



**RISING
REPRESSION
MEETS
GLOBAL
RESISTANCE**

Internet
shutdowns
in 2025

#KeepItOn

04/09/2025 Nepal

26/06/2025 Togo

05/05/2025 Libya

Belarus

01/03/2025

18/02/2025

01/01/2025

2025

#KeepItOn

The #KeepItOn campaign unites and organizes global organizations and efforts to end internet shutdowns. The campaign was launched by a coalition of about 70 organizations in 2016 at RightsCon Silicon Valley in San Francisco. Membership of the coalition has since increased rapidly to more than 366 members from 106 countries around the world ranging from civil society and human rights advocacy groups, to research centers, detection networks, foundations, and media organizations.

This report is a publication of Access Now for the #KeepItOn coalition and was written by Zach Rosson and Felicia Anthonio, in collaboration with the Access Now team.

The authors would like to especially thank Bridget Andere, Darika Bamrungchok, Giulio Coppi, Michael De Dora, Marwa Fatafta, Amina Khan, Marcel Kolaja, Natalia Krapiva, Méabh Maguire, Peter Micek, Kassem Mnejja, Wai Phyo Myint, Faiz Naeem, Laura O'Brien, Naro Omo-Osagie, Milica Pandžić, Gaspar Pisanu, Alexia Skok, and Anastasiya Zhyrmon for their contributions. We would also like to thank 7amleh, Afghanistan Democracy and Development Organization, Afia-Amani Grands-Lacs, Athan, Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), Bytes for All, Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), Cloudflare, Conexion Segura y Libre, Digital Rights Foundation, Digital Rights Kashmir, Digital Rights Nepal, Digitally Right, EG Justice, Gisa Group, Initiative for Embracing Humanity in Africa (IEHA), Internet Outage Detection and Analysis (IODA), IPANDETEC, Internet Protection Society, Internet Society (ISOC), ISOC Togo, Kentik, Libyan Crimes Watch, Miaan Group, Myanmar Internet Project, Na Svyazi, Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI), Paradigm Initiative, SMEX, Software Freedom Law Centre India (SFLC.in), Tech Media Convergency, Yodet, Zaina Foundation, and other members of the #KeepItOn coalition for providing valuable information and insights, reviewing data and sources, and contributing to the report. Any errors, misrepresentations, or inaccuracies are ours alone, and we welcome your feedback.

Edited by Donna Wentworth

Design and data visualization by Loren Giordano

A note on our data

This #KeepItOn report looks at incidents of internet shutdowns documented by Access Now and the #KeepItOn coalition in 2025. While we try to build a comprehensive dataset, our data relies on technical measurement as well as contextual information, such as news reports or personal accounts. The constraints of our methodology mean that there may be cases of internet shutdowns that have gone unreported, and numbers are likely to change if and when new information becomes available after publication. In 2025, we gained insight into shutdowns from previous years and we added these to the dataset retroactively; documentation of these changes can be found at <https://accessnow.org/keepiton-data-spreadsheet>. Our dataset and dashboard can be accessed at <https://accessnow.org/keepiton-data>. All data below reflects the most up-to-date information as of publication. Visit <https://accessnow.org/keepiton-data-methodology> for the latest information on our methodology and commonly asked questions.

March 2026



Table of contents

I.	Internet shutdowns in 2025: A global overview	4	
II.	Triggers for internet shutdowns in 2025	7	Shutdowns during conflict 7 Shutdowns during protests and political instability 9 Shutdowns during elections 11 Shutdowns during exams 12
III.	Stories of everyday resilience	13	
IV.	New and continuing trends in 2025	14	Shutdowns shrouding grave human rights abuses and violence 14 Cross-border shutdowns 16 Alternative connectivity shutdowns 19 Platform blocks 21
V.	Shutdown impact stories from 2025	22	
VI.	New and entrenched offenders in 2025	23	
VII.	Fighting back in 2025: resistance, solidarity and impact	32	
VIII.	Recommendations for stakeholders	34	
IX.	Join us	37	

I. Internet shutdowns in 2025: a global overview

As 2026 began, authorities in Iran responded to mass protests by imposing one of the country's most comprehensive and prolonged national blackouts,¹ in a clear effort to hide grave human rights abuses.² As of February 12, 2026, under the cover of the shutdown, there were 7,002 confirmed killings with more than 11,730 cases still under investigation.³ At the same time, the Ugandan government tried to silence dissent during critical elections by cutting internet access and blocking social media platforms,⁴ demonstrating blatant disregard for human rights and election integrity. Today, in Iran, millions have been cut from the world even as the U.S. and Israel execute a military campaign in likely violation of the UN charter.⁵ Meanwhile, Uganda's president is enjoying a seventh term in office despite reports of election fraud.⁶

As horrifying as these shutdowns are, they are not unusual. **Not a single day of 2025 passed without at least one internet shutdown**, disrupting lives and livelihoods, inflicting collective punishment, and deepening human suffering. In 2025, millions of people came to expect isolation, suppression, and disconnection from the outside world.

Where people experienced shutdowns in 2025 ▼



*The seven countries and colonized or occupied territories above with a single * after the number are all those impacted by cross-border shutdowns.

1 IODA (2026). *A Comparative Look at Internet Shutdowns in Iran: 2019, 2022, 2025, and 2026*. <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/reports/a-comparative-look-at-internet-shutdowns-in-iran-2019-2022-2026-and-2026/>

2 RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty (2026). *Iran Publishes Protest Death List, But Rights Groups Say Toll Is Far Higher*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-protest-death-toll-ofogh-tv/33666963.html/>

3 Anadolu Ajansi (2026). *Death toll in Iran's recent unrest surpasses 7,000, says US-based rights group*. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/death-toll-in-irans-recent-unrest-surpasses-7-000-says-us-based-rights-group/3827875>. See also HRANA (2026). *Day Thirty-six of the Protests; Government Releases List of Names and State TV Insults Those Killed*. <https://www.en-hrana.org/day-thirty-six-of-the-protests-government-releases-list-of-names-and-state-tv-insults-those-killed/>

4 Access Now (2026). *#KeptItOn coalition raise the alarm on potential shutdown during upcoming elections in Uganda*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-coalition-raise-the-alarm-on-potential-shutdown-during-upcoming-elections-in-uganda/>

5 Al Jazeera. *Are US-Israeli attacks against Iran legal under international law?* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/3/3/are-us-israeli-attacks-against-iran-legal-under-international-law>

6 UN OHCHR (2026). *Uganda: Repression and impunity impacting right to participation in leadup to elections*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/01/uganda-repression-and-impunity-impacting-right-participation-leadup>

Access Now and the #KeepItOn coalition documented at least **313** shutdowns in **52** countries, topping the dismal 2024 (**304**)⁷ and 2023 (**289**)⁸ records. **Seven** new countries joined the offender list, meaning that people in **100** countries have now experienced a shutdown since we started tracking in 2016.⁹ What's more, there are **75** shutdowns in **33** countries that persisted from 2025 into 2026, a sign that we'll continue to see perpetrators attempt to permanently block platforms or keep entire populations effectively cut off indefinitely.

The contexts for these shutdowns only underscore how devastating they were. **For the third year in a row, conflict was the leading trigger:** there were **125** conflict-related shutdowns across **14** countries — **40%** of the global total in 2025. This alarming multi-year trend highlights a landscape of conflict where perpetrators are acting with impunity while regularly cutting off internet access to conceal war crimes and atrocities and terrorize populations. There were **70 shutdowns linked to grave human rights abuses**¹⁰ in 2025. People were cut off during the world's worst active humanitarian crisis in Sudan,¹¹ during Israel's unfolding genocide in Gaza,¹² and during protests amid violent police crackdowns in countries like Kenya, Libya, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Tanzania. Shutdowns during conflict and other crises resulted in a wide spectrum of human harms,¹³ spanning from physical and psychological to social and economic to civil and political.

Some of the most devastating shutdowns were **imposed from outside of the targeted countries.** People in **seven** countries and colonized or occupied territories (Cambodia, Central African Republic, Myanmar, Palestine, Russia, Ukraine, and Yemen) were struck by **18** shutdowns implemented by **seven** perpetrators outside of their borders, compounding

the harm for populations already suffering protracted conflict or occupation. When people tried to stay connected despite persistent shutdowns and damaged infrastructure, perpetrators evolved their tactics to cut them off. In 2025, they **increasingly targeted Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite internet systems** for shutdowns, cutting access **14** times across **seven** countries (Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Iran, Myanmar, Syria, Tanzania, and Yemen), a sharp increase from **four** such shutdowns in 2024.

But that's not the end of the story. **The fight to #KeepItOn is more important than ever,** and in 2025, **civil society stood together to make tangible progress.** As we mark the 10th anniversary of the **#KeepItOn coalition**¹⁴ in 2026, we are seeing the fruits of **sustained civil society advocacy, documentation, and demands for accountability.** Despite catastrophic funding cuts,¹⁵ civil society has decisively pushed back, leading to significant milestones over the past year, from key court victories against internet shutdowns in Africa,¹⁶ to lawmakers proposing a ban on internet shutdowns in Bangladesh,¹⁷ to the International Criminal Court (ICC) formally recognizing the link between internet shutdowns and crimes against humanity.¹⁸

As we reflect on the past decade, we want to honor those working tirelessly to protect their communities. In addition to our documentation of the significant global trends and recommendations for stakeholders, in this report we **highlight some of the "hidden" internet shutdowns that didn't get significant media attention in 2025,** describing how they impacted the affected communities, and how everyday people **demonstrated their resilience in resisting them.** We also **share the voices and stories of people directly impacted** by these and other shutdowns. Our message, as we look ahead: not a single shutdown is acceptable, and we won't stop fighting alongside you.

⁷ Access Now (2025). *Emboldened offenders, endangered communities: Internet shutdowns in 2024.* <https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton-2024-report/>

⁸ Access Now (2024). *Shrinking democracy, growing violence: Internet shutdowns in 2023.* <https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton-2023-report/>

⁹ Access Now (2026). *Shutdown Tracker Optimization Project (STOP).* <https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton-data/>

¹⁰ Grave human rights abuses include cases where there is evidence of violence, including murder, torture, rape, or apparent war crimes by governments, militaries, and police or security forces. These abuses must occur within the geographic area and time period of a verified shutdown to be counted as coinciding with a shutdown.

¹¹ Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: Time to end Sudan's isolation; lift the WhatsApp block now.* <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-time-to-end-sudans-isolation-lift-whatsapp-block-now/>

¹² United Nations (2025). *Gaza: Top independent rights probe alleges Israel committed genocide.* <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/09/1165856>. See also: Amnesty International (2024). *Amnesty International investigation concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza>

¹³ Access Now (2025). *Internet shutdowns in armed conflict: a typology of harms.* <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/internet-shutdowns-typology-of-harms/>

¹⁴ Access Now (n.d.). *#KeepItOn: fighting internet shutdowns around the world.* <https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton>

¹⁵ Tech Global Institute (2025). *The impact of funding cuts on internet freedom in the global majority.* <https://techglobalinstitute.com/announcements/blog/the-impact-of-funding-freezes-on-internet-freedom-in-the-global-majority/>
Access Now (2025) *How U.S. funding cuts expose civil society to digital attacks.* <https://www.accessnow.org/u-s-funding-cuts/>

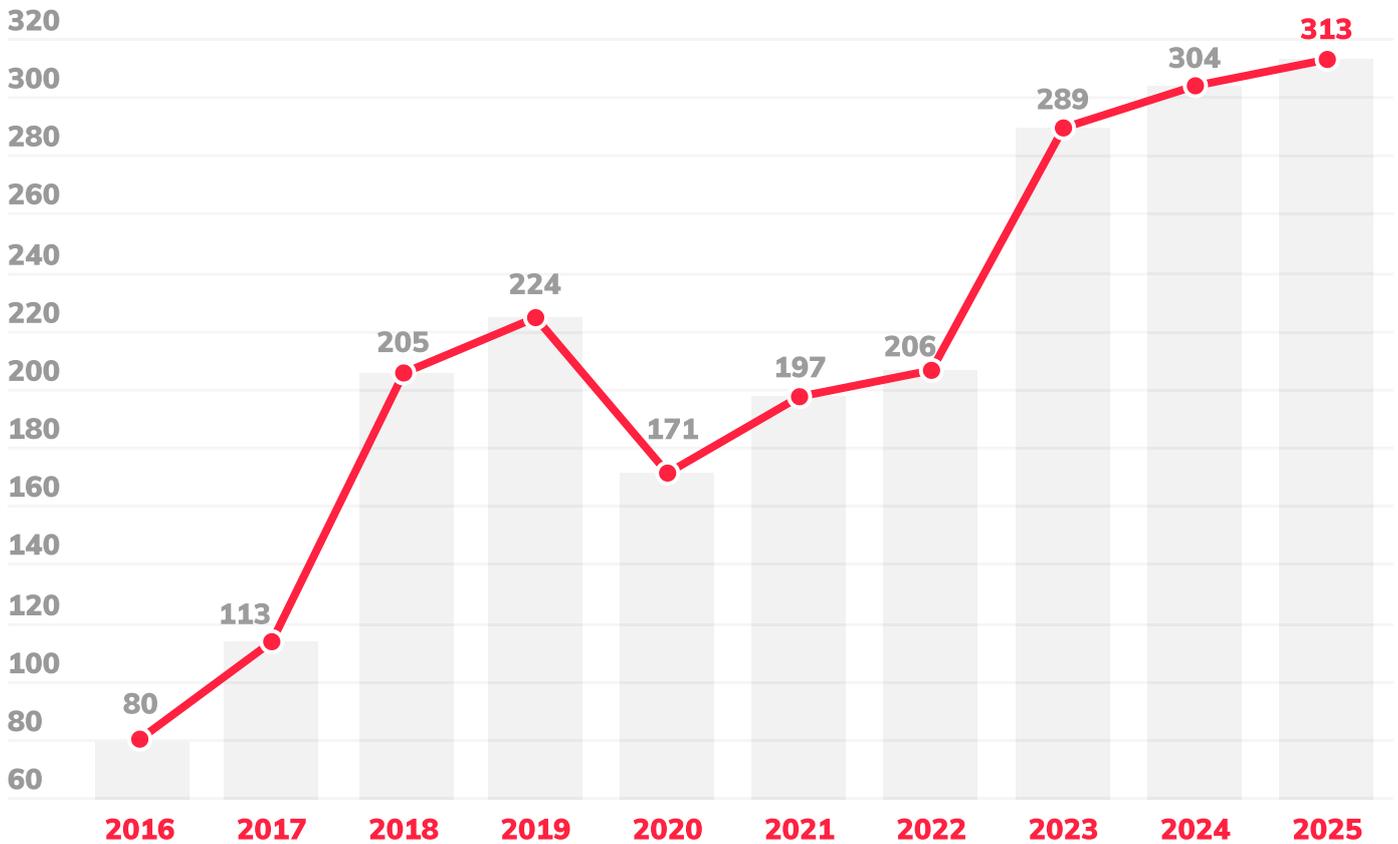
¹⁶ Premium Times (2025). *ECOWAS Court declares Senegal's internet shutdown unlawful.* <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/foreign/west-africa-foreign/794267-ecowas-court-declares-senegals-internet-shutdown-unlawful.html/>

¹⁷ Dhaka Tribune (2025). *Govt moves to abolish NTMC, outlaw internet shutdowns.* <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/395670/govt-moves-to-outlaw-internet-shutdowns-abolish/>

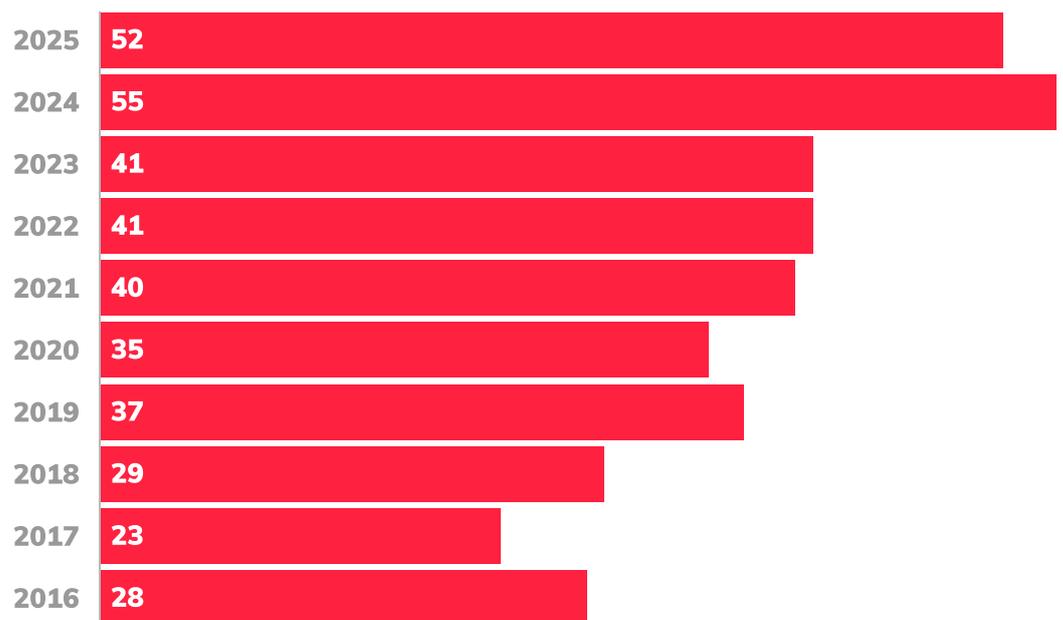
¹⁸ International Criminal Court (2025). *Policy on cyber-enabled crimes under the Rome Statutes.* <https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/otp/questions-and-answers-the-icc-office-of-the-prosecutors-policy-on-cyber-enabled-crimes-under-the-rome-statute/>

Overview of 2025 data

Total number of shutdowns by year* ▾



Number of countries where shutdowns occurred by year* ▶

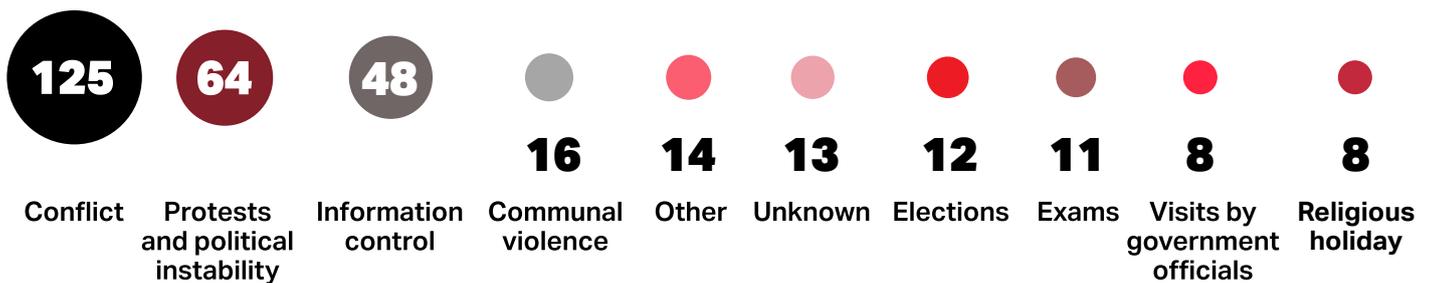


*These numbers reflect the latest data available as of publication of this report and include updates to previously published totals for past years.

II. Triggers for internet shutdowns in 2025

Triggers of internet shutdowns refer to incidents and contexts during which authorities are more likely to impose internet shutdowns. In recent years, conflict and protests have consistently been the dominant triggers of shutdowns. Among the other listed triggers, elections and exams are comparatively predictable contexts during which authorities often impose internet shutdowns and ahead of which we can prepare and target our advocacy.

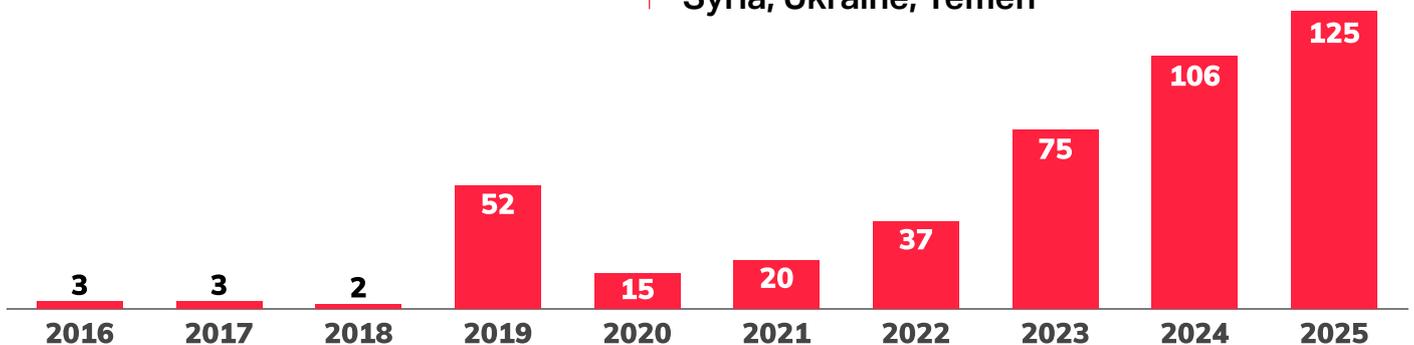
Internet shutdown triggers in 2025 ▼



✦ Shutdowns during conflict

125 conflict-related shutdowns in 14 countries

Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, India, Iran, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Yemen



For the third year in a row, conflict was the leading trigger of shutdowns with **125** conflict-related shutdowns across **14** countries — the highest total ever and **40%** of the global total in 2025. This alarming development shows how emboldened perpetrators have become as they systematically disrupt civilian connectivity around the world with impunity.

Through airstrikes on power and telecommunications infrastructure,¹⁹ seizure of LEO satellite internet terminals,²⁰ jamming devices,²¹ cyberattacks,²² and a range of other tactics,²³ perpetrators are regularly using internet shutdowns as part of the means and methods of warfare.

¹⁹ IODA (2025). *How Russia's Recent Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Grid Impacted its Internet Connectivity*. <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/reports/how-russias-recent-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-grid-impacted-its-internet-connectivity-2/>

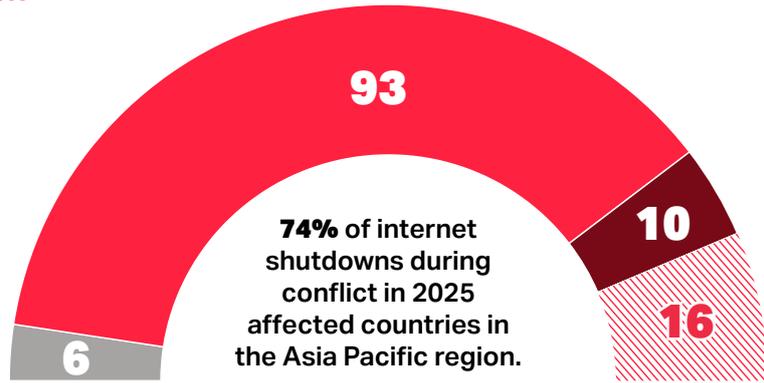
²⁰ SHAN News on Facebook (2025). <https://www.facebook.com/100066891622617/posts/1140682671504776/>

²¹ EngageMedia (2025). *Myanmar Digital Coup Quarterly: August 2025 – October 2025*. <https://engagemedia.org/2025/myanmar-digital-coup-quarterly-august-2025-october-2025/>

²² The Record (2025). *DDoS incident disrupts internet for thousands in Moscow*. <https://therecord.media/moscow-internet-provider-asvt-ddos-attack/>

²³ See, e.g., OONI Explorer (2025). *Iran blocked WhatsApp amid war with Israel*. <https://explorer.ooni.org/findings/273244099200>
See also *supra* note 11. Access Now (2025).

Shut downs during conflict by region ▼



HIDDEN SHUTDOWN

What happened:

In late January 2025, while the Myanmar junta was conducting air strikes and killing civilians in nearby towns,²⁴ local junta forces **cut internet services and phone lines** in Tamu township,²⁵ leaving people in fear of imminent strikes with no way to get news or communicate to protect one another. **“Everyone is on high alert, constantly watching the sky with fright and exhaustion [...] We also keep our eyes on our mobile phone connections — the moment the signal drops, we immediately take cover in underground shelters. We’ve come to understand that a loss of communication signals an impending airstrike,”** a humanitarian aid worker explained.²⁶

DURING CONFLICT:

- ▶ Tamu township, Sagaing Division, Myanmar

How people fought back:

#KeepItOn coalition partners Myanmar Internet Project and Athan documented the shutdown, spotlighting a tactic that has now been linked to crimes against humanity.²⁷

Note: This data was collected through Access Now’s Shutdown Tracker Optimization Project (STOP).²⁸



²⁴ Radio Free Asia (2025). *Fighting in Myanmar’s Sagaing region prompts thousands to flee to India border*. <https://www.rfa.org/english/myanmar/2025/01/30/myanmar-fierce-fight-india-border/>

²⁵ DVB Burmese on X (2025). <https://x.com/dvbburmese/status/1884520570848694781/>

²⁶ See *supra* note 24. Radio Free Asia (2025).

²⁷ See *supra* note 18. International Criminal Court (2025).

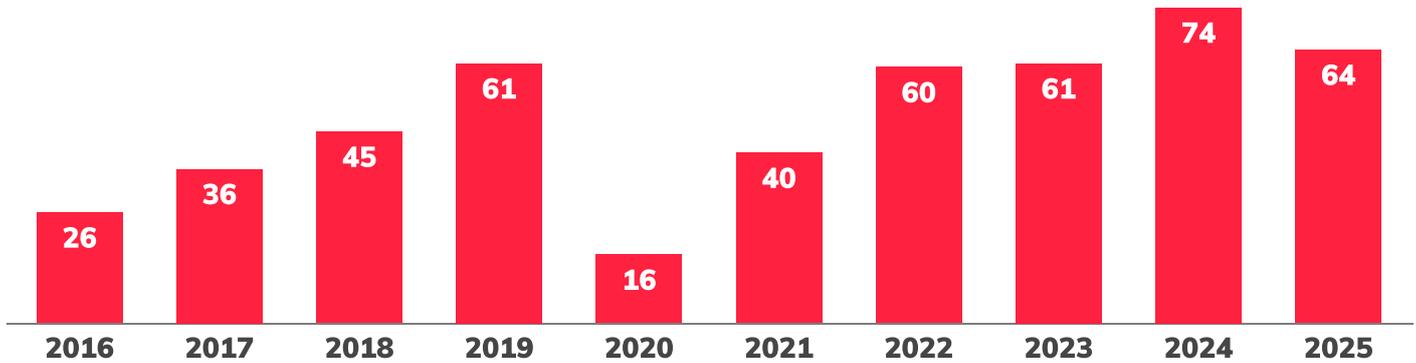
²⁸ See *supra* note 9. Access Now (2026).



Shutdowns during protests and political instability

64 shutdowns in 19 countries during protests and political instability

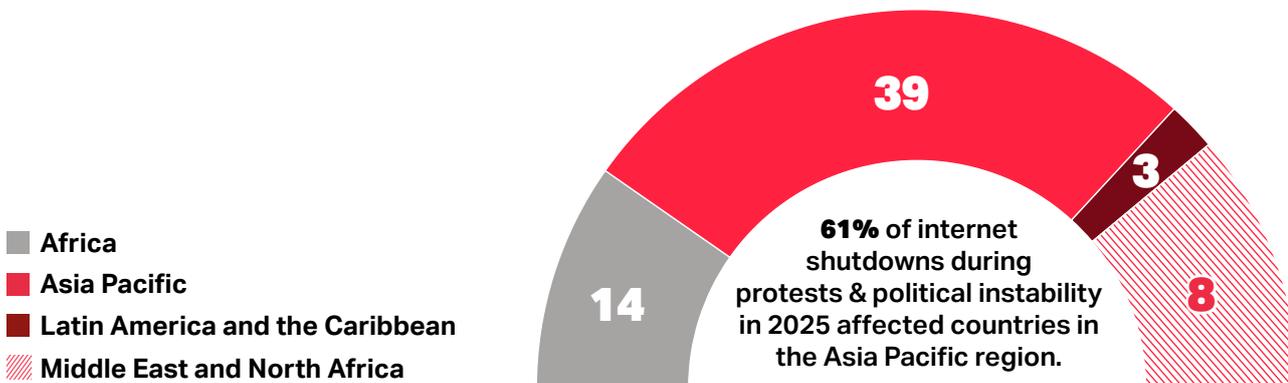
Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic,²⁹ Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Myanmar, Pakistan, Panama, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Türkiye, Venezuela



Protests continued to be a persistent driver for shutdowns in 2025, with **64** protest-related shutdowns across **19** countries as authorities attempted to curb dissent,³⁰ crack down on the opposition and consolidate power,³¹ and hide human rights abuses under the cover of shutdowns.³² In only **33%** of cases did authorities publicly acknowledge a shutdown

occurred (with the exception of India where shutdown orders must technically be published by law).³³ When they did, they gave the same excuses, claiming the shutdowns were to protect national security³⁴ or maintain public safety,³⁵ even though the majority of these shutdowns were tied to anti-government protests³⁶ or protests by opposition parties.³⁷

Shutdowns during protests and political instability by region ▼



²⁹ Cameroon imposed a shutdown which caused a downstream disruption in the Central African Republic. See Chapter IV: New and continuing trends in 2025 – Cross-border shutdowns.

³⁰ Ver Angola (2025). *Angolan NGOs consider internet shutdown during Saturday's protests a dictatorial measure.* <https://www.verangola.net/pt/en/072025/Society/45242/Angolan-NGOs-consider-internet-shutdown-during-Saturday%27s-protests-a-dictatorial-measure.htm/>

³¹ Africanews (2025). *Internet blackout deepens tensions after disputed election in Cameroon.* <https://www.africanews.com/2025/10/24/internet-blackout-deepens-tensions-after-disputed-election-in-cameroon/>

³² Amnesty International (2025). *Tanzania: Security forces used unlawful lethal force in election protest crackdown and 'took away' dead bodies.* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/12/tanzania-security-forces-used-unlawful-lethal-force-in-election-protest-crackdown-and-took-away-dead-bodies/>

³³ Software Freedom Law Centre, India (2025). *Telecom suspension rules, 2024: New language, same shutdowns?* <https://sfic.in/telecom-suspension-rules-2024/>

³⁴ Dawn (2025). *BNP-M reaches Kalat in march to Quetta against crackdown on Baloch activists.* <https://www.dawn.com/news/1900877/>

³⁵ InternetShutdowns.in on X (2025). <https://x.com/NetShutdowns/status/1973343923226681840/>

³⁶ IPANDETEC (2025). *Panamá debe restablecer el acceso a Internet y telefonía móvil en Bocas del Toro de forma inmediata.* <https://www.ipandetec.org/panama/panama-debe-restablecer-internet-bocas/>

³⁷ Al Jazeera (2025). *Why has Pakistan-administered Kashmir erupted in protest again?* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/3/why-has-pakistan-administered-kashmir-erupted-in-protest-again/>



HIDDEN SHUTDOWN

DURING PROTESTS: ▶ Togo

What happened:

When anti-government protests broke out on **June 26, 2025**, to oppose the newly adopted constitution, Togolese authorities responded with a violent crackdown.³⁸ Seven people were reportedly killed, dozens injured, and 60 arrested.³⁹ To further stifle dissent and silence the population, authorities **blocked DuckDuckGo, Facebook, Signal, Telegram, and YouTube**, with some blocks lasting as long as three months.⁴⁰ Additionally, authorities **throttled internet access every day from 9 am to midnight**, rendering the internet effectively useless during waking hours between **July 1 and September 5, 2025**.⁴¹

How people fought back:

#KeepItOn coalition partners shared resources⁴² to help people circumvent the platform blocking, documented the shutdown using open measurement tools,⁴³ and demanded that authorities uphold human rights during protests, online and off.⁴⁴

Note: This data was collected through Access Now's Shutdown Tracker Optimization Project (STOP).



³⁸ Amnesty International (2025). *Togo: Testimonies provide glimpse into violent repression of protests.* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/togo-repression-protests/>.

³⁹ Media Foundation For West Africa (2025). *Bloody crackdown on protests in Togo: 7 dead, over 60 arrested.* <https://mfwa.org/country-highlights/bloody-crackdown-on-protests-in-togo-7-dead-over-60-arrested/>.

⁴⁰ OONI Explorer (2025). *Togo blocked Facebook, Telegram, Signal, YouTube, and DuckDuckGo amid protests.* <https://explorer.ooni.org/findings/167838678600/>.

⁴¹ IODA Internet Connectivity Dashboard (2025). <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/country/TG?from=1751244593&until=1757206193&view=view1/>; RFI (2025). *Togo: Internet et les Réseaux Sociaux ralentis, la société civile inquiète interpelle La Cédéao.* <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20250704-togo-internet-reseaux-sociaux-ralentis-la-societe-civile-inquiete-interpelle-cedeao>

⁴² TOGO SCOOP (2025). *Restriction d'internet au Togo: Internet society-Togo propose des solutions.* <https://togoscoop.tg/restriction-dinternet-au-togo-internet-society-togo-propose-des-solutions/>.

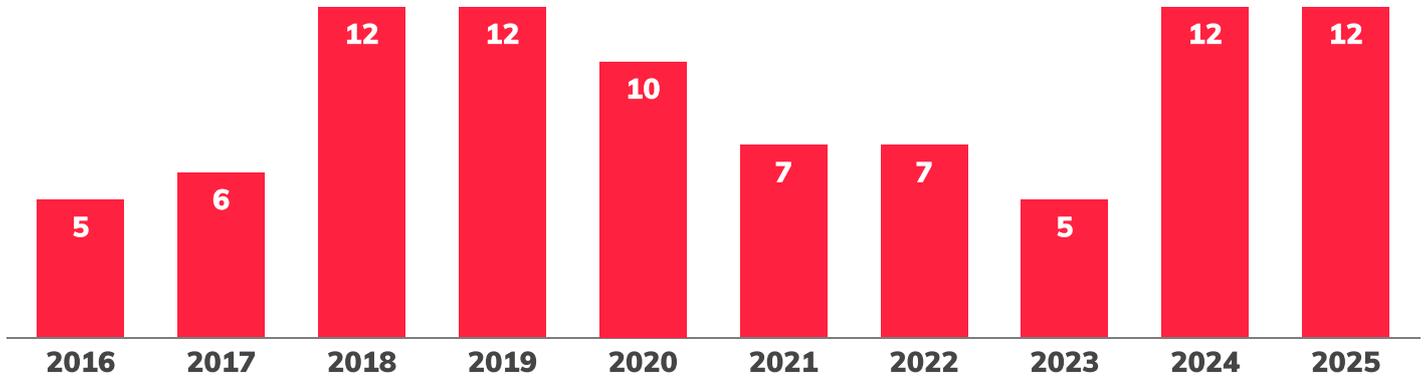
⁴³ See *supra* note 40. OONI Explorer (2025). See also *supra* note 41. IODA Internet Connectivity Dashboard (2025).

⁴⁴ Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: Togolese authorities must uphold human rights online and off during protests.* <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-togolese-authorities-must-uphold-human-rights-online-and-off-during-protests/>.

Shut downs during elections

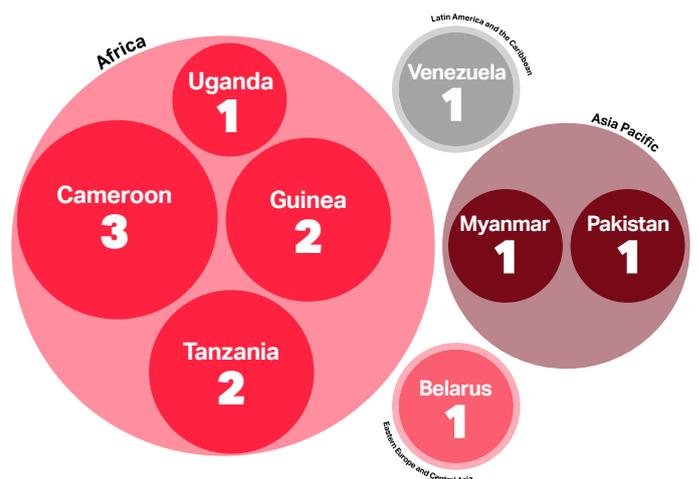
12 election-related shutdowns in **8** countries

Belarus, Cameroon, Guinea, Myanmar, Pakistan, Tanzania, Uganda, Venezuela



Following an alarming increase in election-related shutdowns in 2024 (**12**), there were once again **12** such shutdowns in **eight** countries in 2025, as some incumbent leaders sought to entrench themselves⁴⁵ and legitimize power⁴⁶ while concealing irregularities and silencing dissent.⁴⁷ **Six** of these shutdowns were also protest-related as a dual trigger in **four** countries (Cameroon, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Venezuela), where authorities responded to protests challenging the conduct and results of elections by enacting “precautionary” shutdowns⁴⁸ and perpetrating deadly crackdowns.⁴⁹ Venezuela’s tally includes its extension of platform blocks cutting off access to X, Signal, and other platforms, blocking that began in August 2024.⁵⁰

Shut downs during elections by country



Election-related internet shutdowns are a blatant attack on human rights and democracy. To learn more about election-related shutdowns and how to prepare for them, read our *Internet shutdowns and elections handbook*⁵¹ and follow our **2026 Elections and Internet Shutdowns Watch** campaign, which lists the countries we are currently monitoring.⁵²



⁴⁵ See *supra* note 31. Africanews (2025).

⁴⁶ The Guardian (2025). ‘Not for the people’: Myanmar junta prepares for elections designed to legitimise grip on power. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/dec/26/myanmar-junta-prepares-elections-legitimise-power/>.

⁴⁷ Access Now on X (2025). <https://x.com/accessnow/status/1883820669697204704/>.

⁴⁸ The News International (2025). Cellular, internet services suspended in Quetta. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1268998-cellphone-internet-services-suspended-in-quetta/>.

⁴⁹ See *supra* note 32. Amnesty International (2025).

⁵⁰ VE sin Filtro (2025). Se cumple un año del bloqueo de x en Venezuela, un país con poco acceso a la información. <https://vesinfiltro.org/noticias/2025-08-08-x-signal/>.

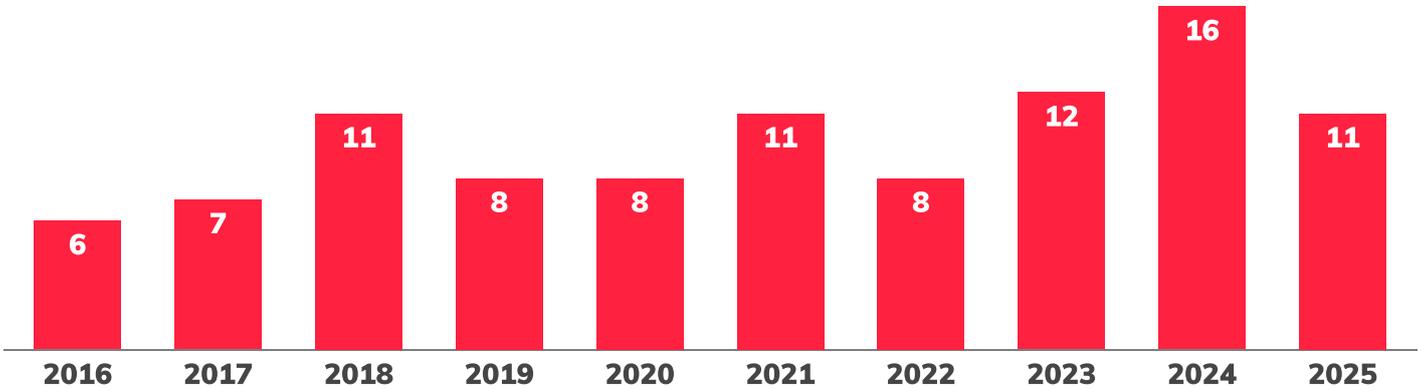
⁵¹ Access Now (2021). *Internet shutdowns and elections handbook*. <https://www.accessnow.org/guide/internet-shutdowns-and-elections-handbook/>.

⁵² Access Now (2026). *2026 Elections and Internet Shutdowns Watch*. <https://www.accessnow.org/campaign/2026-elections-and-internet-shutdowns-watch/>.

✍ Shutdowns during exams

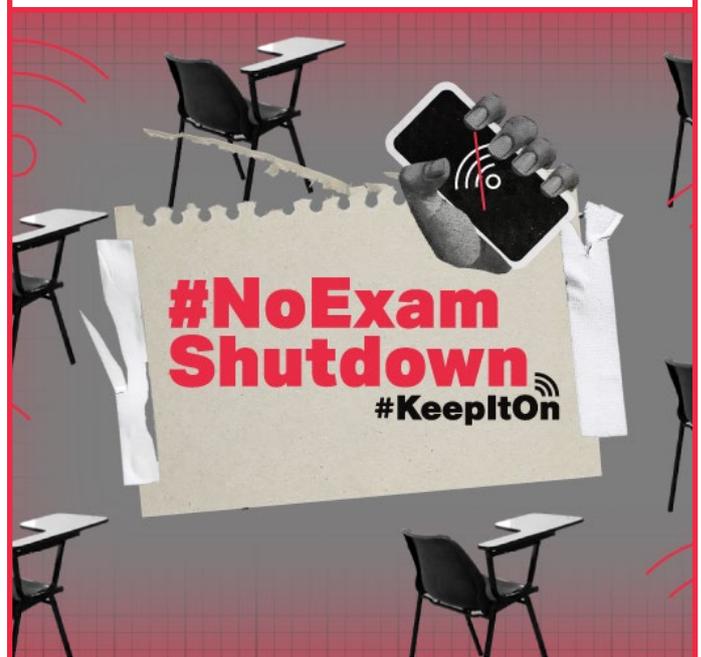
11 shutdowns in 6 countries to "prevent exam cheating"

Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Sudan, Syria



Exam-related internet shutdowns, an inherently disproportionate measure for preventing cheating that harms entire communities and populations,⁵³ remained pervasive in 2025. There were **11** such shutdowns in **six** countries, mostly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.⁵⁴ Iraqi authorities imposed the highest number, with **six** shutdown instances⁵⁵ corresponding to exam periods, resulting in a total of **36** nationwide disruptions and **16** limited to the Iraqi Kurdistan region between May and September. Algeria and Jordan persisted in their yearly practice of blocking access to messaging apps during exams, while Syria continued to cut internet access nationwide during exams, carrying on the damaging tradition of the fallen Assad regime.⁵⁶ Despite a devastating and ongoing civil war,⁵⁷ Sudan shut down mobile internet nationwide in July during a portion of the exam period, putting people in even greater danger. Meanwhile, outside of MENA, Kenyan authorities blocked Telegram for the third year in a row during national secondary school exams.⁵⁸

Access Now continues to work with the Internet Society and SMEX to fight the normalization of exam-related shutdowns that undermine human rights, damage the economy, and put people's safety at risk. Learn more and join our #NoExamShutdown campaign.⁵⁹



⁵³ Access Now (n.d.). *Tell MENA authorities: #NoExamShutdown*. <https://www.accessnow.org/campaign/no-exam-shutdown/>.

⁵⁴ Access Now (2025). *#NoExamShutdown: Lessons for the new academic year*. <https://www.accessnow.org/no-exam-shutdown-new-academic-year/>.

⁵⁵ Access Now counts shutdown instances by each exam period rather than each individual disruption, roughly corresponding to the number of times authorities make the deliberate choice to shut down the internet before each exam period begins. See *Access Now's STOP Methodology FAQ, Question #5*. <https://www.accessnow.org/guide/shutdown-tracker-optimization-project/#faq/>.

⁵⁶ Access Now (2025). *Reclaiming Syria's digital future*. <https://www.accessnow.org/syria-sanctions-digital-future/>.

⁵⁷ BBC (2025). *A simple guide to what is happening in Sudan*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjel2nn22z9o>.

⁵⁸ CryptoRank (2025). *Kenyan Telegram users report national blackout for the second time in 2025*. <https://cryptorank.io/news/feed/3b15d-kenya-blocks-pavel-durov-telegram/>.

⁵⁹ See *supra* note 53. Access Now (n.d.)

III. Stories of everyday resilience

How we fight to #KeepItOn

When the internet goes dark during critical national moments like war or conflict, an election, or a mass protest, it is rarely an accident. **Authorities deliberately cut internet access to control the narrative.** What they cannot control is the resistance and resilience of those affected, determined to bear witness and demand accountability.

In **Tanzania**, when authorities brutally cracked down on protesters during a five-day nationwide internet blackout, people documented the violence and found ways to share the truth with the world, **exposing the government's intent and actions.**⁶⁰ In **Iran**, those suffering under some of the world's worst internet shutdowns have refused to be silenced. They are speaking out against the shutdowns and **finding new ways to stay connected.**⁶¹

It doesn't stop there. There are countless examples of ordinary people refusing to back down. Following are three stories collected from #KeepItOn partners in 2025-2026, explaining in their own words how they fight internet shutdowns and work to reclaim the narrative.

EXPOSING TANZANIA'S BRUTAL CRACKDOWN

For several years now, due to lawfare and state-sponsored violence like abductions, citizen journalism has been the most reliable form of reporting in Tanzania. On October 29, 2025, **authorities turned their weapons on citizens on the streets**, in shops, in bars and at home. **Thousands were shot and killed under the cover of a complete internet blackout. Brave citizens recorded these atrocities.** Despite the shutdown preventing immediate wide sharing, we were able to **disseminate the information online** in small batches for the rest of the world to see. When the blackout ended, this evidence became integral for documenting the crackdown.”

— **Maria Surungi,**
Tanzanian Activist



DOCUMENTING SHUTDOWNS UNDER MYANMAR'S MILITARY REGIME

In 2025, the **military's internet shutdowns and adoption of repressive laws have severely threatened the public's access to information and freedom of expression.** There have been a **growing number of arrests** related to social media posts, stricter VPN restrictions, and expanding digital surveillance. Resistance forces have also imposed internet restrictions due to security concerns. Despite these escalating crises and the intense crackdown on digital rights, the **Myanmar Internet Project remains steadfast** in our commitment to **verifying and documenting internet shutdowns** and other forms of digital repression, **ensuring that these violations do not go unrecorded.**”

— **Thit Nyan,**
Myanmar Internet Project



CHALLENGING KENYA'S INTERNET SHUTDOWNS IN COURT

Shutdowns **strip citizens of their fundamental right to access information that may be vital to their safety and survival.** It is this reality that led the Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), ICJ Kenya, Paradigm Initiative, ARTICLE 19, CIPESA, and other partners to take a stand. Together, **we have challenged four internet shutdowns** before the Kenya High Court. It's our hope that this case will not only **reclaim the right of Kenyans to remain connected** but also send a clear message: **such overreach cannot happen again.** Ultimately, we want this case to **serve as a landmark precedent** for the rest of Africa and the Global Majority, providing a **legal roadmap for how to defeat internet shutdowns** in the halls of justice.”

— **BAKE**



⁶⁰ CNN (2025). *CNN finds evidence Tanzanian police killed protesters.* <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/11/21/world/video/tanzania-police-brutality-protesters-exclusive-investigation-digvid/>

⁶¹ Iran International (2026). *Witnesses say at least 200 killed in Shahrud protests.* <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202601204747/>

IV. New and continuing trends in 2025

Every year we surface trends from the data on internet shutdowns that may be useful in pushing back against network disruptions and ensuring a secure and open internet for all people. This year we're highlighting the continued co-occurrence of internet shutdowns and grave human rights abuses and violence, the growing number of cross-border shutdowns, the spike in alternative connectivity shutdowns, and the increasing use of communications platform blocking.

Shutdowns shrouding grave human rights abuses and violence

In 2025, we documented **70** shutdowns coinciding with grave human rights abuses, such as murder, torture, rape, or apparent war crimes and atrocities,⁶² in **21** countries. Under the cover of internet shutdowns, governments, militaries, and police forces targeted civilians, conducting airstrikes on homes, hospitals, schools, and religious sites; burning down villages; firing live ammunition and killing groups of people including protesters; and blocking entire populations from receiving humanitarian aid. Given that there have been at least **241** shutdowns coinciding with grave human rights abuses since 2022 alone, the #KeepItOn coalition continues to call for investigations into international crimes to consider how internet shutdowns can conceal evidence, can show the intent of an existing policy to harm people,⁶³ and as the International Criminal Court (ICC) has correctly found,⁶⁴ may directly facilitate or contribute to international crimes.⁶⁵

Each shutdown has real human consequences.⁶⁶ Following are three case studies of underreported shutdowns linked to alleged heinous human rights violations, and possibly war crimes or crimes against humanity. While we provide as much information as we can, shutdowns make it extremely difficult to document and verify atrocities, and it is often only later that we learn the full truth of what happened on the ground.⁶⁷

⁶² See *supra* note 10

⁶³ ICRC (2025). *Offline and in danger: the humanitarian consequences of connectivity disruptions*. <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2025/07/01/offline-and-in-danger-the-humanitarian-consequences-of-connectivity-disruptions/>.

⁶⁴ See *supra* note 18. International Criminal Court (2025).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ See *supra* note 13. Access Now (2025).

⁶⁷ Access Now (2026). *#KeepItOn: Iran plunged into digital darkness, concealing human rights abuses*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-iran-digital-darkness-human-rights-abuses/>



HIDDEN SHUTDOWNS

COINCIDING WITH GRAVE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES:

- ▶ Democratic Republic of Congo
- ▶ (DRC), Libya, Nepal

DRC: A BLACKOUT DURING CONFLICT AND CRISIS

What happened: On January 23, 2025, in the midst of an M23 offensive into Goma,⁶⁸ North Kivu, authorities shut down the internet. The blackout came during an escalation of conflict that left hundreds dead and thousands injured.⁶⁹ Active fighting, massive civilian displacement, and a humanitarian crisis⁷⁰ threatened everyone's safety, and the shutdown blocked the delivery of humanitarian assistance, endangering more lives. "[Without] the full restoration of internet access [...] the [humanitarian] response remains severely hindered and intervention capacities greatly reduced," reported a UN humanitarian official.⁷¹

How people fought back: Members of the #KeepItOn coalition spoke out against the shutdown,⁷² highlighting the dangers to civilians, and demanding authorities restore internet access to save lives.

LIBYA: A SHUTDOWN DURING ACTIVE FIGHTING AND PROTESTS

What happened: Amid a series of clashes between rival armed groups and quasi-state forces, protests broke out against the Government of National Unity (GNU) on May 16, 2025.⁷³ Authorities responded by imposing internet shutdowns in Tripoli,⁷⁴ implemented by six major carriers. Reports emerged that security forces used live ammunition against protesters.⁷⁵

How people fought back: #KeepItOn coalition partners reported the blackout on social media,⁷⁶ and Access Now amplified the reports, as well as documenting the incident in our STOP database.

NEPAL: PLATFORM BLOCKING AND LETHAL FORCE TO SILENCE PROTESTERS

What happened: After Nepalese authorities imposed new registration requirements for social media platforms, 26 failed to comply and were banned on September 4, 2025.⁷⁷ The blocking sparked mass protests that quickly escalated to include criticism of the government for corruption and poor handling of the economy.⁷⁸ Security forces used excessive and lethal force against protesters: reports indicate that more than 75 people were killed and more than 2,000 injured.⁷⁹

How people fought back: The public backlash was strong. Members of the #KeepItOn coalition denounced the shutdown and demanded immediate restoration to all restricted platforms.⁸⁰ While authorities lifted the social media ban on September 8, 2025, the blackout and violent police response to the protests did significant political damage to the government, and the prime minister resigned days later.⁸¹

Note: This data was collected through Access Now's Shutdown Tracker Optimization Project (STOP).

⁶⁸ Global Conflict Tracker (2025). *Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo*. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>.

⁶⁹ Al Jazeera (2025). *More than 700 killed as DR Congo military fights M23 rebels*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2025/2/2/more-than-700-killed-as-dr-congo-military-fights-m23-rebels>.

⁷⁰ Relief Web (2025). *UNICEF DR Congo Humanitarian Situation Report No.2 (Upsurge in conflict)*, 31 March 2025. <https://reliefweb.int/report-democratic-republic-congo/unicef-dr-congo-humanitarian-situation-report-no2-upsurge-conflict-31-march-2025>.

⁷¹ OCHA (2025). *The extremely serious humanitarian situation in Goma requires immediate attention from the international community*. <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report-democratic-republic-congo/extremely-serious-humanitarian-situation-goma-requires-immediate-attention-international-community/>.

⁷² Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: authorities must restore access in Goma and across the DRC*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-drc-goma/>.

⁷³ Reuters (2025). *Libyan protesters demand prime minister quit as three ministers resign*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/middle-east/two-ministers-internationally-recognized-libyan-government-resign-2025-05-16/>.

⁷⁴ Libya Review (2025). *Protestors Face Internet Shutdown in Libyan Capital*. <https://libyareview.com/55698/protestors-face-internet-shutdown-in-libyan-capital/>.

⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch (2025). *Libya: Civilians Caught in Militia Clashes*. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/05/20/libya-civilians-caught-militia-clashes/>.

⁷⁶ Cloudflare Radar (2025). <https://x.com/CloudflareRadar/status/1924531952993841639>

⁷⁷ Access Now (2025). *Access Now's statement on Nepal's escalating digital repression and deadly crackdown*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/access-nows-statement-on-nepals-escalating-digital-repression-and-deadly-crackdown/>; VAISHNAV UNFILTERED on X (2025). https://x.com/ItsReal_Vaishhh/status/1963857721934905823/.

⁷⁸ BBC (2025). *What we know about Nepal anti-corruption protests as PM resigns*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crkj0lzlr3ro>.

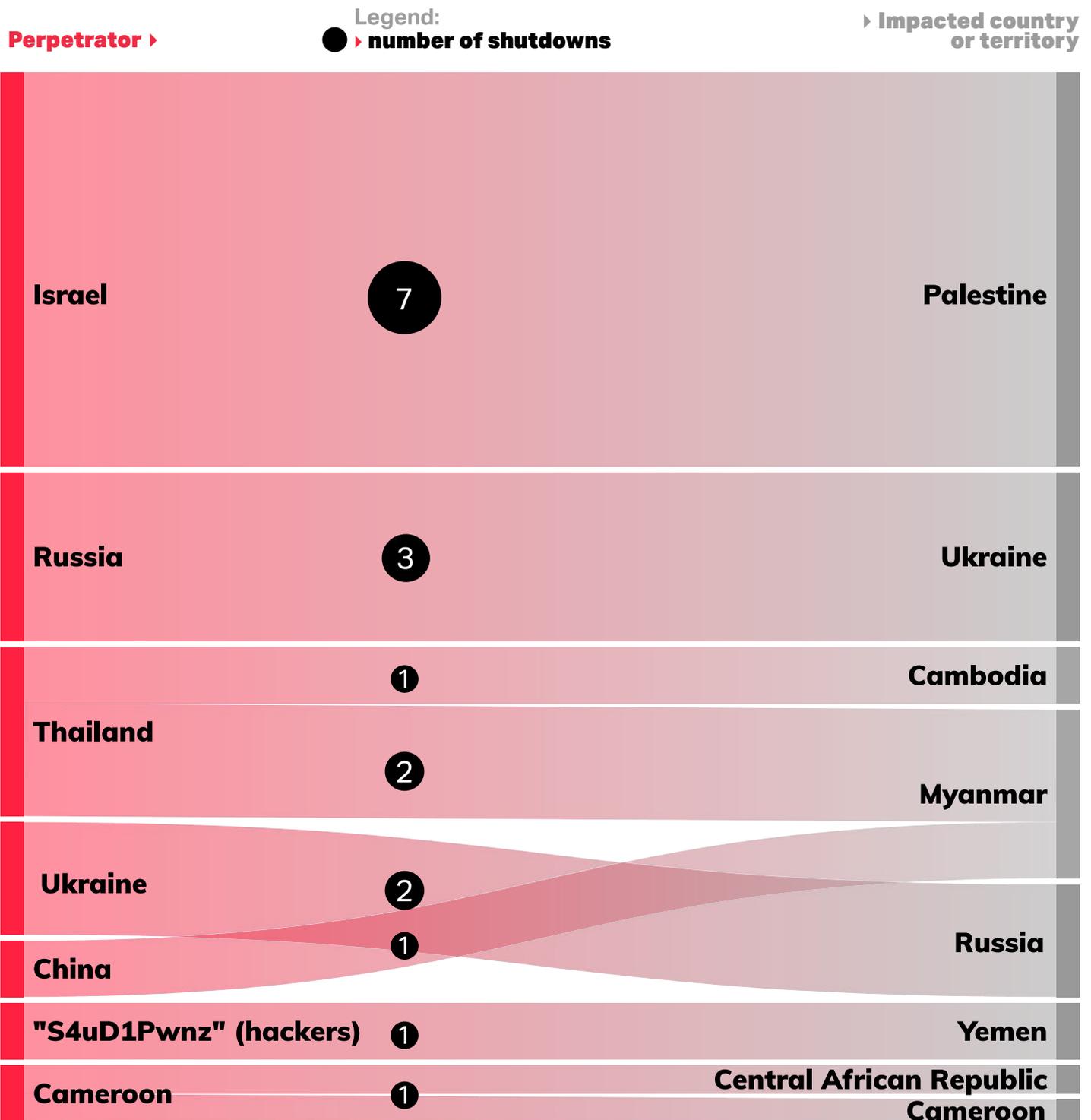
⁷⁹ Harvard School of Public Health (2025). *The 2025 Gen Z uprising in Nepal: a three-part analysis*. <https://hsph.harvard.edu/atrocities-prevention-lab/news/the-2025-gen-z-uprising-in-nepal-a-three-part-analysis/>.

⁸⁰ See *supra* note 77. Access Now (2025).

⁸¹ See *supra* note 78. BBC (2025).

Cross-border shutdowns

Following a multi-year development across a growing number of countries and colonized or occupied territories around the world, there were **18** cross-border shutdowns implemented by **seven** offenders, impacting people in **seven** countries in 2025. Through a variety of methods including airstrikes on fiber optic cables, bombing of power infrastructure, full electricity blackouts, cyberattacks, and tampering with landing stations of submarine cables, perpetrators of cross-border shutdowns kept people in the dark and compounded harm predominantly in areas already struck by persistent conflict or occupation.



Cross-border shutdowns: event(s) and context

Israel

Israel continued its genocide in Gaza⁸² throughout 2025, imposing internet shutdowns during ground operations by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) while armed actors, mostly from Israeli forces, killed scores of civilians at food distribution sites.⁸³ Many local internet service providers (ISPs) have been offline since October 2023,⁸⁴ and Israel has targeted the remaining internet services during documented atrocities, including the bombing of schools, shelters, and hospitals, blockade, starvation, and mass displacement of civilians.⁸⁵

Russia

Russia's illegal⁸⁶ full-scale invasion of Ukraine entered its fourth year in 2025, with the Russian military continuing to target Ukrainian energy infrastructure with at least **three** sets of missile strikes, leading to significant internet disruptions in numerous regions across Ukraine.⁸⁷

Ukraine

Ukrainian hackers carried out cyberattacks on **two** major Russian ISPs in 2025, leading to significant internet disruptions in Moscow⁸⁸ and St. Petersburg.⁸⁹

Thailand

Following similar efforts beginning in 2024 to curb cybercrime operations, Thai authorities **twice** ordered internet service, phone lines, and electricity to be cut off for people living near the border on the Myanmar side.⁹⁰ Cybercrime facilities used Starlink satellite internet and their own generators to bypass restrictions, selling electricity service to local residents at a significant markup.⁹¹ Local communities were significantly impacted in the midst of ongoing conflict. Additionally, amid heightened border tensions and in an alleged effort to curb cybercrime, Thai authorities ordered Thai ISPs to cut off internet service across the border in Cambodia.⁹²

China

Chinese authorities cut off mobile internet and phone lines in villages in the border areas of Hsawlaw and Waingmaw townships, Kachin State, Myanmar, in the midst of fighting between junta and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) troops.⁹³ Similar cross-border shutdowns by Chinese authorities were documented in 2024.⁹⁴

⁸² See *supra* note 12. United Nations (2025). Amnesty International (2024).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Access Now (2023). *Palestine unplugged: how Israel disrupts Gaza's internet*. <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/palestine-unplugged/>.

⁸⁵ CBC (2025). *Internet, phone lines cut off across Gaza as Israeli ground operations expected to escalate*. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/gaza-telecoms-blackout-israeli-army-1.7636933/>.

⁸⁶ United Nations (2022). *General Assembly overwhelmingly adopts resolution demanding Russian Federation immediately end illegal use of force in Ukraine, withdraw all troops*. <https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12407.doc.html/>.

⁸⁷ See *supra* note 19. IODA (2025). See also Cloudflare Radar on X (2025). <https://x.com/CloudflareRadar/status/2000993223406211327/>

⁸⁸ See *supra* note 22. The Record (2025).

⁸⁹ Cloudflare Radar on X (2025). <https://x.com/CloudflareRadar/status/1877096258583589247/>.

⁹⁰ Radio Free Asia (2025). *Thailand cuts power to Myanmar's scam centers in anti-crime push*. <https://www.rfa.org/english/myanmar/2025/02/05/myanmar-myawaddy-thailand-electricity/>. See also Eleven Media Group (2025). *Thailand cuts off AIS 1 – 2 – Call internet connection in the City of Three Pagoda*. <https://news-eleven.com/article/300503/>.

⁹¹ Nikkei Asia (2025). *Myanmar scammers boost Starlink connections to stay in business*.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/spotlight/society/crime/myanmar-scammers-boost-starlink-connections-to-stay-in-business/>.

⁹² Developing Telecoms (2025). *Thailand's NBTC orders telcos to cut internet services to Cambodia*. <https://developingtelecoms.com/telecom-business/telecom-regulation/18701-thailand-s-nbtc-orders-telcos-to-cut-internet-services-to-cambodia.html/>

⁹³ Shwe Phee Myay News Agency on Telegram (2025). <https://t.me/spmnewsagency2019/21482/>

⁹⁴ VOA News (2024). *Communication lines are down in Laukkai*. <https://burmese.voanews.com/a/communication-cut-in-lak-khai-mndaa/7692215.html/>.

Cross-border shutdowns: event(s) and context

S4uD1Pwnz

"S4uD1Pwnz," a hacker group, took credit for cyberattacks targeting internet service in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, including an attack on July 24, 2025 that disrupted internet access for longer than an hour in the capital city of Sana'a and surrounding governorates.⁹⁵

Cameroon

There was a partial shutdown across Cameroon between 3:30am and 8:30pm (UTC+0) on October 23 in the midst of ongoing vote counting and widespread protests.⁹⁶ CamTel and MTN blamed the outage on a problem with the landing station of the WACS submarine cable.⁹⁷ Neighboring Central African Republic (CAR), which relies on internet coming through submarine cables via Cameroon, also experienced a disruption between 3:30am and 6:30pm (UTC+0)⁹⁸ on the same day. Connectivity was restored relatively quickly in both countries, which suggests the WACS cable was tampered with.

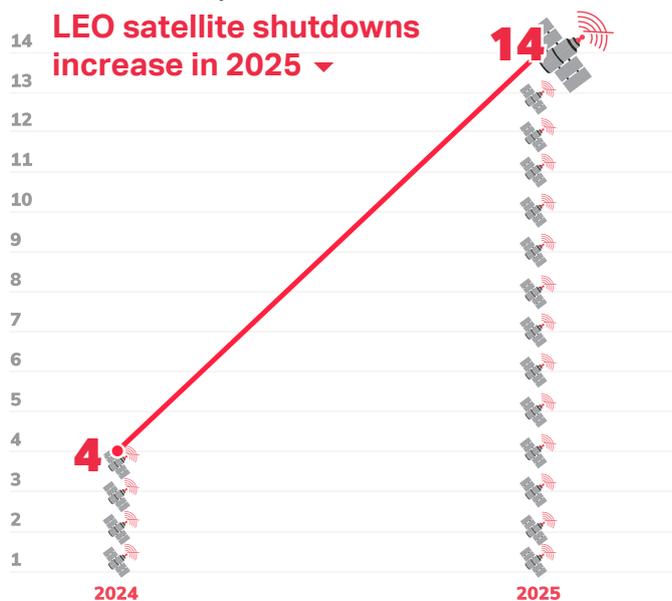
⁹⁵ Yemenat News (2025). *A sudden interruption of ADSL internet service in Sana'a and neighboring governorates*. <https://yemenat.net/archives/410456/>; Aden News (2025). *A sudden internet outage in Yemeni provinces followed an attack targeting YemenNet*. <https://adennews.net/165555/>

⁹⁶ IODA on Bluesky (2025). <https://bsky.app/profile/ioda.live/post/3m3ucisgh422a/>; Dawan Africa (2025). *Tensions mount in Cameroon as internet disruptions reported ahead of election results*. <https://www.dawan.africa/news/tensions-mount-in-cameroon-as-internet-disruptions-reported-ahead-of-election-results/>

⁹⁷ StopBlaBlaCam (2025). *Cameroon internet disruption eases as CAMTEL reports partial restoration*. <https://www.stopblabla.com/society/2710-15212-cameroon-internet-disruption-eases-as-camtel-reports-partial-restoration/>

⁹⁸ IODA Internet Connectivity Dashboard (2025). <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/country/CF?from=1761105878&until=1761278678&view=view1/>.

Country	Method of LEO satellite internet shutdown
Syria	 <p>The Syrian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology confiscated Starlink devices, impacting internet access for more than 5,000 people,¹⁰⁶ claiming the devices violated citizens' privacy, threatened the "national revenue" of the ministry, and "damaged [...] the frequency spectrum of the Syrian Telecommunications."¹⁰⁷ The ministry also prohibited the use and possession of satellite internet devices without prior licensing from the telecommunications regulatory authority.¹⁰⁸</p>
Tanzania	 <p>Authorities added LEO satellite internet within the scope of an existing full network shutdown order in late October 2025, according to reports from Access Now partners.</p>
Yemen	 <p>In Houthi-controlled areas, authorities demanded residents immediately surrender¹⁰⁹ any Starlink equipment, issuing threats of confiscation and penalties that they subsequently followed through with.¹¹⁰ The Houthis have opposed Starlink in its held areas as a national security threat since 2024.¹¹¹</p>



Depending on the tactic they used, perpetrators had various levels of success in keeping people offline. In many cases, the rationale was protecting national security, even though shutdowns cut off and endanger entire populations. Provided that there is proper governance and human rights guardrails,¹¹² LEO satellite internet holds tremendous promise for connecting millions worldwide, especially those living in conflict zones.¹¹³ However, given the growing sophistication of jamming technology to curb its use,¹¹⁴ as we have seen in Iran in January 2026, it's critical to ensure ongoing investment and support of the development of safe, secure systems for alternative connectivity, which are particularly crucial in times of crisis.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁶ SMEX (2025). *Syria: authorities threaten social media users and confiscate Starlink devices*. <https://smex.org/syria-authorities-threaten-social-media-users-and-confiscate-starlink-devices/>.

¹⁰⁷ Syrian Arab News Agency (2025). *The judicial police of the Ministry of Communications remove a number of violations in the Damascus countryside*. <https://sana.sy/governorates/reef-dimashak/2193873/>.

¹⁰⁸ Syrian Telecommunications and Postal Regulatory Authority (2025). *A circular regarding the prohibition of possessing satellite communication stations without obtaining the necessary licenses*. <https://www.sytpra.gov.sy/pages/لوائح-الصالات-اطحمة-قنايحه-عندم-موضوع-مهم-معتاد-لرابع-الاربعاء-لرصد-حالات-نزد-مستخدمي-الفضاء>

¹⁰⁹ Saba Net (2026). *The Ministry of Communications urges citizens and legal entities to hand over Starlink terminals and equipment*. <https://www.saba.ye/ar/news3472031.htm>.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (2025). *The Ministry of Communications is carrying out a field campaign to confiscate banned "Starlink" equipment*. https://mtit.gov.ye/news_info.aspx?NID=461.

¹¹¹ Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (2024). *Communications: Allowing the "Starlink" company to provide internet services in the occupied areas by the mercenaries of the aggression is a blatant violation of Yemen's sovereignty*. https://mtit.gov.ye/pdata_info.aspx?PDID=409.

¹¹² Access Now (2025). *Holding space for human rights: Improving the governance of satellite internet connectivity*. <https://www.accessnow.org/improving-satellite-internet-connectivity-governance>

¹¹³ News Lines Magazine (2025). *Sudanese people don't have the luxury of hating Elon Musk*. <https://newlinesmag.com/spotlight/sudanese-people-dont-have-the-luxury-of-hating-elon-musk/>

¹¹⁴ Filter Watch (2026). *Starlink's resilience despite interference while Iran moves toward a sustainable isolation via the NIN*. <https://filter.watch/english/2026/01/13/network-monitoring-january-2025-internet-repression-in-times-of-protest/>.

¹¹⁵ Direct2cell.org (2026). *DIRECT-TO-CELL SATELLITE INTERNET*. <https://www.direct2cell.org/>

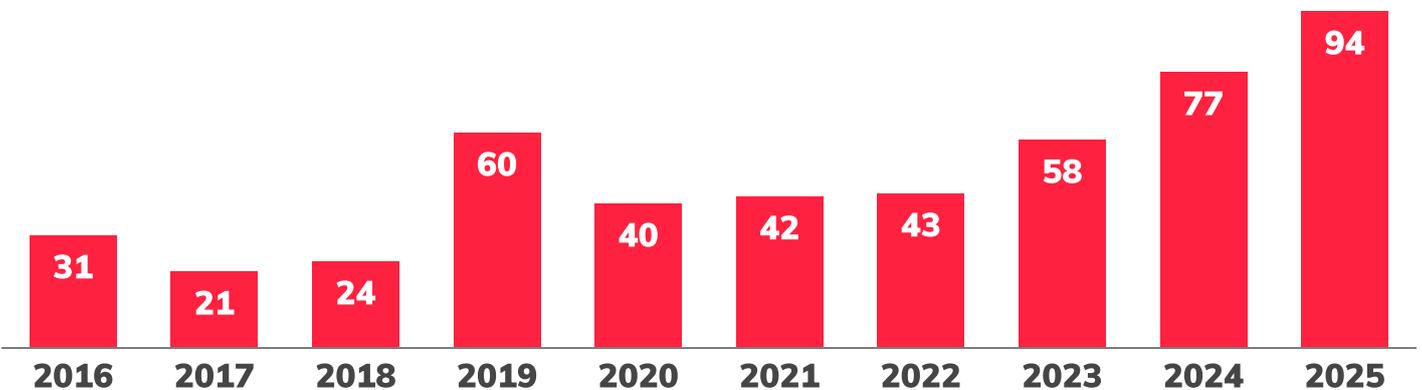
Platform blocks

Perpetrators continued to increase the number of communications platform blocks in 2025, with a record of **94** blocks in **40** countries, compared to **77** blocks in **37** countries in 2024 and **58** blocks in **27** countries in 2023. Authorities targeted popular services or wide-ranging lists¹¹⁶ of many social media and messaging platforms, cutting off communities from vital means of communication in times of crisis. Meta-owned platforms Facebook (**31**) and WhatsApp (**27**) were the most targeted, with TikTok continuing its climb with **16** blocks in 2025, compared to **10** in 2024 and **six** in 2023.

Number of platform blocks in 2025 ▼



Number of platform blocks by year ▼



¹¹⁶ VAISHNAV UNFILTERED on X (2025).

https://x.com/ItsReal_Vaishhh/status/1963857721934905823/

V. Shutdown impact stories from 2025

In 2025, the devastating impact of internet shutdowns was again laid bare. Authorities continued to weaponize connectivity during critical national moments. They violated people’s fundamental rights, endangered their lives, cut them off from life-saving information and essential services, disconnected them from their loved ones, and crashed their aspirations by undermining the economy.¹¹⁷ From Angola to Iran, denying people access to the internet and digital communications isn’t just a betrayal of public trust. It stands in direct conflict with the human rights-centered global digital transformation agenda that is essential for development and growth. The following testimonies are accounts from individuals directly affected by internet shutdowns, anonymized for their safety.

Iran
IT Manager, June 2025

“The internet shutdown in Iran deeply affected me both personally and emotionally. As an Iranian living in exile in Sweden, I rely entirely on internet and mobile communication to stay connected with my family and friends inside Iran. When the shutdown happened, I was completely cut off from my loved ones. I didn’t know if they were alive, injured, or safe. This caused me tremendous anxiety, fear, and emotional stress for several days.”

Myanmar
Activist, June 2025

“When there’s an emergency — like an airstrike — being able to communicate can literally decide who survives. Even when someone gets sick, if we don’t have internet, we have to send someone from the village on a motorbike to ask for help. The roads are rough, and it’s dangerous in conflict areas. By the time help reaches us, it might already be too late. Every minute lost lowers someone’s chance of survival.”

Russia
Parent, September 2025

“My children need the internet to study on a regular basis. The daughter is in 10th grade, the son is in the academy, where some classes are held remotely. It’s terrible without the internet. Children have to search for internet connection around their relatives’ apartments. The neighbors are doing the same, forced to go out somewhere too.”

Tanzania
Journalist, November 2025

“The internet shutdown had a profound impact on my personal and professional life. As someone who works in the field of journalism and communication, my daily routine heavily depends on internet access for research, information gathering, publishing, and maintaining contact with colleagues and sources. When the shutdown occurred, it completely disrupted my ability to perform my duties effectively.”

Venezuela
Activist, July 2024

“Internet shutdowns have made the past year very complex for accessing information inside Venezuela. Throughout the electoral process and after, we had downed internet connections due to power outages and the regime’s blocking of social media for scheduled times of the day. Almost all news websites were unreachable, and even some streaming services were blocked. As someone always ‘connected’ due to my work in civil society organizations, nothing prepared me for how anxiety-inducing it would be to expect all communications to be shut down at any time without any warning. I was prepared with data backups, VPNs, external batteries, and even walkie-talkies to talk to my friends living nearby, but the reality is that no one can be fully prepared for these types of scenarios.”

Note: The testimonies above were collected through Access Now’s Shutdown Stories¹¹⁸ project, as well as through partners. We thank the Bridging Voices Project, led by Border Voices and Friends Without Borders Foundation¹¹⁹ for their contributions.

¹¹⁷ Access Now (2025). *Why Annobón’s internet shutdown should matter to the world* <https://www.accessnow.org/shutdown-stories-annobon/>

¹¹⁸ Access Now (n.d.). *Shutdown stories* <https://www.accessnow.org/tag/shutdown-stories/>

¹¹⁹ Friends Without Borders Foundation on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/fwbfoundation>

VI. New and entrenched offenders in 2025

Since we began tracking in 2016, we have documented shutdowns in **100** countries around the world. New offenders join the shame list each year. There were **seven** new countries in 2025 and **seven** in 2024, an alarming sign of the growing normalization of shutdowns despite the many harms they inflict.¹²⁰ Even one shutdown is unacceptable, but identifying **first-time offenders** can help human rights advocates target governments at risk of becoming repeat offenders, increasing the pressure to desist. According to our records from 2016-2024, there are **23** offenders that have shut down the internet only once in a calendar year, while the remaining offenders have imposed shutdowns across multiple years. These **entrenched offenders** compound harm through their systematic and sometimes institutionalized use of shutdowns year after year, negatively impacting entire populations and communities, and creating new challenges for civil society to prepare, respond, and demand accountability.

First-time offenders

Albania

In March 2025, Albanian authorities imposed a one-year ban on TikTok, arguing that the platform fuels violence among children, an allegation company representatives denied. The blocking was spurred by an incident where a teenager killed a peer, which raised fears over the influence of social media on minors and prompted regulatory intervention.¹²¹

Angola

On July 19, 2025, Angolan authorities shut down internet services for at least three hours in response to planned anti-government protests against rising fuel prices. Activists condemned the shutdowns as unlawful and described it as a deliberate attempt by the government to limit mobilization, stop information flows, and quell the protests.¹²²

Cambodia

On June 13, 2025, Cambodian authorities cut internet services coming into the country from across the border via Thai ISPs.¹²³ This shutdown occurred in the midst of heightened border tensions and followed a warning from Thai authorities days prior that they would cut power and internet to combat call center scams in Cambodia.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ See *supra* note 13. Access Now (2025).

¹²¹ CNN (2025). *Albania shuts down TikTok for a year amid concerns over violence among children*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/03/06/europe/albania-shuts-down-tiktok-intl-latam/>.

¹²² See *supra* note 30. Ver Angola (2025).

¹²³ Radio Free Asia (2025). *Cambodia cuts internet from Thailand as tensions grow after border clash*. <https://www.rfa.org/english/cambodia/2025/06/13/cambodia-thailand-border/>.

¹²⁴ Thai PBS World (2025). *Thailand considers power, internet cuts to combat call-centre scams in Cambodia*. <https://world.thaipbs.or.th/detail/thailand-considers-power-internet-cuts-to-combat-callcentre-scams-in-cambodia/57801/>.

Lithuania

On May 9, 2025, Lithuanian authorities implemented a nationwide blocking of VKontakte and Odnoklassniki in line with the 2014 EU Regulation on restrictive measures in connection with Russia's destabilizing actions in Ukraine.¹²⁵ Similar restrictions have been imposed in other countries, including Ukraine, where both platforms have been blocked since 2017,¹²⁶ and Latvia, where both platforms have been blocked since 2022.¹²⁷

Panama

On June 20, 2025, the Panamanian government suspended internet and mobile phone access in the province of Bocas del Toro in response to protests against reforms to the Social Security Fund, including changes to the retirement and pension provisions.¹²⁸ The shutdown was imposed amid a state of emergency and was lifted after nearly two weeks of disruptions.

Papua New Guinea

On March 24, 2025, authorities in Papua New Guinea shut down Facebook for two days — the country's most widely used social media platform — citing an increase in "misinformation and pornography." The shutdown was implemented by the police minister under the National Security (Amendment) Act 2024, legislation that grants the government sweeping powers to monitor and restrict digital communications in the name of combating terrorism and cybercrime.¹²⁹ The move sparked widespread outrage, with critics arguing that the government used the shutdown to suppress dissent and control public discourse, and to potentially test future shutdowns in the country.¹³⁰ The timing of the shutdown coincided with the Prime Minister's scheduled court appearance in an ongoing corruption case, raising questions about the political motivation behind the disruption.¹³¹

United States of America

On January 18, 2025, the popular messaging app TikTok and other ByteDance apps were suspended in the U.S. under a law signed by former U.S. President Biden and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court on national security grounds.¹³² After a 14-hour blackout, however, service was restored when U.S. President Trump signaled he would delay enforcement of the ban and urged ByteDance to sell TikTok to a U.S.-based entity.¹³³ TikTok has faced similar threats since 2020, with prior bans reversed through executive action.¹³⁴ Following the January 2025 blackout, enforcement was repeatedly postponed as negotiations advanced for U.S. firms, including Oracle, to assume control of TikTok's U.S. user data, apps, and algorithms.¹³⁵

¹²⁵ Novaya Gazeta (2025). *The blocking of VKontakte and Odnoklassniki in Lithuania was delayed for almost six months for some users.* <https://novayagazeta.ee/articles/2025/05/09/blokirovka-vkontakte-i-odnoklassnikov-v-litve-dlia-chasti-polzovatelei-zaderzhalas-pochti-na-polgodu-news#:~:text=%/>. See also EUR-Lex (2014). *Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine.* <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/833/oj/eng/>

¹²⁶ Human Rights Watch (2017). *Ukraine: Revoke Ban on Dozens of Russian Web Companies.* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/17/ukraine-revoke-ban-dozens-russian-web-companies>.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ See *supra* note 36. IPANDETEC (2025).

¹²⁹ ABC (2025). *PNG's sudden Facebook ban — a government flexing social media control?* <https://www.abc.net.au/pacific/facebook-png-disrupted-by-tests-to-regulate-hate-speech/105092262/>.

¹³⁰ ABC (2025). *Papua New Guinea shuts down Facebook in test to stop 'pornography, misinformation, hate speech.'* <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-03-25/facebook-shut-down-in-papua-new-guinea-in-test/105092564/>.

¹³¹ See *supra* note 129. ABC (2025).

¹³² NPR (2025). *TikTok is offline in the U.S. after Supreme Court upholds ban.* <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/18/nx-s1-5266146/tiktok-offline-supreme-court-ban/>.

¹³³ NPR (2025). *TikTok is back online in the U.S., following Trump's promise to pause the ban.* <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/19/nx-s1-5267568/tiktok-back-online>.

¹³⁴ Washington Post (2021). *Biden revokes Trump's TikTok and WeChat ban order.* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/06/09/tiktok-ban-revoked-biden/>.

¹³⁵ Reuters (2026). *TikTok seals deal for new US joint venture to avoid American ban.* <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/tiktok-reaches-deal-new-us-joint-venture-avoid-american-ban-2026-01-23/>.

Entrenched offenders by region

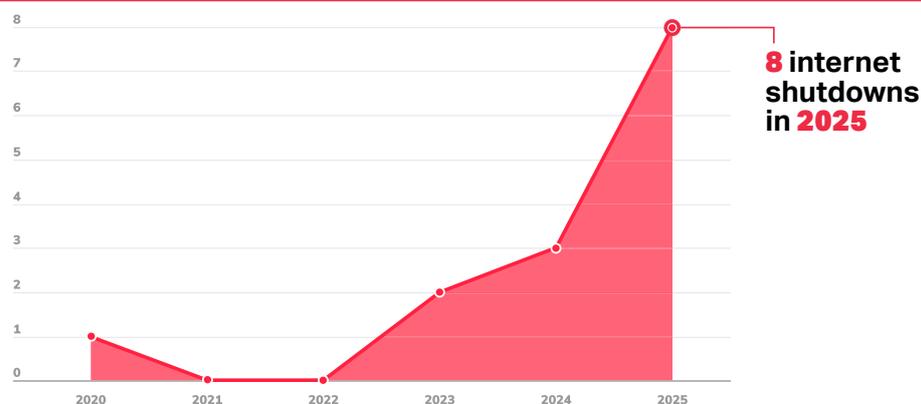
Africa

Tanzania

Tanzanian authorities doubled down on the use of shutdowns in 2025 amid a sharp deterioration of the country's human rights landscape. The number of shutdowns increased from **one** in 2020 to **eight** in 2025, ranging from widespread blocking of social media platforms to a five-day long nationwide shutdown coinciding with an electricity blackout, curfew, and brutal crackdown¹³⁶ on human rights during the October general elections — the worst in the country's history.¹³⁷

Since 2020, when the government adopted legislation banning VPN use¹³⁸ and imposed a partial election-related shutdown, authorities have systematically laid the groundwork to normalize shutdowns as a tool of state censorship.¹³⁹ Over the past five years, these measures have intensified alongside an expanding crackdown on opposition voices and dissent.

Number of shutdowns by year in Tanzania ▶



Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

After a brief reprieve since 2019 following years as a recurrent perpetrator of shutdowns, and despite public commitments to ensure unfettered access to the internet during the 2023 general elections,¹⁴⁰ authorities in the DRC regressed in 2025.¹⁴¹ On January 23, the government began shutting down the internet across Goma (with platform blocks to come across the country on February 1) amid escalating fighting between rebel groups and the Congolese army.¹⁴² Humanitarian officials warned that the internet shutdown exacerbated¹⁴³ an already severe humanitarian crisis by constraining response capacities and further endangering people's lives.¹⁴⁴ A government official reported at the time that the escalation resulted in more than 700 deaths and thousands of injuries.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁶ See *supra* note 32. Amnesty International (2025).

¹³⁷ DW Africa on Facebook (2025). <https://www.facebook.com/reel/3286986024816419/>

¹³⁸ Afriwise (2020). *VPN in Tanzania Regulated*. <https://www.afriwise.com/blog/vpn-in-tanzania-regulated/>

¹³⁹ DW (2020). *Tanzania restricts social media during election*. <https://www.dw.com/en/tanzania-restricts-social-media-during-election/a-55433057/>

¹⁴⁰ Access Now (2023). *#KeepItOn in DRC: internet is vital this election*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-in-drc-elections-2023/>

¹⁴¹ Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: authorities must restore access in Goma and across the DRC*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-drc-goma/>

¹⁴² Internet Society Pulse (2025). *Internet shutdown and service blocking in DRC*. <https://pulse.internetsociety.org/en/shutdowns/internet-shutdown-and-service-blocking-in-drc/>

¹⁴³ OCHA (2025). *The extremely serious humanitarian situation in Goma requires immediate attention from the international community*. <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/democratic-republic-congo/extremely-serious-humanitarian-situation-goma-requires-immediate-attention-international-community/>

¹⁴⁴ Human Rights Watch (2024). *Democratic Republic of Congo*. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/democratic-republic-congo/>

¹⁴⁵ *7SUR7.CD* (2025). *Carnage à Goma: 773 morts et 2880 blessés recensés (Gouvernement)*. <https://7sur7.cd/2025/02/02/carnage-goma-773-morts-et-2880-blesses-recenses-gouvernement/>

Africa

Equatorial Guinea

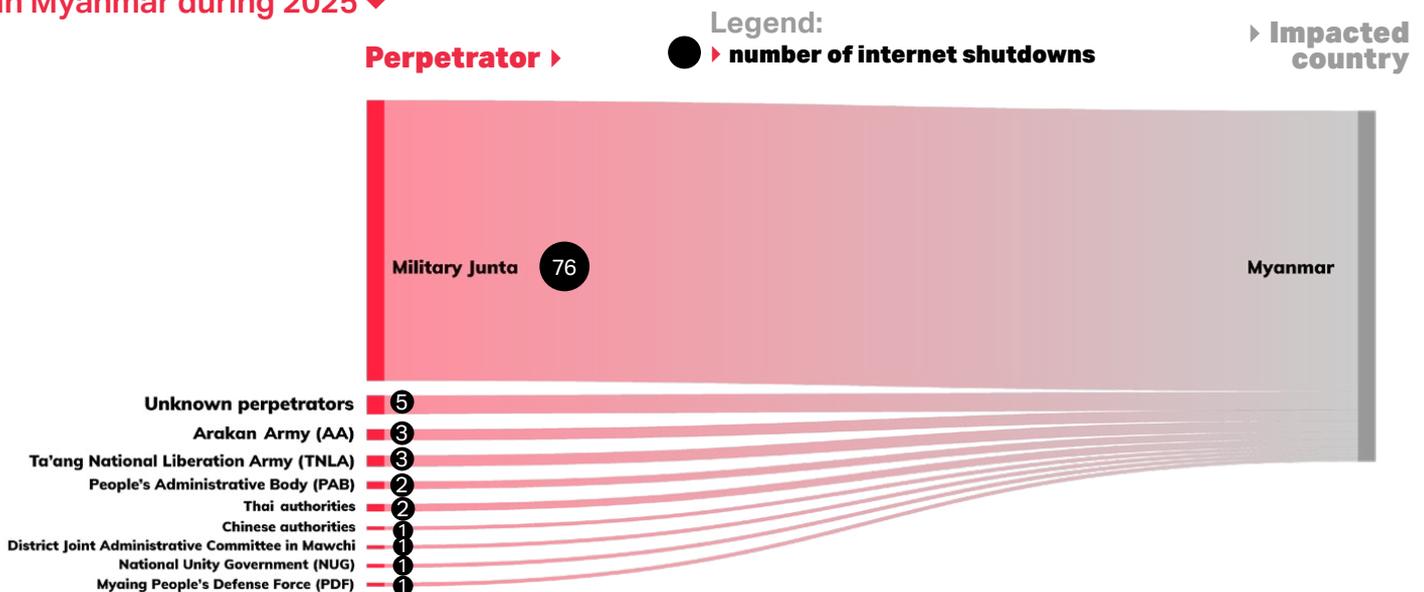
The government of Equatorial Guinea continues to cut off residents of Annobón, the country's smallest island, where internet access has been unavailable since July 2024 following a brutal crackdown on protesters.¹⁴⁶ The prolonged disruption has denied people access to information, disrupted essential services including banking, healthcare, and emergency response, and severely hindered the documentation of human rights violations. The shutdown has also imposed additional burdens on residents, forcing cross-border travel to access the internet or higher costs to maintain basic communication with family and pursue economic opportunities.¹⁴⁷ Authorities in the country previously restricted access to the internet and Facebook during elections in 2017.¹⁴⁸

Asia Pacific

Myanmar

Myanmar has overtaken India as the world's leading perpetrator in total number of internet shutdowns for the second consecutive year with at least **95** incidents documented in 2025. Since the military junta seized power in 2021, internet shutdowns have become a core tool of repression, imposed across all **14** states or administrative regions and primarily impacting villages and townships in the midst of active conflict. The junta imposed the majority of these shutdowns in 2025 (**76**), with another **eight** perpetrators imposing the remaining **19**. These disruptions have severely undermined emergency services and endangered lives. In March 2025, ongoing internet shutdowns severely hampered emergency and lifesaving rescue efforts following a deadly earthquake — the strongest in the country's history — affecting at least 67 townships and killing more than 2,000 people.¹⁴⁹ While civil society groups have strengthened efforts to detect, document, and report internet shutdowns and other digital repression in Myanmar, the true scale is likely higher due to ongoing conflict and severe constraints on information access.

Breakdown of internet shutdowns in Myanmar during 2025 ▼



¹⁴⁶ Access Now (2024). #KeepItOn: Equatorial Guinea authorities must end internet shutdown and other human rights abuses in Annobón. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-equatorial-guinea-authorities-end-internet-shutdown-in-annobon/>

¹⁴⁷ New York Post (2025). Equatorial Guinea cuts internet access to island after protests about construction. <https://nypost.com/2025/09/14/world-news/equatorial-guinea-cuts-internet-access-to-island-after-protests-about-construction/>

¹⁴⁸ Freedom House (2019). Equatorial Guinea: Freedom in the world 2018. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/equatorial-guinea/freedom-world/2018/>

¹⁴⁹ APC (2025). Joint statement: Myanmar must lift internet restrictions following devastating earthquake. <https://www.apc.org/en/pubs/joint-statement-myanmar-must-lift-internet-restrictions-following-devastating-earthquake-1/>

Asia Pacific**India**

India imposed **65** internet shutdowns in 2025 — the lowest since 2017 — yet the figure remains alarmingly high for a democracy, impacting **12** states and territories. The shutdowns were deployed during protests, conflict, communal violence, and religious holidays. Frequent shutdowns occur in the country alongside other suppression of digital rights, with authorities also targeting circumvention tools such as VPNs.¹⁵⁰ On December 29, 2025, officials in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir invoked Section 163 of the Criminal Procedure Code, imposing a two-month ban on unauthorized VPN use.¹⁵¹ Police reportedly penalized around 800 users, including through phone searches for banned applications.¹⁵²

Asia Pacific**Pakistan**

Authorities continued their entrenched censorship practices, imposing at least **20** internet shutdowns in 2025, closely following the rate of **22** incidents recorded in 2024. Pakistan has implemented shutdowns every year since 2016, with a drastic increase in both frequency and scale in 2024 and 2025. These blackouts were employed in response to protests and security incidents as well as during politically and socially sensitive periods, including major religious holidays. For example, in July 2025, authorities suspended mobile and internet services for several hours across multiple cities in Pakistan, citing security and public safety concerns during the Muharram-ul-Haram religious celebration.¹⁵³ Overall, authorities imposed **five** shutdowns during religious holidays.

Asia Pacific**Afghanistan**

In 2025, the Taliban imposed **four** shutdowns in Afghanistan, cutting off more than 43 million people at both regional and national levels and targeting internet access, phone services, and digital communication platforms.¹⁵⁴ Authorities claimed the shutdowns were necessary to “curb immorality,” but the cuts removed the last lifeline that enabled women and girls who have been barred from education and work to access critical information from the outside world.¹⁵⁵ The shutdowns also coincided with a deadly earthquake, severely hampering emergency communications and life-saving response efforts.¹⁵⁶ These blackouts formed part of the de facto regime’s broader effort to increase censorship, following earlier attempts to impose an outright ban on smartphones across the country.¹⁵⁷ Since seizing power in 2021, the Taliban has repeatedly imposed similar restrictions to consolidate power and suppress dissent.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁰ Tech Radar (2026). *VPN users under siege in Jammu and Kashmir as authorities issue a 2-month ban – here’s what we know*. <https://www.techradar.com/vpn/vpn-privacy-security/vpn-users-under-siege-in-jammu-and-kashmir-as-authorities-issue-a-2-month-ban-heres-what-we-know/>

¹⁵¹ Kashmir Life (2025). *Authorities ban VPN services in North Kashmir district*.

<https://kashmirilife.net/authorities-ban-vpn-services-in-north-kashmir-district-418942/>

¹⁵² The Tribune (2026). *Police identify 800 users as crackdown on unauthorised VPNs intensifies in Kashmir*.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/j-k/police-identify-800-users-as-crackdown-on-unauthorised-vpns-intensifies-in-kashmir/>

¹⁵³ The Nation (2025). *Mobile, internet services suspended in several cities for 9th Muharram*.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/05-Jul-2025/mobile-internet-services-suspended-in-several-cities-for-9th-muharram/>

¹⁵⁴ Access Now (2025). *The Taliban must restore internet access across Afghanistan now*.

<https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/the-taliban-must-restore-internet-access-across-afghanistan/>

¹⁵⁵ UNESCO (2025). *Afghanistan: Four years on, 2.2 million girls still banned from school*.

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/afghanistan-four-years-22-million-girls-still-banned-school/>

¹⁵⁶ NPR (2025). *A look at relief efforts in eastern Afghanistan following Sunday’s massive earthquake*.

<https://www.npr.org/2025/09/02/nx-s1-5524897/a-look-at-relief-efforts-in-eastern-afghanistan-following-sundays-massive-earthquake/>

¹⁵⁷ Afghanistan International (2025). *Taliban leader sought clerics’ ruling to ban smartphones before internet shutdown*.

<https://www.afintl.com/en/202509180237/>

¹⁵⁸ Al Jazeera (2021). *Growing concerns for Panjshir residents as Taliban claims victory*.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/6/dire-situation-for-130000-residents-trapped-in-panjshir>

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Russia

People in Russia experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of internet shutdowns in 2025.¹⁵⁹ An uncoordinated web of authorities imposed a barrage of shutdowns broadly justified as countermeasures against drone attacks from Ukraine,¹⁶⁰ despite evidence that mobile internet is not strictly needed to operate drones¹⁶¹ and the fact that many of these disruptions took place in areas without drone attacks.¹⁶² Emerging information from trusted #KeepItOn partners indicates that hundreds to thousands of internet disruptions¹⁶³ have reportedly occurred across virtually every region of the country since May 2025.¹⁶⁴ We are working with partners to verify and document these events, and we will continue to update the STOP dataset accordingly.¹⁶⁵ Our current data catalogs **20** shutdowns imposed by Russian authorities in 2025, with **17** imposed domestically and **three** in Ukraine, either coinciding with major events like Victory Day celebrations in Moscow,¹⁶⁶ visits by President Putin, or due to an ever-expanding list of ongoing blocks of platforms like WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, YouTube, Discord, Viber, and the gaming platform Roblox.¹⁶⁷ Internet shutdowns in Russia impacted many areas of daily life in 2025, causing financial hardship,¹⁶⁸ risks for children with diabetes,¹⁶⁹ and sometimes costing people their lives.¹⁷⁰

Ongoing platform blocks in Russia* ▶

Platform	Status	Scope
Discord	● Blocked	Nationwide
Facebook	● Blocked	Nationwide
Facetime	● Blocked	Nationwide
Instagram	● Blocked	Nationwide
Signal	● Blocked	Nationwide
Snapchat	● Blocked	Nationwide
Telegram	● Blocked	Nationwide
Viber	● Blocked	Nationwide
WhatsApp	● Blocked	Nationwide
X	● Blocked	Nationwide
YouTube	● Blocked	Nationwide

*At time of publication.

¹⁵⁹ Access Now (2025). *Russia's record war on connectivity*. <https://www.accessnow.org/russias-record-war-on-connectivity/>

¹⁶⁰ The Insider (2025). *Russia's Ministry of Digital Development and telecom operators are discussing "internet shutdown rules," pro-Kremlin media report*. <https://theins.ru/en/news/283119/>

¹⁶¹ Visit Ukraine Today (2025). *Communications under threat: will Ukraine start jamming mobile internet due to drone attacks?* <https://visitukraine.today/blog/6346/communications-under-threat-will-ukraine-start-jamming-mobile-internet-due-to-drone-attacks#are-there-plans-to-shut-down-communications-what-the-government-is-saying/>

¹⁶² The Insider (2025). *Russia shut down mobile internet 200 times in May and June due to "drone attacks," but none took place in 26 of the affected regions*. <https://theins.ru/en/news/282568/>

¹⁶³ United24 Media (2025). *Russia Recorded Nearly 12,000 Internet Shutdowns Since May 2025, Report Says*. <https://theins.ru/en/news/282568/>

¹⁶⁴ Meduza (2025). *Mapping Russia's internet blackouts: The Russian authorities keep shutting down mobile Internet. Here's where it happens most, and how the outages are spreading*. <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2025/07/07/mapping-russia-s-internet-blackouts/>

¹⁶⁵ See *supra* note 9. Access Now (2026).

¹⁶⁶ Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: The Kremlin must refrain from imposing internet shutdowns during key national events*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/kremlin-must-end-internet-shutdowns-national-events/>

¹⁶⁷ The Guardian (2025). *Russia blocks Snapchat and restricts Apple's FaceTime, state officials say*. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/dec/04/russia-snapchat-apple/>

¹⁶⁸ Novaya Gazeta (2025). *The country was disconnected*. <https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2025/06/19/stranu-otkliuchili>

¹⁶⁹ The Insider (2025). *Thousands of children with diabetes have lost parental control over their glucose levels due to internet shutdowns in Russia*. <https://theins.ru/news/286784/>

¹⁷⁰ Novaya Gazeta (2025). *Where and how the internet is being shut down in Russia*. <https://novayagazeta.eu/articles/2025/07/08/gde-i-kak-v-rossii-otkliuchaiut-internet>

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Belarus

On January 26, 2025, Belarusian authorities blocked or throttled multiple platforms before and during election day, following a previous disruption on January 9 that was likely in preparation for the election.¹⁷¹ The disruptions began a day before the vote and were lifted only after the Central Election Commission declared incumbent Aleksandr Lukashenko the winner with over 86% of the votes, further extending his over 30-year rule. Prior to the elections, Lukashenko had threatened to shut down the internet in the event of mass protests.¹⁷² The government similarly imposed widespread internet blackouts and censorship during the 2020 elections, which were marked by large-scale protests.¹⁷³

Latin America and the Caribbean

Venezuela

In 2025, Venezuelan authorities continued the nationwide blocking of X,¹⁷⁴ initially imposed in response to widespread protests following the disputed 2024 elections that declared Nicolás Maduro the winner.¹⁷⁵ All major ISPs operating in the country complied with the order to restrict the platform.¹⁷⁶ In January 2025, during Maduro's inauguration, authorities further restricted access to digital communication platforms including Telegram and TikTok,¹⁷⁷ and blocked access to at least 21 VPN services.¹⁷⁸ Other platforms like Signal have also remained blocked in the country since August 2024.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷¹ CSO Meter (2025). *Belarus: Weekend of unfree elections marked by internet and VPN blocking.*

<https://cso-meter.info/updates/belarus-weekend-unfree-elections-marked-internet-and-vpn-blocking/>

¹⁷² RFE/RL (2024). *Lukashenko threatens internet shutdown if there are protests during presidential vote.*

<https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-lukashenko-internet-shutdown-protests/33211982.html/>

¹⁷³ Access Now (2020). *Belarusian election tainted by internet shutdown and state-sponsored violence.*

<https://www.accessnow.org/belarusian-election-tainted-by-internet-shutdown-and-state-sponsored-violence/>

¹⁷⁴ TechRadar (2025). *"No meaningful changes" – Venezuelans still need a VPN to access X.*

<https://www.techradar.com/vpn/vpn-privacy-security/no-meaningful-changes-venezuelans-still-need-a-vpn-to-access-x/>

¹⁷⁵ NPR (2024). *Protesters take to the streets in Venezuela over contested presidential election.* <https://www.npr.org/2024/07/29/nx-s1-5055646/venezuelas-authoritarian-leader-claims-victory-but-opposition-cries-foul/>

¹⁷⁶ VE sin Filtro on X (2025). <https://x.com/vesinfiltro/status/1821720870953333199?s=20/>

¹⁷⁷ VE sin Filtro on X (2025). <https://x.com/vesinfiltro/status/1878806874243354935?s=20/>

¹⁷⁸ VE sin Filtro (2025). *Bloquean DNS públicos, VPN y Tiktok en Venezuela.* https://vesinfiltro.org/noticias/2025-01-09_bloqueos/

¹⁷⁹ The Verge (2024). *Signal has been blocked by Venezuela and Russia.*

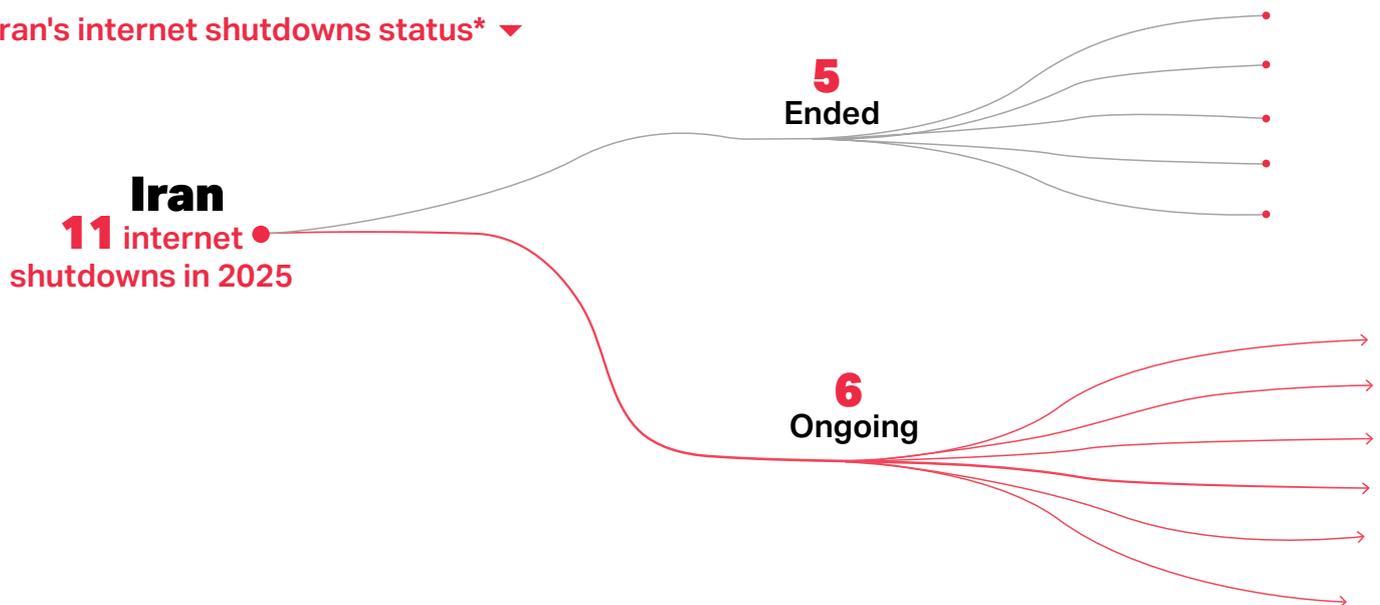
<https://www.theverge.com/2024/8/9/24217008/signal-blocked-venezuela-russia/>

Middle East and North Africa

Iran

In 2025, Iranian authorities imposed at least **11** shutdowns aimed at controlling information in the country during critical moments. In June, authorities enforced a combination of network shutdowns,¹⁸⁰ with one resulting in a near-complete nationwide blackout from June 16–21, and a block of WhatsApp during the Iran-Israel war. Officials generally cited national security concerns, while one government spokesperson said the shutdown was in response to Israeli cyberattacks.¹⁸¹ Viewed in combination with a set of ongoing platform blocks over multiple years,¹⁸² these actions reflect the institutionalization of shutdowns as a state response to dissent and national crises, as Iran continues to face recurring unrest and protest movements. The shutdown that began in January 2026 involved unusually sophisticated disruptions, making it one of the country's most comprehensive¹⁸³ and prolonged nationwide blackouts. Iran has a history of violently cracking down on protesters during shutdowns,¹⁸⁴ and reports from the January 2026 shutdown indicate that there have been 7,002 confirmed killings (including of security forces), and there are an additional 11,730 deaths under investigation, as well as more than 52,941 arrests.¹⁸⁵ Iran also continues to use internet shutdowns to advance its National Information Network (NIN) through offering tiered¹⁸⁶ internet access,¹⁸⁷ allowlisting websites,¹⁸⁸ and forcing people onto national messaging apps.¹⁸⁹

Iran's internet shutdowns status* ▼



*At time of publication.

¹⁸⁰ Human Rights Activists News Agency (2025). *When the Twelve-Day War reached the internet*. <https://www.en-hrana.org/articles/when-the-twelve-day-war-reached-the-internet-fereshteh-goli/>

¹⁸¹ Digiato on X (2025). <https://x.com/Digiato/status/1934561401185432046?s=20/>

¹⁸² Al Jazeera (2024). *Iran unveils plan for tighter internet rules to promote local platforms*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/24/iran-unveils-plan-for-tighter-internet-rules-to-promote-local-platforms/>

¹⁸³ See *supra* note 1. IODA (2026).

¹⁸⁴ RFE/RL (2026). *Iran Publishes Protest Death List, But Rights Groups Say Toll Is Far Higher*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/iran-protest-death-toll-ofogh-tv/33666963.html/>

¹⁸⁵ See *supra* note 3. Anadolu Ajansi (2026). HRANA (2026).

¹⁸⁶ Radio Zamaneh (2025). *Iran passes bylaw expanding censorship with tiered internet policy*. <https://en.radiozamaneh.com/37071/>

¹⁸⁷ Filter Watch (2025). *Iran's digital clampdown: "Corruption on Earth" and wartime internet control*. <https://filter.watch/english/2025/07/10/network-and-policy-monitoring-june-2025-irans-response-death-penalty-for-satellite-internet-users-after-israeli-attack/>

¹⁸⁸ Filter Watch (2025). *The 12-Day War's legacy: security-driven policies dominate Iran's digital ecosystem*. <https://filter.watch/english/2025/08/18/network-and-policy-monitoring-july-2025-security-lens-dominates-irans-digital-ecosystem/>

¹⁸⁹ Filter Watch (2025). *Digital repression in Iran: implementing undisclosed policies for tiered access and judicial control*. <https://filter.watch/english/2025/11/20/network-and-policy-monitoring-october-2025-implementation-of-the-32point-decree/>

Middle East and North Africa

Israel

Israel continued to weaponize internet access during its unfolding genocide in Palestine,¹⁹⁰ compounding the suffering of millions. In 2025, Israeli authorities imposed **seven** shutdowns as part of its military operation, severely restricting access to information and humanitarian assistance. Through unlawful blockade of fuel into Gaza,¹⁹¹ and the destruction of at least 74%¹⁹² of Gaza's telecommunications' structure including the deliberate disconnection of fiber-optic cables along Al-Rasheed street and the Khan Yunis route, connectivity was pushed to the brink of collapse by June 2025.¹⁹³

Middle East and North Africa

Sudan

As the conflict escalates amid what is currently the world's worst health and humanitarian crisis,¹⁹⁴ warring parties have deliberately disrupted connectivity, often preventing access to alternative communication channels. There were **three** shutdowns in Sudan in 2025 during the ongoing conflict, including during school exams in July. Also in July, Sudan's Telecommunications and Post Regulatory Authority imposed a nationwide block on WhatsApp voice and video calls, citing "national security concerns" and cutting off the last remaining lifelines allowing the Sudanese people to stay in touch with the outside world.¹⁹⁵ In October, the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) intensified attacks on civilians in the besieged city of El-Fasher, with reports of mass killings, detention, and sexual violence amid a communications blackout.¹⁹⁶

Middle East and North Africa

Iraq

Iraqi authorities have imposed internet shutdowns during national school exam cycles every year since 2016, as a measure to prevent cheating and exam malpractice. This damaging practice has become an annual ritual,¹⁹⁷ with nationwide disruptions occurring whenever exams are administered. In 2025, we documented **six** exam-related shutdown incidents, subjecting people in the country to approximately two hours of deliberate disruptions daily throughout the exam period. Separately, on February 18, 2025, authorities cut off internet services of Korek Telecom, citing unpaid debts and regulatory violations,¹⁹⁸ affecting thousands of people in the Kurdistan region.¹⁹⁹ The company denounced the suspension as politically motivated and unrelated to the alleged financial dispute.

¹⁹⁰ See *supra* note 12. United Nations (2025). Amnesty International (2024).

¹⁹¹ The Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU) (2023). *Fact sheet: Legal status of Israel's siege & blockade of Gaza*. <https://imeu.org/resources/resources/fact-sheet-legal-status-of-israels-siege-blockade-of-gaza/152/>

¹⁹² The Palestinian Information Center (2025). *Gaza loses 74 percent of its telecommunications infrastructure*. <https://english.palinfo.com/news/2025/06/30/342319/>

¹⁹³ ETC (2025). *Update: Gaza Communications Status*. <https://etcluster.org/document/update-gaza-communications-status/>

¹⁹⁴ World Health Organization (2026). *Sudan: 1000 days of war deepen the world's worst health and humanitarian crisis*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-01-2026-sudan-1000-days-of-war-deepen-the-world-s-worst-health-and-humanitarian-crisis/>

¹⁹⁵ Dabanga (2025). *Sudan to block WhatsApp calls citing security concerns*.

<https://www.dabangasudan.org/en/all-news/article/sudan-to-block-whatsapp-calls-citing-security-concerns>

¹⁹⁶ BBC (2025). *Fear of mass killings as thousands trapped in besieged Sudan city taken by militia group*. <http://bbc.com/news/live/cy7eyd13ky5t/>

¹⁹⁷ See *supra* note 54. Access Now (2025).

¹⁹⁸ Rudaw English on X (2025). <https://x.com/RudawEnglish/status/1892109257325125938?s=20/>

¹⁹⁹ Shafaq News (2025). *CMC cuts Korek Telecom's internet access, sparking outrage in Kurdistan*.

<https://shafaq.com/en/Kurdistan/CMC-cuts-Korek-Telecom-s-internet-access-sparking-outrage-in-Kurdistan/>

VII. Fighting back in 2025: resistance, solidarity, and impact

The 2025 data and analysis confirm a horrific reality: **internet shutdowns keep increasing**, not decreasing. The number of shutdowns reached a record high in 2025, continuing a consistent upward trend since 2020. At the same time, however, **global resistance to these acts of repression has grown**.

There is increasing recognition that internet shutdowns **violate human rights and undermine democratic processes**. Regional and international bodies—including the United Nations (UN), the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the Freedom Online Coalition (FOC), and election observer missions²⁰⁰—continue to speak out. Notably, for the first time, election observers **explicitly recognized the impact of internet shutdowns on election monitoring**, declaring the October 29, 2025 elections in Tanzania **flawed and undemocratic**.²⁰¹ Similarly, the ACHPR **expressed concern over the violent crackdown and nationwide internet blackout during Tanzania's elections**,²⁰² as well as **condemning the January 2026 disruptions**

in Uganda. The FOC also published a statement **opposing the growing normalization of internet shutdowns in times of armed conflict**.²⁰³

The advocacy of #KeepItOn coalition members and partners has also compelled governments to **reverse, end, or provide explanations for shutdown orders**,²⁰⁴ in addition to helping people and communities learn tactics and tools to stay connected. Our coalition continues to mobilize efforts against shutdowns, including through **supporting strategic litigation**, with several cases still pending.²⁰⁵ In 2025, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Court of Justice issued a ruling **declaring shutdowns in Senegal unlawful**.²⁰⁶ This was the fourth shutdown-related case the regional court has heard since 2020. Civil society groups have also **challenged shutdowns in Kazakhstan**,²⁰⁷ **Kenya**, and **Tanzania before national courts**.²⁰⁸ And in **Bangladesh**, sustained demands for accountability led authorities to **take steps to outlaw internet shutdowns altogether**,²⁰⁹ proposing legislation stating that “no telecommunication connection, related service, or internet access shall be shut down, disrupted, or restricted under any circumstance.”

²⁰⁰ African Union (2025). *Preliminary statement of the African Union Election Observation Mission to the October 2025 General Elections in The United Republic of Tanzania: The African Union Election Observation Mission calls for urgent constitutional reforms and inclusive politics in the United Republic of Tanzania*, 5 November 2025.

<https://www.peaceau.org/en/article/preliminary-statement-of-the-african-union-election-observation-mission-to-the-october-2025-general-elections-in-the-united-republic-of-tanzania-the-african-union-election-observation-mission-calls-for-urgent-constitutional-reforms-and-inclusive-politic>.

²⁰¹ Capital News (2025). *AU declares Tanzania's election flawed and undemocratic*. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2025/11/au-says-tanzania-2025-elections-not-democratic/>.

²⁰² African Union (2025). *Press release on the nationwide internet outage on election day in the United Republic of Tanzania*. <https://achpr.au.int/en/news/press-releases/2025-11-01/nationwide-internet-outage-election-day-tanzania/>.

²⁰³ Freedom Online Coalition (2025). *Joint statement on protecting human rights online and preventing internet shutdowns in times of armed conflict*.

<https://freedomonlinecoalition.com/joint-statement-on-protecting-human-rights-online-and-preventing-internet-shutdowns-in-times-of-armed-conflict/>.

²⁰⁴ Access Now (2025). *#KeepItOn: authorities must restore access to social media in South Sudan and uphold human rights*. <https://www.accessnow.org/press-release/keepiton-in-south-sudan-restore-social-media/>.

²⁰⁵ MyJoyOnline (2025). *Seven organisations sue over internet shutdowns in Kenya*. <https://www.myjoyonline.com/seven-organisations-sue-over-internet-shutdowns-in-kenya/>.

²⁰⁶ Premium Times (2025). *ECOWAS Court declares Senegal's internet shutdown unlawful*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/foreign/west-africa-foreign/794267-ecowas-court-declares-senegals-internet-shutdown-unlawful.html/>.

²⁰⁷ Eurasian Digital Foundation (2025). *Kazakh lawyer files Constitutional Court appeal against internet shutdowns*. https://digitalrights.asia/media/kazakhstan-lawyer-constitutional-court-internet-shutdown-challenge/?lang_ui=en. See also Eurasian Digital Foundation (2025). *Appeal filed to Constitutional Court against internet shutdowns*. https://digitalrights.asia/events/kazakhstan-constitutional-court-internet-shutdown-appeal-2025/?lang_ui=en.

²⁰⁸ MyJoyOnline (2025). *Seven organisations sue over internet shutdowns in Kenya*. <https://www.myjoyonline.com/seven-organisations-sue-over-internet-shutdowns-in-kenya/>; The Chanzo Initiative (2025). *Third legal challenge emerges over post-election events as rights groups sue govt over post-election internet blackout*. <https://thechanzo.com/2025/12/11/third-legal-challenge-emerges-over-post-election-events-as-rights-groups-sue-govt-over-post-election-internet-blackout/>

²⁰⁹ See *supra* note 17. Dhaka Tribune (2025).

That's not all. As we have noted, in December 2025, the International Criminal Court **acknowledged²¹⁰ the link between shutdowns and crimes against humanity**, after more than a decade of advocacy by Access Now and other members of the #KeepItOn coalition. Sustained documentation has demonstrated how shutdowns enable perpetrators to conceal violence, evade accountability, and deprive people of their rights, leading investigators to **consider shutdowns as part of inquiries into grave international crimes.²¹¹**

Our measurement partners have also continued to support and strengthen shutdown advocacy by moving beyond documentation to providing **real-time alerts and in-depth analysis of global trends**. In 2025, Internet Outage Detection and Analysis (IODA) expanded²¹² its platform and infrastructure to analyze large-scale throttling, **generating concrete evidence of throttling** and addressing longstanding challenges in detecting and documenting these often hidden disruptions. IODA also produced a **practical guide²¹³ for journalists and researchers**, enabling them to access real-time and historical insights into global internet disruptions at a macro level. Cloudflare introduced new features, including the Data Explorer,²¹⁴ which offers a simple Web-based interface for building complex API queries, applying comparisons and filters, and visualizing the results. These features support country and ASN-level shutdown analysis²¹⁵ for advocacy and evidence gathering. The Open Observatory of Network Interference (OONI) launched²¹⁶ thematic censorship pages, making it easier to **identify and respond to emerging** censorship of platforms that are in the public interest — such as news media platforms — without sifting through raw measurements. Finally, Kentik continued to **provide valuable real-time technical evidence²¹⁷** and updates on shutdowns as well as **detailed analysis²¹⁸ of shutdown trends over time**.

As we reflect on the 10th anniversary of the #KeepItOn campaign and coalition in 2026, we are encouraged to see the progress we are making despite the relentless increase in shutdowns. This coalition is what it is today thanks to the unwavering support and solidarity of each of the voices pushing back against digital authoritarianism and demanding change. It is vitally important to honor the resilience of affected communities, celebrate strengthened partnerships, and renew our collective commitment to end internet shutdowns worldwide.

²¹⁰ See *supra* note 18. International Criminal Court (2025).

²¹¹ Access Now (2024). *Legal explainer: Internet and telecommunications shutdowns in the assessment of international crimes*. <https://www.accessnow.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Shutdowns-and-ICL-Legal-Explainer.pdf>.

²¹² IODA (2025). *Shining a light on the slowdown: IODA to track internet bandwidth throttling*. <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/reports/shining-a-light-on-the-slowdown-ioda-to-track-internet-bandwidth-throttling/>.

²¹³ IODA (2025). *Discover the New IODA brochure: a must-have resource for journalists*. <https://ioda.inetintel.cc.gatech.edu/reports/inside-our-new-brochure-journalists-guide-to-ioda-2/>.

²¹⁴ Cloudflare Radar Data Explorer (2026). <https://radar.cloudflare.com/explorer?dataSet=netflows>.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ OONI (2025). *Launch: New OONI explorer thematic censorship pages*. <https://ooni.org/post/2025-ooni-explorer-thematic-censorship-pages/>.

²¹⁷ Doug Madory on X (2026). <https://x.com/DougMadory/status/2018728546777383103/>.

²¹⁸ Kentik (2026). *From stealth blackout to whitelisting: inside the Iranian shutdown*. <https://www.kentik.com/blog/from-stealth-blackout-to-whitelisting-inside-the-iranian-shutdown/>.

VIII. Recommendations for stakeholders

The global rise in internet shutdowns despite their many negative impacts is a clear call to action for all who care about human rights. The use of shutdowns to assert control, manipulate elections, and hide human rights violations is causing deep, preventable harm,²¹⁹ including the loss of lives.²²⁰ In Myanmar, Iran, Afghanistan, Tanzania, Sudan, and elsewhere, countless people have suffered and died under the cover of internet blackouts. **These deliberate disruptions must never be normalized.** Stakeholders from across sectors must take **immediate concrete steps to end internet shutdowns and hold perpetrators accountable.**

With the sharp increase in the **targeting of LEO satellite internet systems** further exacerbating multiple humanitarian crises around the world, it's imperative that governments, regulators, satellite providers, and international institutions develop more robust and inclusive governance processes,²²¹ and **support and implement solutions such as direct-to-cell satellite connectivity.**²²²

Below we provide specific recommendations for stakeholders, including states and international and regional bodies, private companies, humanitarian organizations, and funders, who can play a pivotal role in the fight for an open, secure, and inclusive internet for all. They are organized along four themes: strengthening norms, improving humanitarian response, resourcing civil society resistance, and investing in alternative connectivity.

STRENGTHENING NORMS

States and international organizations:

- States and international organizations must continue to **develop and strengthen norms to ensure the practice of internet shutdowns comes to an end.** In 2025, the UN General Assembly undertook its 20th review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to assess problems and challenges. In the outcome document adopted by consensus, world leaders stressed “the importance for all Member States and stakeholders, to **promote universal, free, open, interoperable, safe, reliable, and secure use of and access to the internet** by respecting and protecting human rights and by **refraining from internet shutdowns and measures that target internet access.**”²²³ This **represents a significant normative win**, and a high-level affirmation of a decade of advocacy against internet shutdowns at intergovernmental forums. International actors such as the UN Secretary-General, Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies (ODET), High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and other key mandate holders **should continue to advance this work** both through ongoing norm development and through accountability and implementation.
- States must **refrain from shutting down the internet**, and instead strengthen their commitments to respect and protect **universal, free, open, interoperable, safe, and secure** use of and access to the internet for everyone.
- State **parties to conflict** should **immediately halt any behavior resulting in shutdowns affecting civilian communities and the humanitarian system.**

²¹⁹ See *supra* note 13. Access Now (2025).

²²⁰ See *supra* note 32. Amnesty International (2025).

²²¹ See *supra* note 112. Access Now (2025).

²²² WITNESS (2026). *Civil society coalition launches campaign calling for direct-to-cell satellite connectivity amid Iran's internet shutdowns.* <https://www.witness.org/civil-society-coalition-launches-campaign-calling-for-direct-to-cell-satellite-connectivity-amid-irans-internet-shutdowns/>

²²³ United Nations (2025). *World Summit on Information Society +20.* <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/80/173/>

- » Warring parties must refrain from targeting ICT infrastructure and fully comply with the laws of armed conflict and humanitarian norms and principles, including the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution.
- » Warring parties and the international community shall also engage in good faith to protect civilian telecommunications, immediately restore connectivity in the event of a shutdown, and ensure that measures for these purposes are also integrated in any ceasefire or peace negotiation.
- **The Freedom Online Coalition (FOC) should renew and deepen its commitment to preventing internet shutdowns and pursuing accountability when they occur.** It's deeply alarming to see state members of the FOC — an alliance meant to advocate for internet freedom globally — undermine their own principles by imposing harmful internet shutdowns. The FOC's public statements denouncing internet shutdowns in times of conflict, elections, and protests are a clear signal that the international community must stand against such actions. ²²⁴
 - » The coalition should **adopt stronger and more effective accountability mechanisms for FOC members** to avoid the normalization of the use of internet shutdowns by its members.
 - » In light of the FOC discontinuing its Task Force on Internet Shutdowns (TFIS) in 2024, the coalition must **develop new mechanisms, in collaboration with civil society and the private sector, for continuing its public and private advocacy against shutdowns**, and for enabling more member states to step into leadership roles amid uncertain political support for internet freedom at a global level.

IMPROVING HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Humanitarian organizations:

- Humanitarian organizations must **prioritize emergency connectivity to the wider population, instead of focusing on humanitarian response only.**
 - » As the practice of shutting down the internet during situations of conflict and violence continues unabated, the humanitarian sector under guidance by the Humanitarian Protection Cluster (HPC) should **adopt more adequate protection standards for preventing, documenting, correcting, and redressing digital-related harms**, starting from the official recognition of civilian data and digital systems as protected objects under International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
 - » Considering the growing recognition of the life-saving and aid-enabling role of connectivity, protection and logistics-oriented entities, including the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), the Information and Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the HPC, should **agree on a set of standards and on a governing mechanism for rapid provision of civilian connectivity**, and design sustainable community-led emergency connectivity response and innovative connectivity solutions ranging from mesh systems and satellite direct to cell connectivity.

²²⁴ Freedom Online Coalition (2025). *Joint statement on protecting human rights online and preventing internet shutdowns in times of armed conflict*. <https://freedomonlinecoalition.com/joint-statement-on-protecting-human-rights-online-and-preventing-internet-shutdowns-in-times-of-armed-conflict/>

RESOURCING CIVIL SOCIETY RESISTANCE

Funders:

- Funders such as **governments, development agencies, and donor organizations** should **prioritize support for organizations working to document, raise awareness, and protect human rights**, by:
 - » **Prioritizing sustained and flexible funding for organizations working to document, challenge, and prevent internet shutdowns** and other forms of digital authoritarianism;
 - » **Investing in rapid-response and protection mechanisms** such as direct-to-cell connectivity to support organizations and groups operating in volatile and high risk environments,²²⁵ and
 - » **Championing coordinated action among governments, multilateral bodies, and philanthropy** to end internet shutdowns and safeguard an open and secure digital space for all.

INVESTING IN ALTERNATIVE CONNECTIVITY

Governments, regulators, satellite providers, and international institutions:

- Governments must **remove regulatory barriers to humanitarian connectivity** and ensure sanctions exemptions, licensing, and spectrum access allow satellite internet services to operate in countries under authoritarian control, including during shutdowns.
- Multilateral institutions should convene and support multistakeholder processes and spaces to **promote dialogue on standards and best practices in good governance and rapid response coordination for emergency connectivity** provision for civilians and humanitarian actors.
- Satellite providers and regulators must **prioritize crisis-ready satellite infrastructure** and ensure coverage, capacity, and rapid activation protocols are designed to serve crisis zones (not only profitable markets) enabling immediate use during emergencies.
- All actors must **ensure that connectivity is accessible for people under duress and services are affordable**, easy to activate, and compatible with commonly used devices, including through subsidized or pooled funding models that ensure access during shutdowns and emergencies.
- Policymakers and companies must **establish clear emergency response protocols and create fast-track mechanisms** to activate connectivity during documented crises to support medical care, humanitarian coordination, family contact, and human rights documentation.

²²⁵ See *supra* note 222. WITNESS (2026).



IX. Join us

As our coalition continues to grow and diversify, so will our capacity to turn the tide against the use of internet shutdowns as a tool for violence, authoritarianism, and oppression around the world. If you'd like to join us, we encourage you to reach out. All stakeholders are welcome as we work together to ensure shutdowns become a thing of the past.

CONTACT

For questions and more information, please visit:

<https://www.accessnow.org/keepiton/>

OR REACH OUT TO:

Felicia Anthonio

#KeepItOn Global Campaign Manager, Access Now

felicia@accessnow.org

Zach Rosson

#KeepItOn Global Data and Research Lead, Access Now

zach@accessnow.org

09/05/2025 Lithuania

04/09/2025 Nepal

26/06/2025 Togo

16/05/2025 Libya

Belarus

26/01/2025

18/02/2025

Iraq

DRC

23/01/2025

20/06/2025 Panama

28/01/2025 Myanmar

24/03/2025 Papua New Guinea

Tanzania

28/10/2025

#KeepItOn 