemeni journalist missing in Saudi Arabia since June 2018."*

Yes: Involuntary and enforced disappearance as well as incommunicado detention fall within the scope of the PTS.

– *"Under the country's interpretation and practice of sharia (Islamic law), capital punishment may be imposed for a range of nonviolent offenses, including apostasy, sorcery, and adultery, although in practice death sentences for such offenses were rare and usually reduced on appeal. The government, however, frequently implemented capital punishment for nonviolent drug trafficking offenses. As of November 11, the country carried out 177 executions, 77 of which were for drug-related offenses."*

No: Corporal and capital punishment fall outside of the scope of the PTS.

Example 2: US State Department Report, Madagascar 2019

– *"L'Express newspaper reported that on May 1, four military personnel briefly arrested eight persons in the marketplace in Miandrivazo. According to eyewitnesses, the four personnel assaulted them and made them perform push-ups, "duck walk" under the hot sun, and take off their pants in public. The persons arrested included the son of an alleged witch whom military personnel allegedly shot and killed and dismembered the previous day. The alleged witch had been accused of the murder of a military official in 2018."*

Yes: This account contains at least two violations that fall within the scope of the PTS – namely, torture and ill treatment and an extra-judicial killing. Considering that "witchcraft" is not a recognized crime in Madagascar, the arrest and temporary detention can also be classified as a violation within the scope of the PTS.

– *"On May 30, press reported that a military team forcibly entered the residence of a suspected thief in the commune of Soamadinika in the district of Tsaratanana. The team reportedly tortured the suspect while questioning him about a shotgun found in his house, although he had a permit for the weapon. According to press, a gendarme from the Soamadinika station arrived and tried to take the injured suspect to the hospital, but the military team refused to let him. The military team reportedly demanded 10 million ariary ($2,700) from the villagers in exchange for release of the suspect. The military team then reportedly killed the suspect and took six million ariary ($1,600) from the villagers."*

Yes: Similar to the account above, this account describes multiple violations that are accounted by the PTS. They include torture, arbitrary detention, and an extra-judicial killing.

– *"Prison conditions were harsh and life-threatening due to inadequate food, overcrowding, poor sanitation, and insufficient medical care. [...] According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), almost one in two prisoners nationwide suffered from moderate or severe malnutrition in 2018. [...] The ICRC, in collaboration with the Catholic Chaplaincy for Prisons, treated almost 7,500 prisoners in 14 detention centers for malnutrition during the previous year, in addition to approximately 2,000 sick prisoners and breastfeeding women."*

No: Although the starvation and disease described here have obvious implications for the physical integrity of prisoners in Madagascar, the PTS treats them as incidental and not "perpetrated." An explicit reference to a decision or policy to withhold food or medical treatment to extract confessions or bribes would be required to make the account above fall within the scope of the PTS.

Example 3: US State Department Report, Brazil 2019

– *"Reports of abuse by prison guards continued. On March 25, the national daily newspaper Folha de S. Paulo reported that the Sao Paulo Penitentiary Administration SecretaryâĂŹs OmbudsmanâĂŹs Office received 73 reports of torture in correctional facilities in the state of Sao Paulo in the first two months of the year, 66 of which were related to the Provisional Detention Center of Osasco, in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo. Reports mentioned long punishment in isolated cells, lack of access to health care, and psychological torture."*

Yes: Unlike the account of prison condition in Madagascar above, this account specifically describes abuse by prison guards that includes torture and the withholding of medical care.

– *"In February media outlets reported that police in Fortaleza, the capital city of Ceara, unlawfully stopped a woman and her husband in their car, asked them to get out, and began cursing and beating them. Media reported that a military policeman whipped the woman while detaining her on the sidewalk."*

Yes: This is a clear example of an account that falls within the scope of the PTS. Violations include arbitrary arrest and detention, and abuse and ill-treatment.

– *"NGOs reported police occasionally conducted searches without warrants. Human rights groups, other NGOs, and media reported incidents of excessive police searches in poor neighborhoods. During these operations, police stopped and questioned persons and searched cars and residences without warrants."*

No: This paragraph contains no mention of a physical integrity rights violations within the scope of the PTS. Violations of civil and political rights, such as censorship, violations of religious expression, search and seizure laws, trial procedures, freedom of the press, legal restrictions on civil society organizations, etc are not coded by the PTS.

Example 4: US State Department Report, Greece 2019

– *"Police detained undocumented migrants and asylum seekers in Reception and Identification Centers (RICs). [...] Locally based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), reiterated findings from previous years that severe overcrowding in the RICs caused distress and seriously affected mental health. The group accused Greece and the European Union in September of intentional neglect, arguing that the migrant centers were intentionally kept in dismal conditions to dissuade new arrivals."*

Yes: Intentional neglect seriously affecting the mental health of detained migrants and asylum seekers falls within the scope of the PTS.

– *"NGOs reported incidents of security forces committing racially and hate-motivated violence. [...] Victims in these incidents included, among others, refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, including unaccompanied minors, and a Greek transgender woman. All such allegations claimed inappropriate behavior by law enforcement officials during routine or nonroutine police checks and operations. In 19 of the 22 cases, victims reported the physical violence occurred in public spaces or inside police departments in Athens."*

Yes: This paragraph constitutes a clear case of state perpetrated violence that is coded by the PTS.

Scoring Reports

Once coders have identified allegations of abuse that fall within the scope of the PTS, they are asked to assign a score ranging from 1 to 5 to the report under consideration (covering a country or entity during a year). As discussed above, scores are a function of the types of the relevant violations described in the report (*Scope*), the frequency with which violations occur (*Intensity*), and with the selectivity of the violence (*Range*).

Scope: Violation Types

Physical integrity rights violations within the scope of the PTS range from excessive use of force, beatings, and cases of brief but arbitrary detention to severe torture, sexual assault and rapes, forced removals, enforced disappearances, political imprisonment, and killings as well as summary executions. Coders are asked to assign higher scores (worse PTS-Scores) to reports containing evidence of disappearances and killings compared to those containing "only" evidence of excessive force or beatings. Evidence of more egregious types of violations corresponds to higher (worse) PTS-Scores. Excessive use of force and beatings are considered less egregious than severe maiming and torture; arbitrary detention is a less severe violation than incommunicado detention and political imprisonment; disappearances, summary executions, assassinations, and extra-judicial killings are to be considered most egregious. Coders are also expected to assign higher scores to reports containing evidence of more than one type of violation. A report describing one instance of torture is to receive a lower score than a report describing one instance of torture and an arbitrary arrest (all else equal). A report describing abuse across the entire range of violation types is to be assigned a higher score.

Intensity: Violation Frequency

The number of instances of physical integrity rights violations that are reported, obviously matters. A report mentioning a single case of abuse, is evidence of less problematic conditions, than a report detailing the abuse of hundreds or thousands. Reports alleging isolated or rare incidents are to receive lower PTS-scores, all else equal, than reports alleging widespread and systematic violations. The vast majority of reports do not provide exact numbers of cases, violations, or victims but rather contain a rough assessment as to how prevalent or common violations of a given type are. Coders are directed to assign scores based commonly used terms/adjectives contained in the reports that describe the intensity or frequency of violations:

- none,
- rare, isolated, few
- reports of, cases of, instances of, some
- common, frequent, regular, often, routinely
- widespread, systematic, pervasive, endemic

Language describing the absence of physical integrity rights violations of a particular type:

Example: US State Department Report, Denmark 2019

– *"There were no reports the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings."*

Language describing the few or some physical integrity rights violations:

Example: US State Department Report, Denmark 2019

– *"The constitution and law prohibit such practices [torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment], and there were some reports government officials employed them. The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) reported an increased use of force in prisons, particularly pepper spray and batons. The DIHR also noted an exponential increase in the use of prolonged solitary confinement as a disciplinary measure against convicted prisoners."*

Language describing frequent physical integrity rights violations, including details of specific cases:

Example: US State Department Report, Uzbekistan 2019

– *In late September, local officials in Khorezm detained blogger Nafosat "Shabnam" Ollashkurova after she posted on Facebook content criticizing local government corruption, including postings about illegal demolitions. Prior to her arrest, Ollashkurova also documented a protest by journalist and poet Mahmud Rajabov against a criminal case that authorities had brought against him. Ollashkurova served 10 days of administrative detention, following which the Urgench district civil court ordered authorities to place her in the Khorezm regional psychiatric center for six months of forced evaluation and treatment. Early in her detention, officials did not allow her to contact her family. Following an October 21 visit by the ombudsman for human rights, the regional psychiatric centerâĂŹs officials permitted her to speak with her mother as well as human rights activists. Ollashkurova was released from the regional psychiatric center on December 28.*

  While the constitution and law prohibit abuse, civil society reported law enforcement and security officers routinely beat and otherwise mistreated those held on criminal charges to obtain confessions, incriminating information, or for corrupt financial gain. Activists reported physical abuse of political and religious detainees somewhat decreased in the previous year, with methods shifted more to psychological manipulation, including humiliation, threats to activistsâĂŹ family members, and threats to withhold medical treatment. There was at least one report of sexual assault against a female detainee.

Language describing pervasive physical integrity rights violations:

Example: US State Department Report, North Korea 2019

– *The law requires all citizens of working age to work and "strictly observe labor discipline and working hours." There were numerous reports that farms and factories did not pay wages or provide food to their workers. Forced labor continued to take place in the brick making, cement manufacturing, coal mining, gold mining, logging, iron production, agriculture, and textile industries. The South Korean NGO Open North Korea estimated that North Koreans perform $975 million worth of forced labor each year. The Walk Free Foundation [...] estimated that one of every 10 individuals, or approximately 2.6 million persons, in North Korea were in situations of modern slavery.*

Range: Violation Selectivity

A final criterion determining PTS scores, concerns the selectivity of violence. Coders must weigh indiscriminate violence, affecting potentially the entire population, more than the selective targeting of a subset of the population (e.g., the targeting of an ethnic minority, political dissidents, migrants, or criminals).

Language describing targeted abuse affecting a specific group (dissidents, protesters):

Example: US State Department Report, Chile 2019

– *Although the constitution and law prohibit such practices, there were reports of excessive force, abuse, and degrading treatment by law enforcement officers. During widespread protests and civil unrest in October and November, the INDH filed more than 350 criminal accusations that law enforcement officials had committed acts of torture during detention of protesters (including student protesters), during criminal arrests, or at prisons, including more than 270 accusations of torture and 60 of sexual abuse or assault.*

Language describing indiscriminate violence affecting potentially anybody:

Example: US State Department Report, Eritrea 2019

– *An unknown number of persons disappeared during the year and were believed to be in government detention or to have died while in detention. The government did not make efforts to prevent the disappearances, or investigate or punish those responsible for such disappearances. The government did not regularly notify family members or respond to requests for information regarding the status of detainees, including locally employed staff of foreign embassies and foreign or dual nationals. Disappeared persons included those detained for political and religious beliefs, journalists, individuals suspected of evading national service and militia duties, and persons not known to have committed any offense.*

General and ID Variables

Country

Name of country or entity covered in human rights reports. In most cases names refer to independent states. Technically, the unit of analysis of the PTS data is the *report-year* and not the *country-year*. As such, some entities covered are not independent states or UN members. Potentially controversial examples of "non-states" covered include: Western Sahara, Taiwan, Kosovo, the Occupied Territories, Gaza, the European Union, and Puerto Rico.

Country_OLD

Name of country or entity covered in human rights reports as used in previous data releases.

Year

Year of observation. Note that this is not the year of publication but the year of events covered in reports. For example, the "World Report 2016" published by Human Rights Watch in 2016 covers events that took place in 2015. Year corresponds to the year covered in the report not the publication date or title of the report.

COW_Code_A

The Correlates of War Project (CoW) alphabetic country codes. Details can be found here: http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/cow-country-codes.

COW_Code_N

The Correlates of War Project (CoW) numeric country codes.

WordBank_Code_A

World Bank three letter country codes (ISO 3166-1 alpha-3). Details can be found here: http://data.worldbank.org/developers/api-overview/country-queries.

UN_Code_N

United Nation three digit numeric country codes (ISO 3166-1 numeric-3). Details can be found here: http://unstats .un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49alpha.htm.

Region

OECD region identifier.

- eap – East Asia and Pacific
- eca – Europe and Central Asia
- lac – Latin America and Caribbean
- mena – Middle East and North Africa
- na – North America
- sa – South Asia
- ssa – Sub-Saharan Africa

PTS Variables

PTS_A PTS: Amnesty International (PTS-A)

PTS-scores based on information contained in Amnesty International's annual human rights reports. Reports are scored on a 5-point scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of abuse, *political terror*, or physical integrity rights violations than lover scores. 'NAs' imply missing values.

PTS_H PTS: Human Rights Watch (PTS-H)

PTS-scores based on information contained in annual human rights reports published by Human Rights Watch. Reports are scored on a 5-point scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of abuse, *political terror*, or physical integrity rights violations than lover scores. 'NAs' imply missing values.

PTS_S PTS: State Department (PTS-S)

PTS-scores based on information contained in the annual human rights reports produced by the US Department of State. Reports are scored on a 5-point scale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of abuse, *political terror*, or physical integrity rights violations than lover scores. 'NAs' imply missing values.

New PTS Variables

NA_Status_A, NA_Status_H, and NA_Status_S

Three new indicators have been added to the to our regular **PTS** release: NA_Status_A, NA_Status_H, and NA_Status_S. Each variable corresponds to its respective **PTS** counterpart (i.e.PTS_A, PTS_H, and PTS_S). The variables provide information concerning missingness (i.e. 'NA' values) in the respective **PTS** variable. The NA_Status variables can take on the values: 0, 66, 77, 88, or 99.

0 The value of '0' is assigned for instances where the respective human rights report was available and has been coded. For example, NA_Status_A will be 0 for Sri Lanka 2016 if Amnesty International published a 2016 report for Sri Lanka and a PTS_A score has been coded.

99 We assigned the value '99' for units that exist (i.e., they are full United Nations member states), a human rights report was published but no **PTS** score was assigned. U.S. State Department reports for 'micro-states' such as Andorra or Liechtenstein fall into this category. The countries exist, a report was published but the reports were never coded and a PTS_S score was not assigned. As such, the NA_Status_S for Andorra and Liechtenstein takes on the value '99' for years.

88 The value of '88' is assigned for units that exist (i.e., they are full United Nations member states) but no report was published and as such no **PTS** score could be assigned. NA_Status_S, for example, is always coded as '88' for the United States (a full United Nations member state) because no State Department human rights reports are published for the United States and PTS_S is missing ('NA') for all years.

77 The NA_Status variables are coded '77' for units that no-longer exist, or do not exist yet. For example, PTS_S is missing ('NA') for the South Sudan from 1976 through 2010 because South Sudan only became a full United Nations member in 2011. As such, no reports on human rights practices were published before 2011 and **PTS** scores are missing. Similarly, NA_Status is coded '77' for the Soviet Union since 1992.

66 Finally, the value '66' is reserved for missing **PTS** scores due to missing reports for non-United Nations members, such as sub-national, supra-national, or non-state entities. Human Rights watch publishes reports for the European Union whereas neither Amnesty International nor the State Department does. Because of this PTS_A and PTS_S are missing for the European Union and NA_Status_A and NA_Status_S take on the value '66.' Other examples of non-United Nations member state entities that are subject of occasional human rights reports include Puerto Rico, Western Sahara, Taiwan, Palestine, Gaza, as well as Hamas.

Index of Variables:

Country, 13
Country_OLD, 14
COW_Code_A, 14
COW_Code_N, 14

NA_Status_A, 15, 16
NA_Status_H, 15
NA_Status_S, 15, 16

PTS_A, 3, 15, 16
PTS_H, 3, 15
PTS_S, 3, 15, 16

Region, 14

UN_Code_N, 14

WordBank_Code_A, 14

Year, 14

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