Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2669 (2026)[1]

Fighting back against transnational repression

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The plight of exiled political dissidents, journalists and human rights defenders does not end once they have escaped from the oppressive systems of their home States. As instances of foreign interference have increased in frequency and severity, authoritarian regimes have found new ways to subjugate their opponents beyond their borders. Such cases of transnational repression, whether involving the use of violence or the misuse of legitimate international co-operation tools, violate the rule of law and State sovereignty, infringe the human rights of the individuals targeted and pose a serious threat to national security.

2. The seriousness of the issue of transnational repression is clearly illustrated by Freedom House, one of the most prominent United States of America-based non-governmental organisations, which has documented 1 375 instances of physical transnational repression since 2014, perpetrated by 54 origin States, affecting 107 host States. Freedom House lists the 10 most frequent perpetrators of physical transnational repression as China, Türkiye, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Egypt, Turkmenistan, Cambodia, Uzbekistan, Iran and Belarus.

3. The Parliamentary Assembly condemns all forms of transnational repression. It reiterates that acts of transnational repression perpetrated by member States and those that occur or have effects in their territories undermine the values and principles of the Council of Europe and are incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5).

4. Because of the lack of a tailored legal framework, including the absence of a common definition of transnational repression, many cases remain unidentified, and the true scale of this phenomenon may be even greater. Despite attempts to define the term in various domestic legal instruments and by civil society organisations, no universally agreed definition currently exists.

5. Consequently, the Assembly holds that the term "transnational repression" should be understood as a form of foreign interference by a State, its organs, proxies and/or persons whose actions can be attributed to that State, employed to intimidate, silence, harass, coerce, abduct, harm or kill individuals beyond the State's borders, including political dissidents, activists, human rights defenders, journalists, political opponents, members of minority religious or ethnic groups, academics, members of diaspora and exile communities and/or their relatives, regardless of their nationality. Transnational repression methods include, but are not limited to:

5.1. murder and the threat or use of violence;

5.2. unlawful rendition and/or abduction;

5.3. unlawful electronic or in-person surveillance;

5.4. harassment or unlawful detention of family members in the origin State;

5.5. misuse of legitimate international legal co-operation mechanisms, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) notice system, extradition requests, mutual legal assistance frameworks and anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures;

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1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2026 (26th sitting) (see Doc. 16421, report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mr Constantinos Efstathiou). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2026 (26th sitting).
See also Recommendation 2309 (2026).

5.6. doxing (publicly and unlawfully disclosing personally identifiable information about an individual or organisation with the intention of harassing or causing distress) and the release of sensitive personal information;

5.7. unwarranted designation as a terrorist or extremist;

5.8. mobility restrictions, including through passport cancellation and denial of consular services;

5.9. recourse to strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs);

5.10. arbitrary prevention of renunciation of citizenship;

5.11. financial repression, including the denial of access to banking and financial services, account freezes, de-banking and other measures aimed at restricting the economic activities, livelihoods or financial participation of targeted individuals and entities.

6. The Assembly considers that, under certain circumstances, victims of transnational repression who are detained pursuant to an abusive INTERPOL Red Notice or extradition request may fulfil the criteria for a political prisoner, as listed in Resolution 1900 (2012) "The definition of political prisoner". Accordingly, States that refuse to consider the political motivation behind such requests should be regarded as facilitators of transnational repression, thus sharing the responsibility for the human rights violations committed against its victims. The Assembly reminds member States that mutual legal assistance under international treaties and co-operation mechanisms should be carried out in full compliance with international human rights law, including their obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, which transcend national borders. Member States should therefore pay particular attention to specific and credible allegations of transnational repression and political persecution when examining international co-operation requests, especially those that could result in an individual's arrest and detention.

7. The Assembly is further concerned by repeated allegations that anti-money laundering and anti-corruption measures are being misused for the purpose of transnational repression. It calls on national law-enforcement authorities to ensure that any such proceedings respect the right to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence, in accordance with Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

8. The Assembly welcomes the fact that, since the adoption of its Resolution 2509 (2023) "Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights", attempts to combat transnational repression have been undertaken through several international and domestic initiatives. In particular, during the 2025 Group of Seven (G7) Summit in Canada, leaders committed to countering the threat of transnational repression by fostering a common understanding of the phenomenon, raising awareness and promoting accountability. The European Parliament adopted a resolution on addressing transnational repression of human rights defenders and several domestic legislative or other measures were taken by States such as France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America.

9. The Assembly believes that only a co-ordinated international response can adequately counter the threat to national security, human rights and the rule of law posed by transnational repression. The Council of Europe possesses both the necessary expertise and the international outreach to lead these efforts.

10. Reiterating its support for the Secretary General's initiative to establish the New Democratic Pact for Europe, the Assembly believes that properly addressing the phenomenon of transnational repression will increase European democratic security and strengthen the international rules-based order, including through co-operation between member and observer States.

11. Accordingly, the Assembly calls on all member and observer States, as well as States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly, to:

11.1. enact legislation or introduce other equivalent instruments aimed at preventing and combating transnational repression, including through the criminalisation of these methods and adoption of a definition of transnational repression;

11.2. prosecute perpetrators of transnational repression to the fullest extent of the law, including through relevant international criminal justice mechanisms where acts of transnational repression may amount to international crimes falling within their jurisdiction;

11.3. treat transnational repression as an aggravating factor when prosecuting crimes committed within such a context;

11.4. apply targeted sanctions against foreign officials, individuals and entities involved in acts of transnational repression, using Magnitsky-type legislation or similar instruments;

11.5. apply all available legal measures against foreign diplomats, consuls and other foreign officials involved in transnational repression, including by declaring them *personae non gratae* and imposing visa restrictions upon them;

11.6. designate a relevant domestic focal point responsible for shaping and co-ordinating State policy to counter transnational repression, including through monitoring, awareness raising, community outreach, regular reporting and international co-operation;

11.7. set up dedicated reporting avenues, allowing victims of transnational repression to alert relevant authorities, and ensure staffing by adequately trained officials, appropriate follow-up and sufficient resources;

11.8. create training programmes for law-enforcement authorities focused on preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to transnational repression;

11.9. make available accessible resources for vulnerable groups and possible targets of transnational repression, providing information on its potential forms, reporting avenues and support, in relevant languages and subject to regular review and update;

11.10. establish outreach programmes aimed at building trust and effective co-operation with communities exposed to the risk of transnational repression, such as diaspora groups, political dissidents, exiled journalists and human rights defenders;

11.11. work closely with like-minded countries, affected communities and civil society actors in shaping transnational repression prevention and response mechanisms;

11.12. regularly exchange information on transnational repression trends, both bilaterally and within multilateral fora, including the Council of Europe, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations, and strengthen institutional co-operation between the Council of Europe, the European Union and the European External Action Service with a view to developing common standards, early-warning mechanisms and best practices for preventing and responding to transnational repression;

11.13. co-ordinate efforts aimed at increasing the level of transparency within INTERPOL, in particular by championing reforms enabling the disclosure of information on identified attempts to misuse the INTERPOL notice system and the publication of decisions of the Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files;

11.14. have regard to the analysis and proposals set forth in the February 2026 report of the European Criminal Bar Association "Safeguarding INTERPOL's systems: recommendations for reform", including concerns as to the lack of transparency in INTERPOL's ongoing reform processes and proposals aimed at upholding public confidence in the Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files and ensuring equality of arms and effective remedies for victims of transnational repression;

11.15. regularly inform INTERPOL about the outcomes of domestic extradition proceedings, especially in cases concluding with a refusal to extradite the individual sought;

11.16. consider new processes whereby member States can alert their own citizens should they become aware of any of their own citizens being targeted with a malign Red Notice issued by States seeking to abuse the Red Notice system;

11.17. increase funding for the INTERPOL bodies responsible for preventing the misuse of its system, including the Notices and Diffusions Task Force and the Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files;

11.18. take into account States' transnational repression records when considering extradition requests and other forms of mutual legal assistance;

11.19. consider introducing mechanisms to facilitate the issuance of relevant identity and/or travel documents for victims of transnational repression who are affected by mobility restrictions and are legally resident within the territory of the State concerned. This would apply to cases where the State of origin refuses to issue or renew such documents in order to coerce these individuals into returning to their homeland where they would risk being subjected to further politically motivated persecution;

11.20. enable easier access to courts and introduce effective legal remedies for victims of transnational repression, including those who are denied access to financial or digital services based on an abusive designation as a terrorist or extremist, and proactively monitor the credibility of such foreign designations, and establish mechanisms ensuring guaranteed access to basic banking services for persons denied access to financial services as a result of transnational repression, enabling them to receive income, make payments and meet their daily needs;

11.21. investigate possible transnational-repression angles when processing asylum applications, particularly in cases involving individuals seeking refuge from States known for misusing counter-terrorist tools against political opponents;

11.22. promote and protect access to secure digital communications, including end-to-end encrypted communication services, for individuals and communities exposed to transnational repression, and refrain from measures that would undermine the security, confidentiality or integrity of such communications.

12. The Assembly is deeply concerned that corrective measures applied to the Russian Federation – one of the world's largest perpetrators of transnational repression – have been partially lifted by INTERPOL's Executive Committee. It notes that such a relaxation would significantly weaken the safeguards designed to protect the INTERPOL system from misuse.

13. Referring to the European Parliament Resolution of 13 November 2025 on addressing transnational repression of human rights defenders (2025/2048(INI)), the Assembly calls on the European Union and the European External Action Service to integrate measures aimed at combating all forms of transnational repression in their sanctions regimes, human rights protection clauses (such as in trade agreements or other instruments), external policy and dialogue.

14. The Assembly further calls on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) to treat the misuse of FATF recommendations and anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing methods for the purpose of transnational repression as grounds for finding a State to be non-compliant with these recommendations and subject to grey listing.

15. The Assembly invites the European Court of Human Rights to consider instructing respondent States, when indicating interim measures or adopting judgments in removal cases bearing signs of possible transnational repression, to inform INTERPOL about such decisions and personal details of the applicant, in order to prevent a possible future misuse of its system.

16. The Assembly calls upon INTERPOL to strengthen the filtering, oversight and independent review mechanisms applicable to notices and diffusions submitted by member States, with particular attention to requests emanating from States with a high case count of abusive submissions, and to ensure that its Commission for the Control of INTERPOL's Files operates with full independence, adequate resources and transparent procedures that meet international human rights standards, including effective and timely access to the review process for affected individuals and their legal representatives.

17. The Assembly further calls upon INTERPOL to ensure that any corrective or supervisory measures applied to National Central Bureaus with a documented record of submitting non-compliant, politically motivated or abusive notices and diffusions remain in force in the absence of demonstrated, sustained and independently verified compliance with INTERPOL's rules and international human rights standards, so as to ensure that the diffusion system cannot be instrumentalised as a vector for transnational repression.

18. The Assembly calls on its General Rapporteur on political prisoners in Europe and its General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistle-blowers to pay particular attention to cases of transnational repression when carrying out their respective mandates.