



THE TAHRIR INSTITUTE FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY

2021

TIMEP
ANNUAL REPORT

The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP) centers localized perspectives in the policy discourse to foster transparent, accountable, and just societies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

TIMEP was founded in 2013 and is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a network of expert fellows and partners located on the ground in the Middle East and North Africa and throughout the world. TIMEP is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit in the District of Columbia.

For more information about TIMEP's mission, programming, or upcoming events, please visit timep.org.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2021 was a critical year for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and it was a critical year for the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP). In 2021, the region marked a decade since protesters first took to the streets to demand change in response to decades of status quo in what became popularly known as the "Arab Uprisings." It was, for many in the region, a year of reflection and year of re-articulation. And for TIMEP, an institute born out of this movement and out of this spirit, 2021 provided a similarly unique opportunity to reflect on and refine the new direction articulated in 2020 and to grow the institute's model and its programming region-wide.

In 2021, TIMEP solidified its commitment to serving as a connective tissue between local advocates and decision-makers, creating a space for the voices of experts and advocates from and in the MENA region to be heard, for their work to be strengthened, and for them as individuals, to be protected. In doing so, TIMEP empowered this community to play a direct and impactful role in bringing about policies that deliver on the transparent, accountable, and just societies that protesters first called for when they took to the streets in 2010 and 2011, and that they have continued to call for in protests, online, and in exile since. Across its work and to implement its mission, TIMEP leveraged a diverse toolbox, including analysis, advocacy, events, legal interventions, and coalition-building.

In addition to kicking off and implementing a dynamic project around the 10 year anniversary of the Arab Uprisings, in 2021, TIMEP built on the regional growth instigated in 2020, expanding its programming in Lebanon, while planting the seeds for a new Sudan program. In turn, it paved the way for TIMEP to articulate five priority countries for the forthcoming year (Egypt, Tunisia, Sudan, Syria, and Lebanon), alongside a series of region-wide priority themes.

In 2021, TIMEP graduated its first-ever nonresident fellowship cohort, and successfully

recruited and onboarded a second cohort—investing in a community of early and mid-career advocates who are committed to bringing about transparent, accountable, and just societies in the region. It centered the voices and expertise of changemakers from and in the region, delivering their insights to policymakers by publishing unique, solutions-oriented analysis by first-time and seasoned authors alike; and convening timely events and podcast conversations to provide critical insights. It protected these advocates and experts as they came under attack for their work and focused on protecting the larger environments in which they functioned, building effective coalitions with partners in the region and across the world, and leveraging legal interventions to bring about systemic changes at home and in the international stage.

TIMEP continued to nimbly implement and adapt its programming model as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to restrict the ability of many to travel, host in-person meetings, and return to a physical office. The institute embraced the realities of the moment, investing more in curating virtual conversations that would ensure that the best qualified advocates could speak regardless of their physical locations; bringing to the table local experts to virtual briefings with government stakeholders; putting together innovative program ideas that built communities among like-minded organizations in the virtual space; and educating and training a larger community through an internship program that knew no physical bounds.

Looking ahead to the challenges, opportunities, and realities of 2022, TIMEP identified two thematic priority areas for growth—the digital space and climate change—and began paving the way for new programming in those areas. TIMEP is committed to bringing the same tried and true approach in which local experts are invested to problem-solve and innovate in response to the region's most complex and pressing challenges.



(Photo by Michel Marcipont/ Getty Images)

TEN YEARS ON

December 17, 2020 marked 10 years since Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi stood in the middle of traffic, shouted “How do you expect me to make a living?” and set himself on fire, catalyzing popular protests in Tunisia and across the MENA region. To mark this monumental 10 year anniversary and those of the protest movements that would follow, TIMEP sought to carve out a space that would center the lived experiences of the individuals, organizations, and movements at the heart of mobilizing in the region, not only in 2010 and 2011, but in more recent years and across the entire region.

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TIMEP kicked off “Ten Years On”, a dynamic project leveraging analysis, events, and audiovisual content to platform those who have organized, are organizing, and will organize in the MENA region on the ground, online, and in exile.

Over a four month period and through the end of April 2021, TIMEP :

- Hosted four virtual events on organizing in Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria; cyberspace as a platform for mobilization and contestation; the role of diaspora and exile communities in bringing about change; and the future of organizing in the region, looking to more recent protest movements in Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon, and Iraq. In doing so, TIMEP platformed journalists, lawyers, grassroots activists, political organizers, researchers, tech specialists, and others, largely based in the region.



- Published 14 analysis pieces in English and Arabic, tackling diverse and critical topics to those at the forefront of mobilizations for change, from the *anti-sexual violence movement in Egypt to Tunisia's role as a hub for diaspora and exile organizing*, and the *impact of surveillance and content restrictions on the online space across the MENA region*.
- Designed a series of three fact sheets documenting the ways in which the law has been leveraged to restrict, affect, and expand upon critical rights at the heart of organizing, from protest to information access in *Tunisia, Egypt*, and *Syria*.
- Produced a *powerful video* in which four Egyptians in exile tell their stories, reflecting on the role they see for themselves in Egypt's struggle toward greater respect for equity, accountability, and liberty.

As news headlines from around the world marked a decade since the Arab Uprisings, focusing largely on the severe deteriorations that

“**Ten Years On” gave space to those whose voices have been systematically sidelined or erased.**”

the region has witnessed since and describing the region's movements as a “failure,” TIMEP's Ten Years On gave space to those whose voices have been systematically sidelined or erased. For that, TIMEP convened critical and complex conversations that recognized the immense challenges and obstacles facing the region, celebrated and marked critical successes and opportunities, and focused on the way forward.

As organizing in the MENA region did not begin and will not end with the Arab Uprisings, the project was committed to, and succeeded in, sharing and learning from the experiences of those presenting alternative visions to decades of status quo.



Protesters during an evening demonstration in Idlib City demanding freedom for prisoners imprisoned by the Syrian regime. (Photo by Muhammad Al-Najjar/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images)



(Photo by Chedly Ben Ibrahim/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

FELLOWSHIPS

TIMEP's fellowships are an investment in the future of the MENA region. They provide an opportunity for early and mid-career advocates, scholars, journalists, and lawyers based in the region or with significant ties to it with the space, resources, and tools to develop critical work on key issues, while accessing targeted and tailored skills-building, network-expanding, and spotlighting opportunities.

Nonresident Fellowships

In May of each year, TIMEP welcomes a new cohort of nonresident fellows from countries across the region on timely and essential topics. Each nonresident fellow has a thematic and/or country-focused mandate on which they leverage TIMEP's tools, including analysis, events, podcasts, legal interventions, and advocacy. Opportunities are created to encourage and cultivate collaboration among fellow cohorts and with former fellows, contributing to cross-regional learning and connectivity among a new generation of advocates committed to transparency, accountability, and justice in the MENA region.

Through the nonresident fellowship program, TIMEP empowers a cadre of advocates, scholars, and analysts to shape the global policy discourse in a lasting and impactful way, while leveraging its

network, partnerships, and programming to realize each fellow's personal and professional objectives.

In the first half of 2021, TIMEP continued to invest in and support the work of its **2020-2021 nonresident fellows**. The institute provided space for critical analysis by the cohort on topics like the **Beirut explosion's impact on mental health** and **how online hate speech manifests in real-world violence in Iraq**; worked with three of its fellows to host a timely and **well-attended event, setting a Syria agenda** for the policy community from the vantage point of Syrians; hosted a two-part Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) training workshop to build upon the cohort's research and investigative skills; and facilitated tens of media and advocacy opportunities for fellows, from interviews with Newsweek to meetings with Meta.

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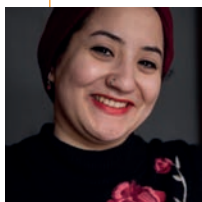
2021-2022 Nonresident Fellowship Cohort

In May 2021, TIMEP welcomed eight fellows to its 2021-2022 nonresident cohort.



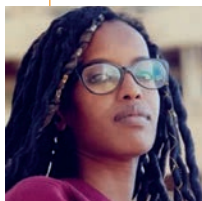
Basma Alloush is a humanitarian advocate and the Senior Policy and Advocacy Adviser at the Norwegian Refugee Council USA.

- **Mandate:** Humanitarian trends and emerging issues (MENA).
- Committed to providing a space for the experiences, challenges, and realities facing locally-led humanitarian organizations on-the-ground in countries from Palestine to Iraq, Alloush has done critical work connecting with local groups and bringing their voices to the global counterterrorism and humanitarian space. She has led and informed the institute's engagement on refugee and IDP-related issues and as Gazans entered their 15th year under blockade, she produced dynamic analysis on their needs.



Habiba Abdelaal is a program associate for the Thomas Jefferson Scholarship Program at IREX. She has volunteered and worked with many NGOs, civic initiatives, and social institutions—including grassroots Egyptian organizations fighting sexual assault such as Imprint and Harassmap.

- **Mandate:** Sexual and gender-based violence (Egypt).
- Following a series of critical developments affecting Egyptian women, from the prosecution of TikTok vloggers to the tightening of penalties for female genital mutilation and sexual harassment, Abdelaal has led the institute's work on sexual and gender-based violence. She has produced timely analysis on topics from marital rape to sexual harassment, led work on Egypt's CEDAW review regarding its women's rights record, and convened critical conversations around the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.



Muzan Alneel is a writer and public speaker with an interdisciplinary professional and academic background in engineering, socioeconomics, and public policy. Alneel is the co-founder of The Innovation, Science and Technology Think-tank for People Centered Development (ISTiNAD) – Sudan.

- **Mandate:** People-centric approach to economy, industry, and environment (Sudan).
- As TIMEP's first-ever fellow on Sudan, Alneel has played an essential role in setting the policy agenda on Sudan at a critical time following the country's military coup and continued protest movement. She has produced timely analysis on the role of resistance committees in mobilizing, engaged extensively with journalists and media outlets from across the world to spotlight the work of Sudanese civil society, and participated in critical conversations to galvanize public support for voices on-the-ground.



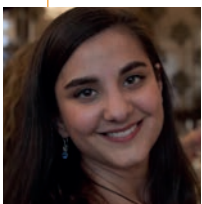
Chaima Bouhlel is an independent consultant based in Tunisia. Over the past few years, her work has focused on the decentralization reforms taking place since the adoption of the Tunisian constitution in 2014, as well as issues of citizen participation, transparency, and good governance.

- **Mandate:** Decentralization (North Africa).
- Amid Tunisia's turbulent transition following President Kais Saied's power grab, threatening the country's democratic trajectory, Bouhlel has provided essential knowledge on Tunisia from the vantage point of local advocates and organizers. She has conducted timely research on local governance and civilian participation, both in the Tunisian and Libyan contexts.



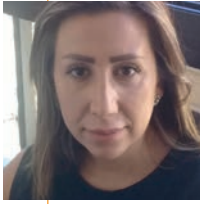
Karim Merhej is a researcher and writer. He has worked at The Public Source, an independent media organization based in Beirut, and was previously the Google Policy Fellow at the Governance and Policy Lab, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) at the American University of Beirut.

- **Mandate:** Corruption, socioeconomic inequality, and governance (Lebanon and Jordan).
- As Lebanon undergoes compounded crises involving economic, security, governance, and accountability-related issues, and its people suffer as a result, Merhej has played a critical role in spotlighting systematic and forward-thinking solutions for the country, from the independence of the judiciary to information access. He has served as a key resource for decision-makers globally, including the U.S Congress.



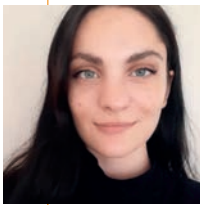
Ghinwa Hayek is an epidemiologist who works mainly in the fields of maternal and newborn health, mental health, and COVID-19 in the academic and humanitarian sector in Lebanon and the Middle East.

- **Mandate:** COVID-19, public health, and access to data and information (MENA).
- As variants of COVID-19 continue to spread across the MENA region and vaccine inequity remains a life-threatening challenge disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups, Hayek has worked to actively bring public health perspectives to the policy space, including by leveraging venues like the annual Bread&Net conference and convening action-oriented conversations on health misinformation and disinformation with tech specialists, fact-finders, and others.



Noura Ghazi is a human rights lawyer and the co-founder and Executive Director of Nophotozone.

- **Mandate:** Enforced disappearances and detention (MENA).
- Bringing her personal and professional experience on detention and disappearance in Syria to the institute, Ghazi came into the fellowship keen on building connective tissue between the organizations and advocates working on enforced disappearance and detention issues across the entire region. She has conducted interviews with survivors and their loved ones and has published essential first-hand accounts including on life after detention and the wives of detained persons.



Veronica Bellintani is a human rights researcher and transitional justice specialist, focusing on the Syrian conflict. She works as the Legal Analyst at the Syrian Legal Development Programme.

- **Mandate:** Victim and survivor-centric justice (Syria).
- In an unwavering commitment to providing support for Syrian victim and survivor-led organizations, Bellintani has dedicated her fellowship to platforming the voices of these advocates in personal Q&A pieces, connecting them to decision-makers and influencers in the policy space, and producing critical analysis on the role they have played and will continue to play in the struggle for transitional justice and accountability.

Bassem Sabry Fellowship

The Bassem Sabry Democracy Fellowship was established in memory of Egyptian political writer and commentator Bassem Sabry, who was widely-recognized and respected for his nuanced and balanced analysis, his ability to bring people from across the political spectrum together, and his love and vision for the MENA region. Every year, TIMEP hosts one to two Bassem Sabry Democracy Fellows at its Washington, D.C. offices for a six-month period, providing young analysts from the region with the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of policymaking, to gain exposure to

the workings of a nonprofit in the U.S. capital, and to produce policy-relevant programming that is informed by their first-hand knowledge. The fellowship welcomes applications from young professionals residing in the region, with plans to return to the region following the fellowship.

Responding to safety and travel restrictions brought about as a result of the pandemic, TIMEP temporarily transitioned its Bassem Sabry Fellowship program into a virtual offering in 2021. The institute then welcomed Mohamed

Mandour, whose mandate has focused on how Egyptians have organized politically in exile since 2013. As an Egyptian in-exile himself, he has leveraged the fellowship to conduct over 15 interviews with advocates in countries from the United States to Brussels; to produce critical research and analysis on the forms of organizing that have taken place, the response of the state, and the way forward; and to convene dynamic conversations among Egyptians to facilitate the sharing of experiences and learning from non-Egyptian diaspora communities.

Prior to the fellowship, Mandour was the Atlas Corps Research Fellow at the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED); and previously worked as a researcher at the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), the Law and Society Research Unit at the American University in Cairo (AUC), and the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR).



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(Photo by KHALED DESOUKI/AFP via Getty Images)

ANALYSIS

TIMEP's editorial programming works to carve out a space for experts and advocates whose voices are systematically marginalized from the policy conversation, including first-time authors and contributors.

Throughout 2021, TIMEP continued spotlighting the expertise of its expansive network of external contributors, fellows, and staff members on a range of issues, producing a total of over 95 analysis pieces in English and Arabic.

During the year, TIMEP's Editorial Department produced solutions-oriented analysis on pivotal themes of long-standing importance, while expanding to unpack new issues and country contexts:

- TIMEP's analysis pieces examined aspects of mobilization and dissent on the ground as protest movements progressed across various countries. With protests continuing regionally, TIMEP published analysis on the role of resistance committees in organizing in Sudan and the street's role in the political process; free speech in Iraq; and the Hirak in Algeria. Other articles looked at how different segments of society have managed to organize among themselves—from Egyptian lawyers and anti-sexual harassment activists

to Copts in the diaspora, women in Libya, and LGBTQI+ advocates in Egypt and Sudan.

- Amid continuing crises in Lebanon, TIMEP's fellows and contributors sought to analyze root causes for grave issues related to transparency and financial mismanagement. As the Lebanese people continued to grapple with the effects of the August 2020 port blast, articles took closer looks at the toll on residents' mental health and sought to explain the lack of accountability and overall environment of impunity in which the country's authorities operate.

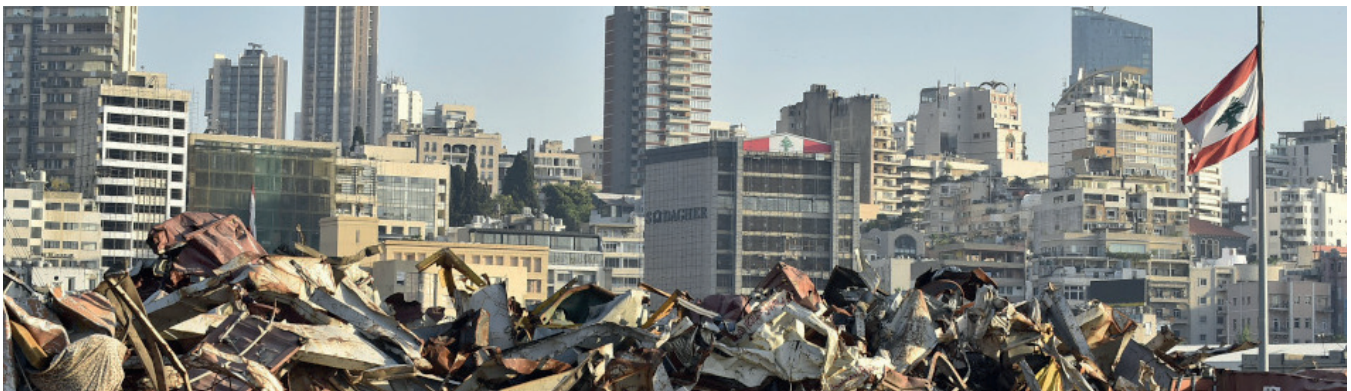


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Sudanese protesters lift national flags as they rally on 60th Street in the capital Khartoum, to denounce overnight detentions by the army of government members, on October 25, 2021. (Photo by AFP via Getty Images)

- TIMEP continued dedicating editorial attention to marginalized communities and minorities across the region. In Egypt, TIMEP looked at challenges facing the Baha'i and Coptic communities, while also considering the rights of atheists and members of other "unrecognized minority" groups. An additional article took a comparative regional look at the repression of minorities and religious interpretation across North Africa. In Tunisia, the ongoing crackdown against the LGBTQI+ community was examined. Unpacking the vulnerability of groups across the region on issues related to the pandemic, pieces tackled the impact of COVID-19 in prisons and the access of marginalized groups to vaccines.
- Setting the agenda on new issues of importance, TIMEP's editorial programming published on topics like corporate accountability in MENA and climate change, including pieces on water scarcity in Egypt and wildfires in Algeria.
- In an effort to make its content accessible to a wider audience, to provide Arabic writers with a platform, and to ensure that language barriers do not limit the reach of Arabic-speakers in the policy community, TIMEP continued curating unique and valuable policy insight in Arabic, as well as translating content across both languages. These pieces included personal retrospectives on the Syrian revolution, articles that explored the firsthand experiences of spouses of detainees in Syria and the lives of those who were released; and first hand accounts of the obstacles faced by LGBTQI+ individuals in Egypt.



A view of devastated Beirut port, almost one year after the August 2020 massive explosion, in Beirut, Lebanon on August 3, 2021. (Photo by Hussam Shbaro/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images)



(Patrick Baz/AFP via Getty Images)

LEGAL UNIT

TIMEP's Legal Unit is dedicated to turning the law into a powerful tool for change in the MENA region. It does so by serving as a resource on legal, judicial, and accountability issues in the MENA region and by investing in the community already working with the law day-and-night and supporting, amplifying, and complementing their work. The Legal Unit works to realize its vision and mandate by implementing legal research and documentation; legal intervention; and legal education projects.

Legal Research and Documentation

In 2021, the Legal Unit served as a resource on critical legal, judicial, and rule of law issues in particular countries of focus and across the region as a whole. This included documentation and research projects which yielded outputs on:

- Issues arising from the pandemic, including the **rise of virtual trials**; the spread of **COVID-19 in prisons**; and **vaccine distribution and inequality** across the MENA region;
- **Access to information** in Lebanon, Tunisia, and Jordan; and

- Critical country-specific priorities, like **indefinite pretrial detention in Egypt**, **accountability for the Beirut Port Explosion**; and **the legislative system in Sudan** amid transition.



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As part of its Lawyers-at-Risk program, TIMEP continued to document violations against the MENA region's lawyers for their legal defense work and exercise of fundamental freedoms. It began the groundwork for a critical new project involving prosecutions for social media posts and the criminalization of the digital space.



A prison guard stands in front of a gate during a vaccination campaign against the coronavirus, at the El-Arjate prison near the capital Rabat, on May 26, 2021. (Photo by FADEL SENNA/AFP via Getty Images)

Legal Interventions

Collaborating with lawyers and organizations conducting legal work in the MENA region by bringing international and foreign legal tools to complement domestic priorities, the Legal Unit supported and/or directly participated in a series of legal interventions. This included:

- Underscoring the importance of respect for press freedom in Lebanon through a **successful advocacy campaign** with the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) around Lebanon's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in which at least 20 recommendations were made by states to Lebanon on freedom of expression issues.
- Highlighting issues of arbitrary detention, rotation, press freedom, digital rights, and reprisal through submission of a series of paradigmatic case submissions to the UN special procedures.
- Supporting individual lawyers at-risk to bring about global action on their behalf, document and report on the challenges and opportunities they face, and nominate them for high-profile human rights awards in order to lend protection to them.
- Centering **key issues affecting women** ahead of and around Egypt's review before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women through a joint-submission with the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR).
- Ending impunity for human rights abusers and corrupt actors from across the MENA region by compiling case recommendations for targeted human rights sanction submissions, including the U.S. Global Magnitsky program.

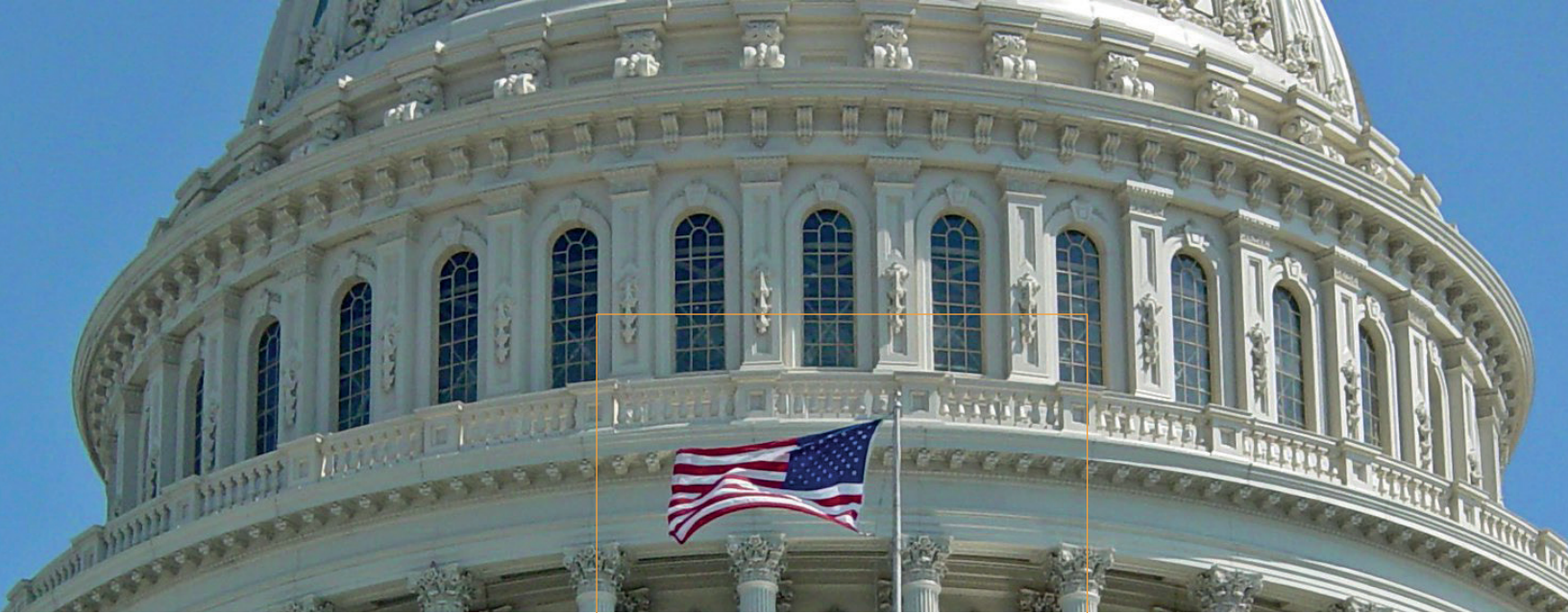


Legal Education

With an eye toward investing in the future of the legal community and providing them with the tools and resources to better apply and leverage international and regional law human rights law and mechanisms toward positive change at home, TIMEP's legal education efforts included:

- Drafting, in collaboration with former nonresident fellow Noor Hamadeh, a practical legal guide on corporate accountability for MENA lawyers and the organizations supporting them (publication, dissemination, and follow-up training is forthcoming in 2022); and
- Providing expert review on a partner-drafted guide for Syrian civil society organizations on the submission of effective and actionable cases to the UN special procedures, made available in both **English** and **Arabic**.





(Photo by Ben Schumin/Flickr)

ADVOCACY AND POLICY ENGAGEMENT

TIMEP's advocacy efforts are the practical manifestation of the institute's mission to center diverse, informative, and localized perspectives in the policy discourse.

TIMEP's advocacy works to inform the policy making community and stakeholders, particularly across the Global North, in two functional ways: by responding to developments in the region with incisive analysis and by proactively engaging relevant stakeholders to address gaps in knowledge and set the agenda.



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Our sustained reputation as a wealth of knowledge, driven by a network of experts with years of intimate experience, makes TIMEP a natural resource for Congress, the State Department, the European Union, foreign governments like Canada, and international institutions to draw on.

In 2021, TIMEP prioritized the growth of its advocacy engagement across the institute's priority countries, beyond its traditional strong suit on Egypt. Throughout the year, TIMEP's advocacy team held more than 75 briefings with government and multilateral stakeholders covering a range of thematic issues, from the return of Syrian refugees, to digital transnational authoritarianism and repression, and tackling corruption in Lebanon. TIMEP facilitated closed door roundtables, led private and public joint letters, consulted senior policymakers, engaged in multilateral fora, and ultimately played a role in shaping policy discourse in Washington, D.C. and beyond. Because of the institute's unique network, TIMEP is a trusted partner of several aligned think-tanks in the Washington, D.C. area and throughout the Middle East. TIMEP's collaboration with like-minded peers allowed it to greatly expand its audience and coordinate efforts.

- **Crisis on the Nile:** In partnership with Tree Media's Need 2 Know (N2K) project, TIMEP released a seven-part video series titled *Crisis On The Nile*, delving into the diplomatic struggle between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia over the ongoing construction and filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). Each video segment presented a different perspective in an effort to move beyond government rhetoric and underscore the importance for a peaceful resolution to tensions. The release of the project and subsequent conversations with stakeholders were timely contributions alongside a related UN Security Council meeting and trilateral negotiations hosted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the same time.



- **Refugees in Lebanon:** TIMEP joined 10 other policy and advocacy organizations to participate in the Refugees in Lebanon: An Unknown Path campaign to bring attention to the ongoing struggle of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, particularly their compounded suffering throughout Lebanon's historic collapse. TIMEP took an active role in the coalition, helping draft a comprehensive action paper, conduct meetings with pertinent embassies and humanitarian organizations, and participate in convenings. This work also complements efforts by TIMEP to inform policymakers about looming normalization with the Assad regime in Syria, and efforts by certain countries to deport Syrian nationals despite demonstrably unsafe conditions throughout Syria.
- **Religious Minorities in Egypt:** Advocating for underrepresented religious communities across the region has been an important priority of TIMEP's for several years. In October, TIMEP was one of the only D.C.-based

policy institutes to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the Maspero Massacre, calling attention to the lack of accountability and continued impunity at all levels of the Egyptian government. TIMEP closed 2021 with a concerted effort to center the voices and perspectives of religious minorities in Egypt for a U.S. government audience, meeting with congressional stakeholders and drumming up support for critical initiatives.

- **Political Prisoners in Egypt:** TIMEP has been a steadfast advocate for individuals wrongfully detained across the region; Egypt is no exception. Throughout 2021, TIMEP joined as signatory in numerous joint letters calling for the release of political prisoners in Egypt. During frequent meetings with government leaders, our advocacy team also pressed stakeholders to advocate for the release of these individuals and to push for systematic change in this portfolio.

- **Policy Fellowship:** As TIMEP grows its policy and advocacy engagement to address and inform new actors and stakeholders, TIMEP welcomed Timothy Kaldas as the institute's first-ever policy fellow; Kaldas is a PhD candidate at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. As a policy fellow, Kaldas is doing critical work on the EU policy toward Egypt, as well as the individual foreign policies of EU member states.



— Timothy Kaldas

He is additionally spearheading the institute's work on the role of international financial institutions (IFIs) in the region and the critical role they can play in bringing about positive governance and anti-corruption reforms on-the-ground. Kaldas has played a pivotal role in efforts to inform stakeholders about the state of Egypt's economy, such as crafting TIMEP's submission to the U.S. International Trade Corporation about the impact of government censorship on international investment in Egypt.



(Photo by Chedly Ben Ibrahim/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

EVENTS AND CONVERSATIONS

In keeping with its commitment to amplify localized perspectives, TIMEP convened advocates and analysts with diverse areas of expertise for productive, policy-oriented discussions and workshops, both private and public. By hosting and participating in conferences, panels, and roundtable discussions, TIMEP sets the agenda, forges lasting partnerships, and deepens its network across the region and beyond.

Digital Rights and Cyberspace

TIMEP joined Bread&Net, the Arabic-speaking region's largest digital rights conference, as a community partner for the second year in a row to help shape regional discourse on digital rights and some of the most critical challenges affecting the region. In addition to this institutional collaboration, several members of the TIMEP team organized and participated in sessions during Bread&Net.

Nonresident Fellow Ghinwa Hayek hosted two sessions—“Misinformation during health crises among vulnerable populations” and “Detection of health threats through health surveillance systems and social media”—and additionally

collaborated with colleagues at Access Now to co-host a third session entitled “COVID-19 vaccine “passports”: a new frontier threatening human rights.” Executive Director Ramy Yaacoub hosted “Organizing in Exile,” in which panelists explored how diaspora communities can augment the efforts of in-country activists on the ground. Managing Director Mai El-Sadany moderated a session organized by the Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE) on censorship laws and



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surveillance in Egypt and was a participant in a session on content moderation.

TIMEP joined ***RightsCon***, the world's leading summit on human rights in the digital age hosted by ***Access Now***, for the fourth consecutive year. TIMEP facilitated two sessions: Managing Director Mai El-Sadany moderated "Misinformation, Disinformation, and the Pandemic in MENA" and in which Nonresident Fellow Diana Rayes was a participant, and Executive Director Ramy Yaacoub led a community lab on "Organizing in Exile: MENA and Beyond."

The Pandemic and Beyond: Humanitarian Trends and Vulnerable Communities

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued to spread rapidly throughout the region, it fueled existing inequalities and vulnerabilities among marginalized communities, but also exacerbated humanitarian needs. TIMEP convened and participated in several conversations unpacking a sustainable approach to humanitarian crises, both in the short and long-term.

- Nonresident Fellow Ghinwa Hayek moderated "***COVID-19 Vaccine Access in the MENA Region***," a virtual panel on vaccine equity, particularly for marginalized communities and those in conflict zones across the MENA region, as well as policy responses to the pandemic as new technologies and strategies began to emerge.
- On World Health Day, Nonresident Fellow Diana Rayes ***discussed*** systemic inequities in healthcare and vaccine access in the MENA region in a Conversation Six episode.
- Policy Fellow Timothy Kaldas participated in a Carnegie Middle East Program panel, "***North Africa Faces the Pandemic***," marking the release of its mini-documentary series on the pandemic's effects on vulnerable populations across North Africa.
- Multiple overlapping crises, including a mismanaged pandemic response and the



Vials of the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine in Gaza City on March 25, 2021 (Photo by MOHAMMED ABED/AFP via Getty Images)

2020 Beirut Port explosion, coupled with the long-term systemic corruption which led to a financial crisis, have left the Lebanese people in increasingly dire circumstances. As socioeconomic inequality continued to worsen, TIMEP convened "***Social Protections for All in Lebanon: Not if, But When***," a virtual panel moderated by Nonresident Fellow Karim Merhej on alternatives to Lebanon's current social protections system.

- As Gaza entered its 15th year under blockade, Nonresident Fellow Basma Alloush ***raised*** the alarming conditions many Gazans live in under blockade, how dependence on humanitarian aid has drastically increased in recent years, and what a long-term, sustainable policy response could look like.

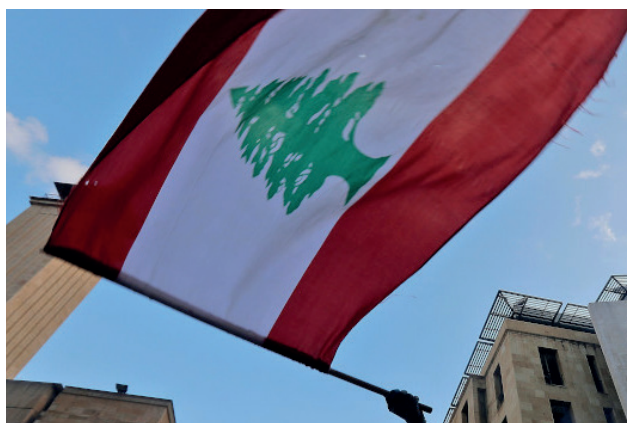
Transparency, Accountability, and Justice

Reflecting on citizen demands across the region for governments, TIMEP hosted numerous timely conversations on popular movements as well as political and legal mechanisms to counter corruption, foster transparency, and deliver on justice and accountability.

- In partnership with the World Movement for Democracy, TIMEP hosted a regional discussion entitled ***Mobilizing Toward Accountability in MENA: Strategizing For a Just Future*** which reflected on prospects for accountability for abuses committed by governments, business, and individuals, and

on challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for securing a future defined by justice.

- On the International Day for Universal **Access to Information**, TIMEP hosted a virtual conversation “Access to Information: Holding Officials to Account,” moderated by former Nonresident Fellow Kareem Chehayeb, in which panelists reflected on mechanisms governing freedom of information in Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon.
- Managing Director and Legal and Judicial Director Mai El-Sadany spoke at the **Halifax Security Forum** on the legacy of the Arab Uprisings across the MENA region and at a panel discussion entitled “**Implementing Magnitsky-Style Sanctions Multilaterally – Civil Society Perspectives**” hosted by Human Rights First.



A Lebanese protester waves a national flag amid clashes with security forces in central Beirut on August 10, 2020. (Photo by JOSEPH EID/AFP via Getty Images)

- Nonresident Fellow Karim Merhej participated in a Chatham House virtual panel discussion for the launch of his research paper “**Breaking the Curse of Corruption in Lebanon**” on anti-corruption laws in theory and in practice in Lebanon, as well as a conversation on prospects for **accountability for the Beirut Port Explosion** one year after the catastrophe and an update as traditional sectarian parties moved to **obstruct the investigation** into the blast.
- As attention toward Syria waned in the policy community, TIMEP brought the perspectives of Syrian experts and advocates in

“**Syria: Setting the Agenda**.” Nonresident Fellows Diana Rayes, Noor Hamadeh, and Suhail Al-Ghazi all participated in a solutions-oriented discussion in which participants highlighted diverse analyses of the economic, humanitarian, and human rights conditions inside Syria, as well as the situation of refugees and activists in exile, and pathways to accountability for the regime.

- TIMEP staff and fellows spoke at Syria events hosted by Columbia Law’s Human Rights Institute and 7th Joint Human Rights Conference on Human Rights and Foreign Policy. TIMEP hosted Conversation Six episodes with **Alysia Grapek** on the precarious situation of Syrian refugees in Denmark and with **Ahmed Helmi** on current efforts by survivor and victim-led associations for justice and accountability in Syria.

Tunisia's Fragile Democracy

When Tunisian President Kais Saied shocked the world with his power grab on July 25, 2021, the country’s democratic trajectory was irreversibly altered. In response to these alarming developments that lay the groundwork for a consolidation of power in one man, TIMEP hosted convenings and timely conversations to keep a close eye on the country’s path.

TIMEP convened a discussion entitled “**Tunisia at a Crossroads**” to examine events since July 25, and the key challenges facing the country from a security, economic, and political perspective. The panel featured Nonresident Fellow Chaima Bouhlel. In Conversation Six podcast episodes, Nonresident Fellow Chaima Bouhlel also **spoke** about the power grab and **unpacked** the national dialogue.

Sudan's Coup

In October 2021, the Sudanese military staged a coup to bring an end to the country’s power-sharing agreement that had been in place since the fall of dictator Omar Al-Bashir. Since then, the Sudanese people have organized, rejected military rule, and called for a return of power to

civilian leadership. TIMEP Nonresident Fellow Muzan Alneel **emerged** as a clear, indispensable voice amid Sudan's new realities. Additionally, Alneel participated in a virtual panel organized by the LSE Middle East Centre and the Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa at the LSE entitled "**Sudan Coup: Analysis from the Ground**," spoke on **youth mobilization and activism during Sudan's transition** in a discussion hosted by Bergen University, and discussed resistance efforts against the coup in "**Sudan: Revolution & Counter-Revolution**."

Women and Marginalized Communities' Safety and Empowerment

The rights and freedoms of marginalized and disadvantaged communities, including women and the LGBTQI+ community, remain under threat in a variety of contexts in the MENA region, particularly as women were subjected to drastic increases in domestic violence during lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. TIMEP hosted a virtual event entitled "**Violence Against Women in Egypt: Between Policy and Practice**," featuring Nonresident Fellow Habiba Abdelaal. Panelists discussed wins and losses for women's rights and safety, and how advocates for gender

equality can build on previous successes to close the gap between laws and how policies work in practice in order to better protect women from violence.

Conversation Six episodes with **Assala Mdawkhy** on anti-LGBTQI+ violence and police brutality in Tunisia and with **Nouran Ragrag** on women's political participation in Libya were recorded.

MENA Representation in Western Storytelling

TIMEP kicked off a virtual event series entitled "**MENA Representation in Western Storytelling**" on representation of voices from the MENA region in various forms of media in the Western world. In **part I**, panelists discussed the prevalence and harm of underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Arab stories in film, theater, and television. In **part II**, panelists explored opportunities and challenges for such communities to make progress in creative spaces.



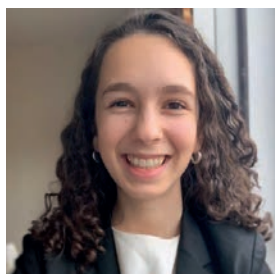
On the 15th day of the UN's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, TIMEP hosted a virtual event entitled "Violence Against Women in Egypt: Between Policy and Practice" with Habiba Abdelaal (TIMEP), Amel Fahmy (Tadwein), Nada Nashat (CEWLA), and Lobna Darwish (EIPR), moderated by journalist Suzanne Gaber

SPOTLIGHT: INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Over the course of 2021, TIMEP was pleased to welcome seven interns. Along the way, TIMEP celebrated an exciting milestone in its internship program: hosting the institute's 100th intern! In addition to continuing the Legal and Policy Internship program in 2021, TIMEP

had the opportunity to expand its internship program and recruit for two new internship positions: a Digital Engagement Internship and an Advocacy Internship.

Here's what two of TIMEP's 2021 interns had to say about their internship experience:



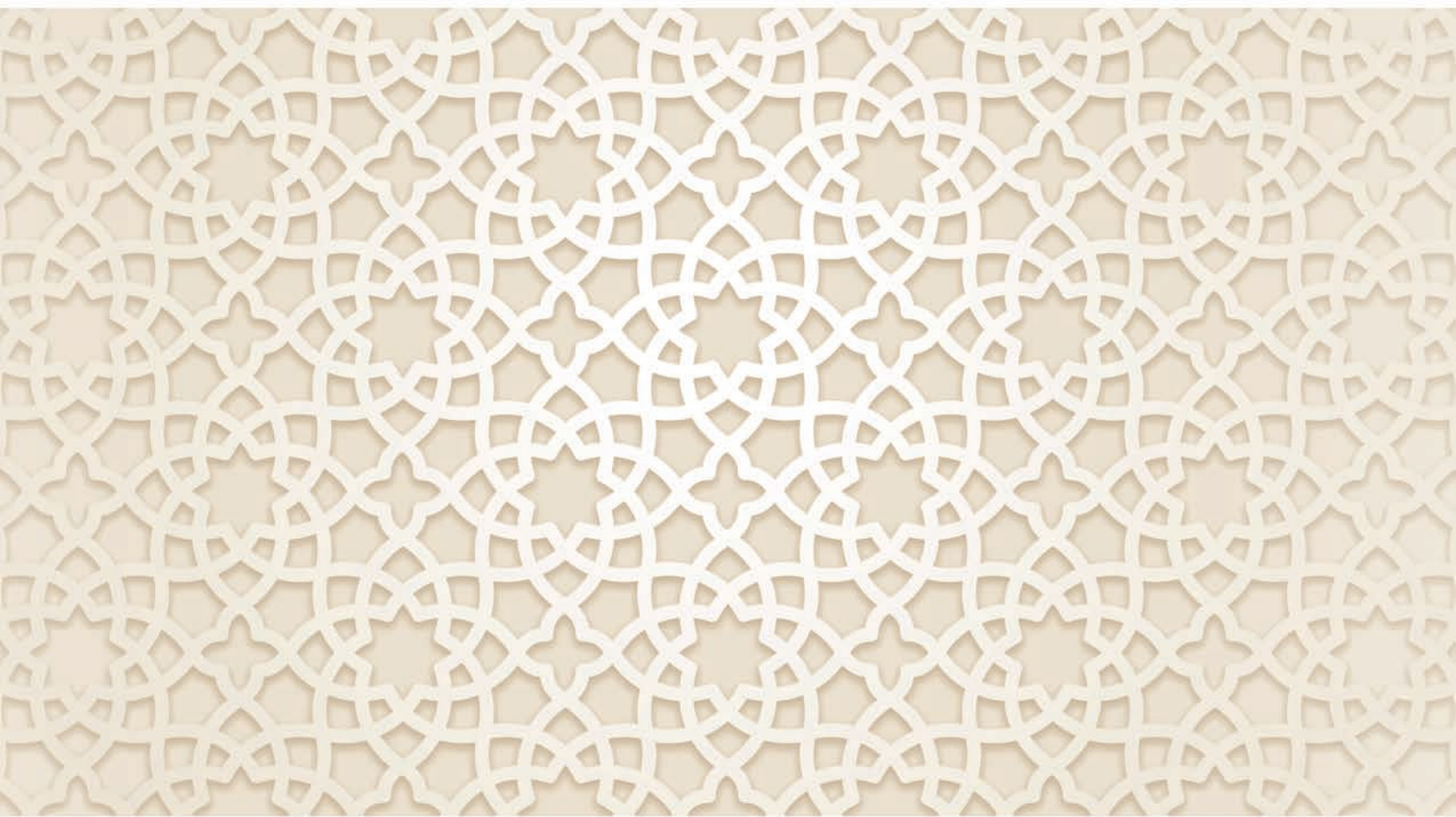
Eliora Goodman
Former TIMEP Digital
Engagement Intern

TIMEP is expanding in so many new and exciting directions, and as Digital Engagement Intern I loved being able to help support that growth over the past year. The internship gave me a direct role in developing new engagement strategies to strengthen TIMEP's online presence. From the "Conversation Six" podcasts to our new graphics style, I loved supporting the launch of new projects and it was an honor to work with such a committed and enthusiastic team. The team also encouraged me to pursue my own interests and professional development which was such a valuable opportunity as someone with a deep interest in social and political issues across the MENA region. During the internship, I researched and published an article on the impacts of climate change in Egypt (which became TIMEP's most-read article of 2021!). I know that I will carry the knowledge and experience I gained at TIMEP with me as I complete undergrad and continue on in the professional world."



Sarah Ludwick
Former TIMEP Legal
and Policy Intern

My time at TIMEP was one of the most formative experiences I've had while in law school. As part of the Legal Unit, I had opportunities to learn from extremely talented and dedicated lawyers, substantively contribute to a broad range of projects, collaborate with the organization's amazing NonResident Fellows, staff, and partners on the ground, and even conduct and publish my own research. The skills, knowledge, and most importantly relationships that I developed while at TIMEP helped me to reimagine the kinds of things I can do with a law degree and greatly expanded my understanding of the wide set of tools that lawyers, policy influencers, and other advocates in the international human rights space have at their disposal in the pursuit of accountability."



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