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# International Borders, Human Trafficking, and Human Rights

## Introduction

This project aims to explore if hardening borders affect international human rights of persons in, near, and transiting border zones, and how it does so. Research consisted of 2 main areas of focus, Borders and Human Trafficking, and 2 subgroups within each focus. Early findings indicate that hardening borders do in fact affect both the levels of torture in border zones, as well as the incidence of human trafficking in countries globally.

## Methodology

### Borders

- Torture - Gathered data from Amnesty International's annual country reports and documentation on torture and ill-treatment allegations aimed towards border security agents. A level was then assigned based on the language implicating severity of torture.
- Complaints - Gathered data from complaints regarding border walls from articles of the top three most-circulated newspapers in the relevant countries. Specific quotes were then recorded and translated as evidence as well as their source (country and level of government)

### Human Trafficking

- Corridors - Data was gathered using the US State Department's Annual Reports of Trafficking in Persons (TIP). Each route used by traffickers, often involving 2 or 3 countries as a Source, Transit, or Destination country, and each type of trafficking mentioned was coded (e.g. Child Labor).
- Aid - Data was gathered using the OECD Development Assistance Committee forum. Each aid project was coded based on its mentions of Human Trafficking, Prosecution, Prevention, and Victim Protection.

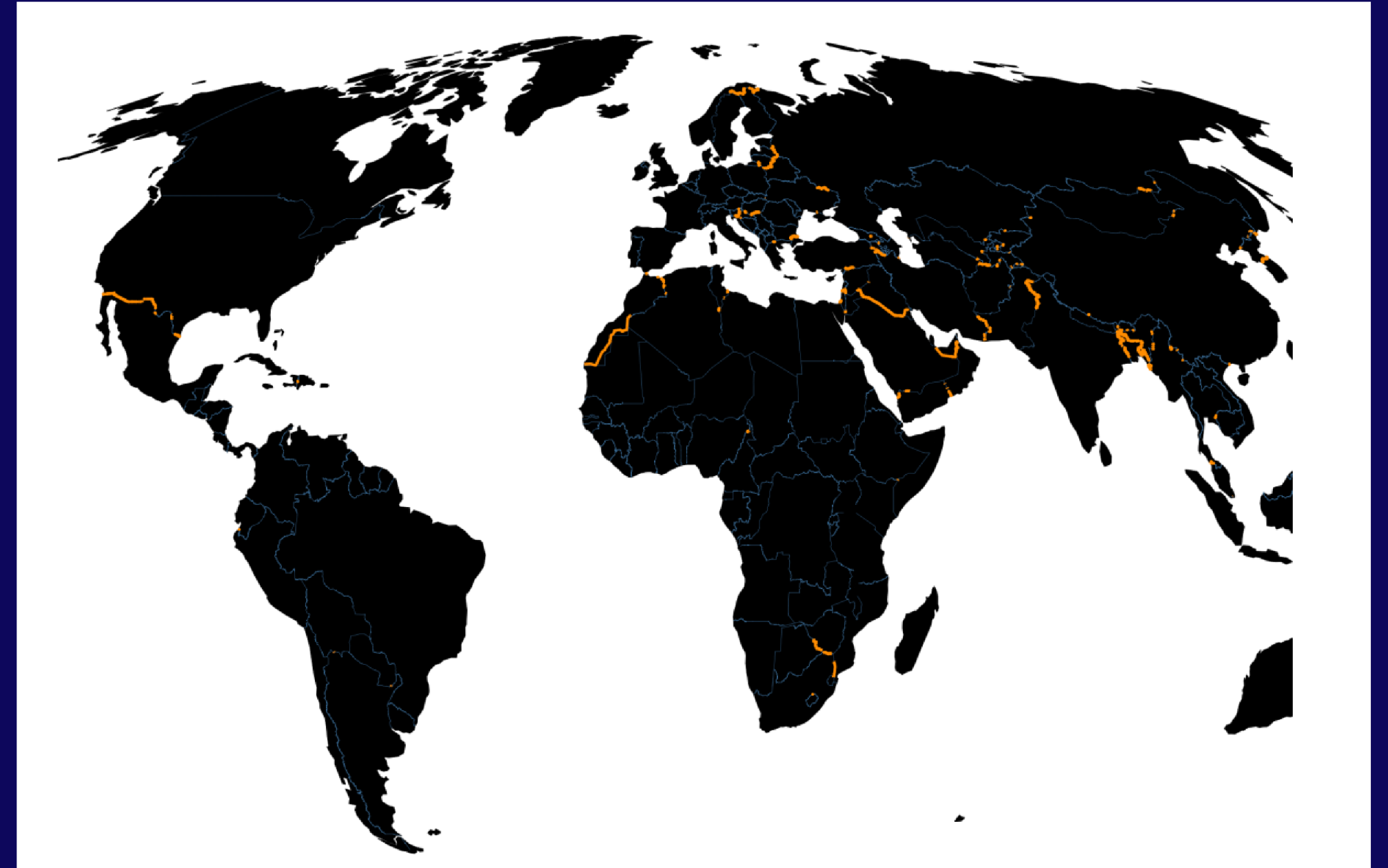
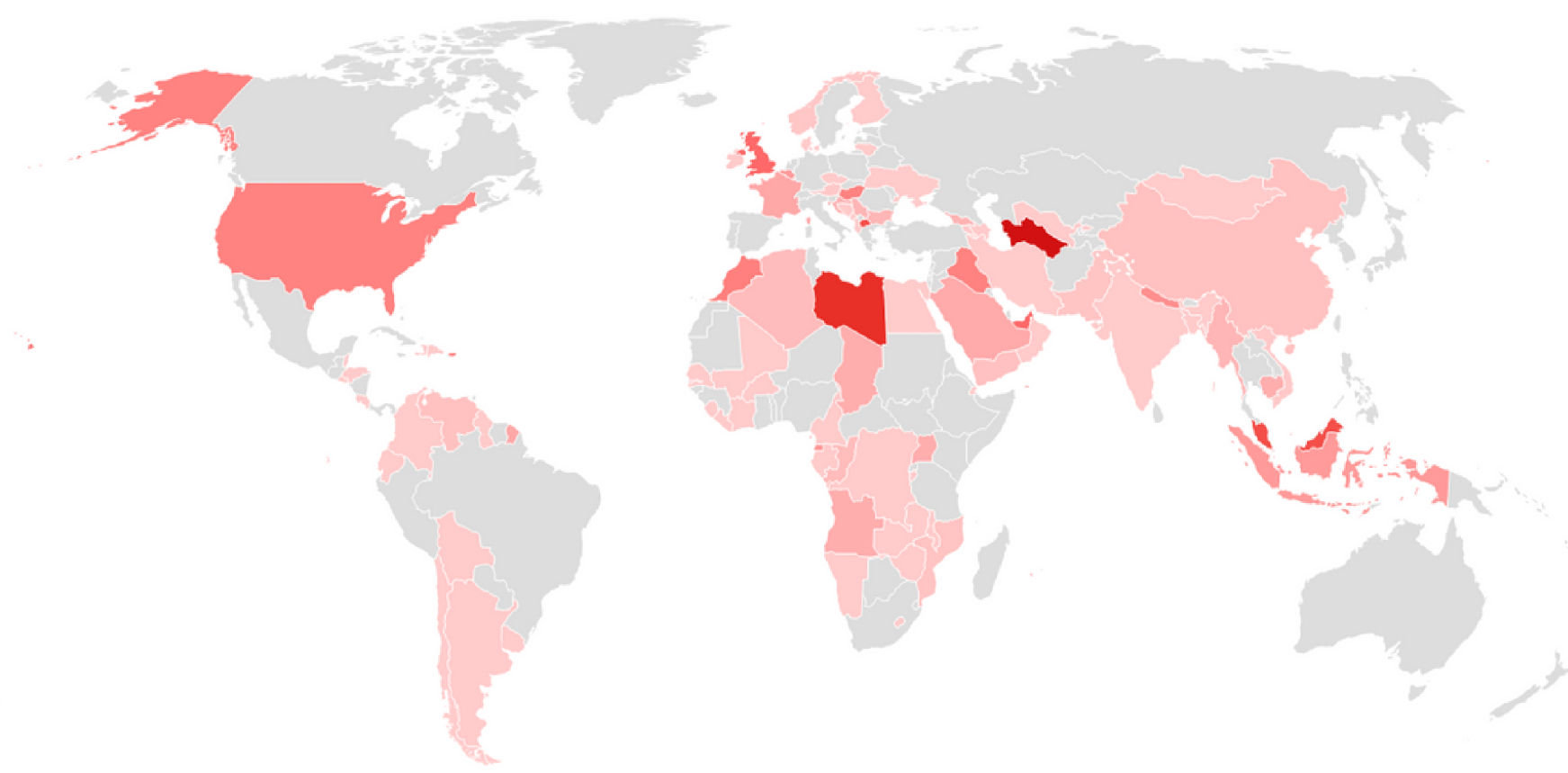


Figure 1: Walls by Geographic Location (Kenwick et al. 2022)

Note: International borders are displayed in blue, with interstate border wall segments displayed in orange.

## Border Torture Visuals

### National Averages of Torture



Map: Selena Rosario - Created with Datawrapper

Figure 2: Visual Map of National Torture Averages

### Border Wall Complaints

Comparing the sources of border wall complaints and the levels of government at which they are made

■ National Reactions ■ Subnational Reactions ■ Private Reactions

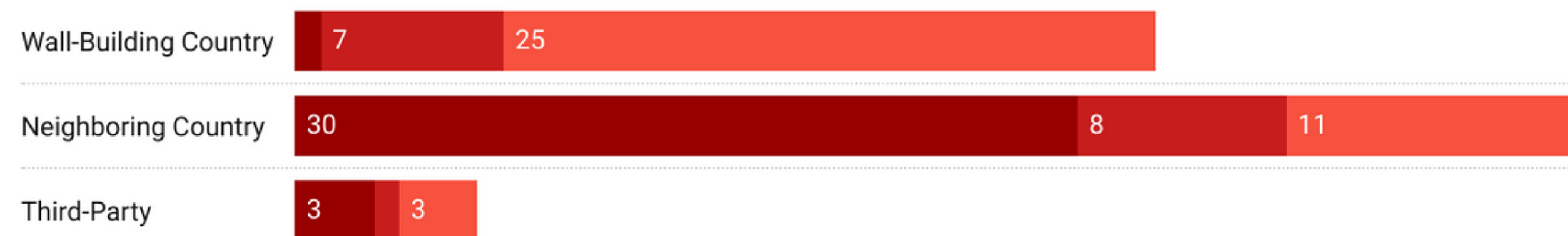
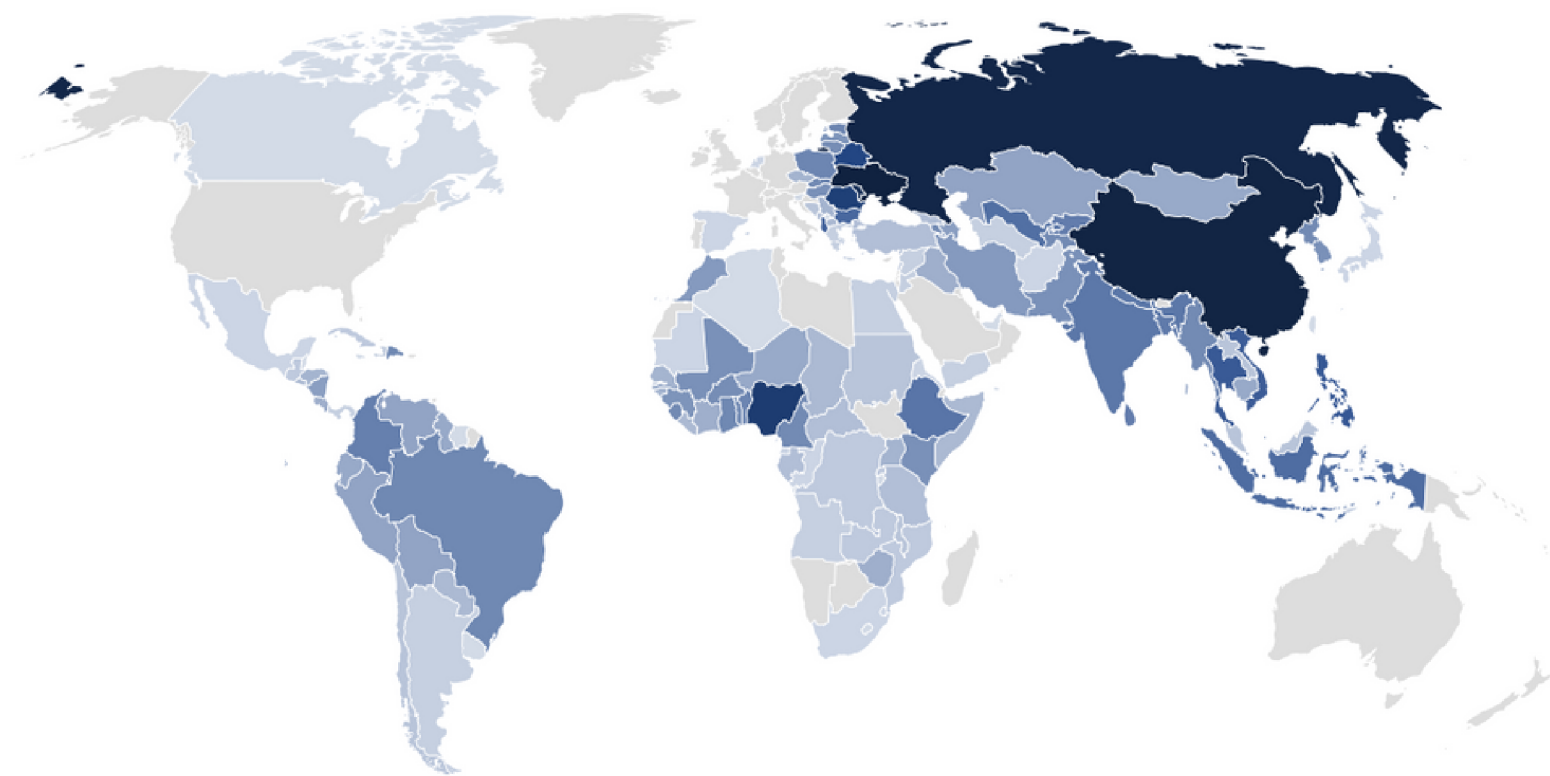


Chart: Selena Rosario - Created with Datawrapper

Figure 4: Visualization of Border Complaints

## Human Trafficking Visuals

### Average Source Country Mentions 2001-2007



Countries in gray have no source country mentions

Get the data - Created with Datawrapper

Figure 3: Visual Map of Source Country Averages from 2001-2007

## Findings

### Borders

- Turkmenistan (4) and Libya (3.5) had the highest averages of torture
- Complaints from wall-building countries are disproportionately private in comparison to the complaints of neighboring countries, which are mainly made at the national level of government.

### Human Trafficking

- Country with Highest Incidence of Source Country Mentions: Ukraine (56.25)
- Countries with Lowest Incidence of Source Country Mentions: Belize, Burundi, Canada, Dominica, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, Jamaica, Japan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Lesotho, Singapore, Suriname, Swaziland, Tibet, United Arab Emirates (0.25)

## Human Rights and Borders

## Early Analysis

As demonstrated by the Border Torture and Human Trafficking Graphs above, human rights violations, specifically Border Torture and Human Trafficking, seem to have a higher occurrence rate near zones with strict border boundaries (border walls). For example, the highest average incidence of Source Country Mentions from 2001-2007 occurred in Ukraine, which has 2 border walls.

Figure 5 (left) shows a map indicating the Average Source Country Mentions (2001) and places with recorded torture allegations within Central Asia and Eastern Europe, including the border walls for this region. The highest incidence of Source Country Mentions is Ukraine (56.25 mentions) and Russia (50.25 mentions). Additionally, most conflicts related to torture are found along borders with walls. For example, there are three allegations of torture from the South Ossetia region of Russia bordering Georgia. Additionally, the border wall between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan has also been a site for torture.

These findings suggest that individuals within border zones, migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees, are often vulnerable to exploitation. Focus has been placed on the source countries of victims of trafficking to highlight how migration potentially exposes individuals to human rights violations. Efforts to increase border security, such as increased border guards or the construction of physical border walls, do not seem to result in human rights respecting borders. Hardened borders are not synonymous with the protection of human rights.

### Central Asia en Eastern Europe Average Source Country Mentions (2001-2007) and Average Torture Levels



Figure 5: Visual Map of Human Rights Violations and Border Segements

Yellow Circles = Recorded Torture Allegations Red Lines = Border Segments