

CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT

RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.

ANNUAL REPORT

2022





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LETTER FROM SUSAN OSNOS, BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Supporters of CIVIC,

2022 was an especially awful year for civilians caught in conflict. We at CIVIC witnessed firsthand this terrible toll from the invasion of Ukraine to the too-often neglected wars of Yemen, Mali and elsewhere. While international humanitarian law was designed to protect the rights and lives of civilians, it means very little without compliance and accountability. Today and every day, CIVIC and our partners demand more protection for civilians, from concrete steps to prevent suffering and save lives, to fact-based and accountable responses to harm.

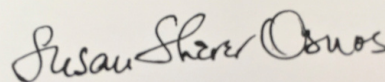
There is now some hope that global actors are mobilizing to protect the rights and lives of civilians in war. Until Russia's invasion of Ukraine, too many people did not fully grasp the effect of explosive weapons in urban areas: the loss of innocent lives and the long-term havoc of wrecked infrastructure, schools and hospitals. In 2022, over 80 nations signed the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. The Declaration commits states to revise military practices in urban areas, including refraining from the use of such weapons, providing assistance to victims, and collecting and sharing data on the effects of explosive weapons. CIVIC has been working steadily towards this moment for over a decade, and we will be there in the decades following to ensure meaningful change through implementation of the commitments undertaken by states.

We also welcomed the new US Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP), an unprecedented effort to improve United States prevention efforts and response to civilian harm, announced in August by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. When implemented correctly, the Action Plan will make a profound difference in the lives of civilians in conflict. We hope to see similar efforts by other states globally and will work hard to ensure the US plan follows through effectively and commits to ensuring accountability for past harm.

The devastating war in Ukraine has reminded the world that civilians always bear the brunt of war. Yet as we strive to protect civilians in Ukraine, we cannot fail to respond to the longstanding suffering of civilians in forgotten conflicts around the world, such as Syria, Yemen, Nigeria and Mali. We work long hours every day with conflict-affected communities and take our expertise to power centers everywhere to build a better future in which no civilian is harmed in conflict.

Doing this work requires that we believe change is possible. It is the partners, peers, and supporters such as yourself that allow us to safeguard the lives of civilians caught in conflict. We are committed to this mission and buoyed by the important new policies and declarations of 2022. Thank you for your support and your partnership.

Sincerely,



Susan Osnos
Board Chair, CIVIC



LETTER FROM FEDERICO BORELLO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends of CIVIC,

On February 24th we marked the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The consequent war has been frequently reported on through news outlets over the last year, providing us with a glimpse into the immense crisis faced by so many in Ukraine. As the end of the war tragically does not appear to be in sight, it is clear that much more is needed to alleviate the suffering of those whose lives have been upended by this conflict. Center for Civilians in Conflict's presence in Ukraine has been more vital than ever, and we will continue to be at the forefront of advocating for and enabling the protection of civilians in Ukraine.

While the world's attention has been directed at Ukraine, with record mobilization of resources and support, civilians have also continued to suffer outside of the spotlight, in places like Ethiopia, Nigeria, Myanmar, Yemen and Syria. CIVIC continues to raise awareness and advocate for the protection of civilians in conflicts, whether or not they are on the front pages. I recently traveled to Yemen, and spoke to internally displaced people living in sub-human circumstances. The World Food Programme warned it was forced to take food from the hungry to feed the starving and might soon be unable to feed even the starving. In the Lake Chad Basin, an average of 11 civilians per day are the victims of serious violence as a result of the armed conflict. And in Nigeria, displaced communities were left homeless after displacement camps were shut down, exposing them to abuses and exploitation by armed groups. These forgotten wars remain a priority for CIVIC, as the lack of attention from the international community and media leads to dwindling financial support to respond to humanitarian needs while thousands of civilians are in dire need of protection.

Lastly, I want to take a moment to highlight some of the progress on the protection of civilians in 2022. In August, the US Department of Defense released the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan

(CHMR-AP), an unprecedented and detailed action plan to overhaul how the US prevents and respond to civilian harm. The action plan followed calls from CIVIC and our partners for urgent reforms after over 20 years of repeated civilian harm without meaningful accountability, learning, or policy change. If implemented properly, the CHMR-AP represents a historical milestone in the protection of civilians. Also in August, CIVIC secured approval for the Civilian Casualty Tracking Analysis and Response Cell (CCTARC) at the 7th Division of the Nigerian Army, which is the result of a multi-year effort. This mechanism, the first of its kind in Nigeria, will help the military track, analyze, and respond to civilians that may be harmed by security forces and is an incredible step towards improving the protection of all civilians in Nigeria. Later in 2022, more than 80 States signed a political declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) in Dublin, Ireland. The EWIPA declaration is an important milestone in the protection of civilians, as many of today's conflicts are fought in densely populated cities. These three highlights are just some of the examples of incredible milestones on the protection of civilians in 2022, and we look forward to continuing to advocate for the protection of civilians in 2023.

Thank you to all who have supported CIVIC over the last years. To our incredible and passionate staff, our donors, and our Board, we are grateful for your work and support and look forward to the coming year of growth.

Thank you,



Federico Borello
Executive Director,
CIVIC





OUR MISSION

Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) is a non-profit organization that strives for a world where no civilian is harmed in conflict.

There is nothing inevitable about civilian casualties in war. Civilian harm can be prevented, minimized, and remedied.

2022 – A TROUBLED YEAR

The War in Ukraine

The Russian invasion of Ukraine was widely recognized as the major global event of 2022. Since February 24, 2022, the world has witnessed countless attacks on civilians by Russian Armed Forces. Cities and towns were bombed. Schools, hospitals, and theaters were targeted by airstrikes. And humanitarian convoys were prevented from reaching populations in need. The war has created the greatest refugee surge in Europe since World War II, with more than 8 million Ukrainians seeking refuge outside their country. With each passing day, violations of international humanitarian law and human rights were recorded, while the number of civilian casualties grew. Simultaneously, calls for perpetrators of war atrocities and crimes to be held accountable rose. Throughout 2022, CIVIC continued supporting local communities affected by fighting and airstrikes, as well as internally displaced families and individuals. We also enhanced our cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine to ensure better protection outcomes.

A Brief Moment of Truce

2022 brought a few months of respite for millions of Yemenis who have suffered from the devastating eight-year long conflict. A three-month truce beginning on April 2 was extended twice before it expired on October 2. Since then, parties to the conflict have not agreed on a new deal and the risk of re-escalation remains probable. Despite the truce, the suffering of millions of Yemenis continued in 2022 as they were impacted by the indirect effects of the war in Ukraine with a surge in food prices and basic items. With 90 percent of its food and key supplies being imported, Yemen is highly vulnerable to fluctuation of global market prices. Through 2022, CIVIC expanded its activities and interventions to cover more regions in Yemen, reaching more civilians and military and security actors.



CIVIC / Daniel Brown



CIVIC/ Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

UN Peacekeepers Face Growing Threats

Attacks against UN peacekeeping missions rose. UN peacekeepers increasingly faced tensions with local communities and direct attacks by armed actors in at least three missions, in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Mali. At least 32 UN peacekeeping personnel were killed in deliberate attacks in 2022, according to the United Nations. Malicious acts were the highest cause of fatalities of uniformed personnel, amounting to 53 percent of fatalities. In the three countries, UN peacekeeping missions were also the target of mis-/disinformation campaigns, and in some cases were prevented access to key locations. In Mali, the government openly spoke against MINUSMA's human rights mandate at a UN Security Council meeting, and later expelled the Mission's spokesperson.

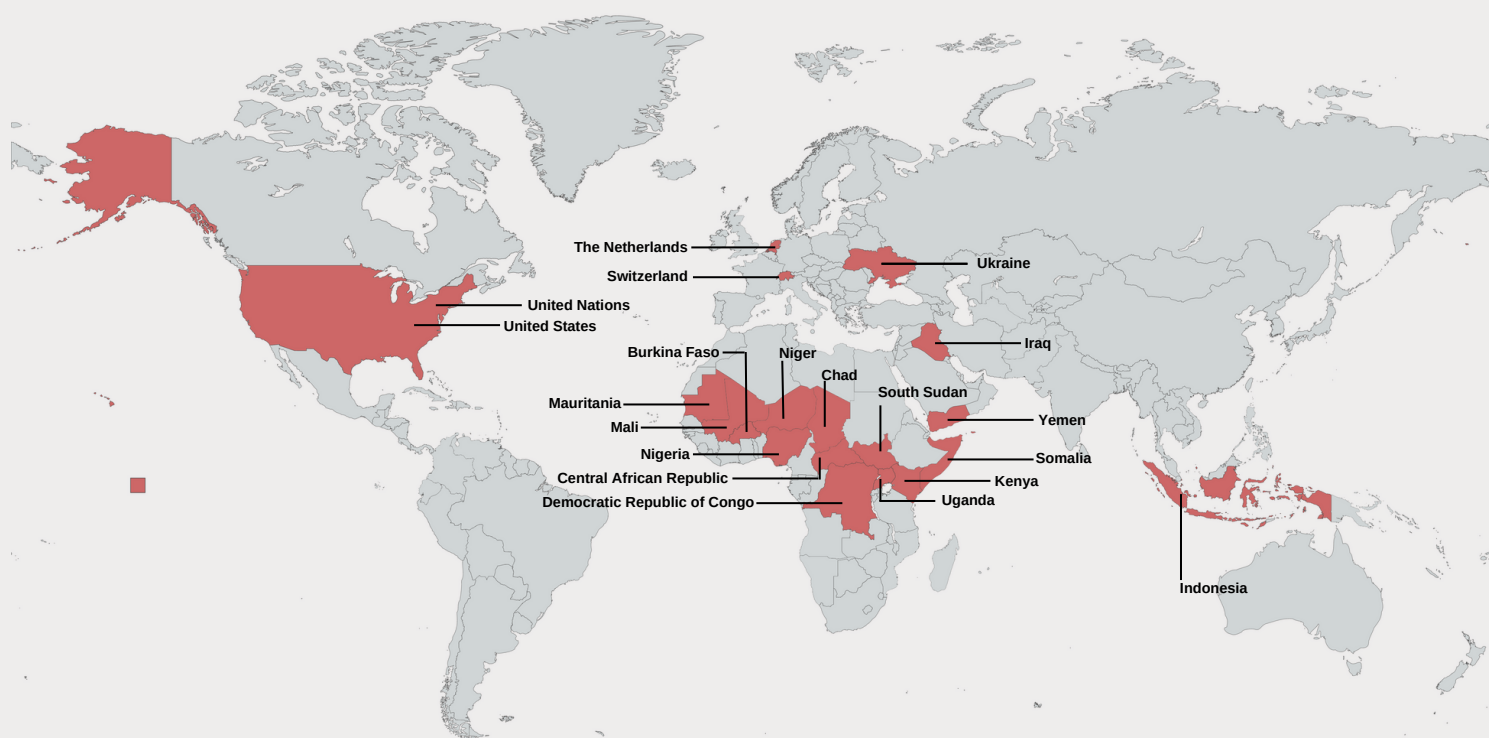
A Global Agreement on Explosive Weapons

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is the leading cause of civilian casualties in armed conflict. On average, 90 percent of victims of attacks using explosive weapons in populated areas are civilians. In a welcome development, 82 countries officially endorsed the Political Declaration on the Protection of Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas in November 2022 in Dublin. The declaration, which aims at reducing harm and strengthening the protection of civilians in armed conflict, is the culmination of a decade-long advocacy effort led by the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), of which CIVIC is a member of the steering committee, the ICRC, and the United Nations, as well as three years of diplomatic negotiations led by Ireland.

US Commits to Reduce Civilian Casualties

The US Department of Defense unveiled a plan - the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan- aimed at reducing US military harm to civilians in armed conflict. The plan contains 11 major objectives, many of them addressing fundamental flaws in US military operations that have caused civilian deaths, injuries, and other harm in a number of countries around the world. Non governmental organizations, including CIVIC, have for over 20 years documented harm caused by US military operations and the DoD's flawed approach to preventing and responding to civilian harm.

WHERE AND HOW CIVIC WORKS



RESEARCH

CIVIC conducts in-depth research, speaking with victims and survivors and engaging with militaries. This allows us to develop pragmatic recommendations that can be implemented to reduce further harm to civilians and to properly respond when harm does occur.

ADVOCACY

Drawing from our research and field presence, we formulate recommendations for policymakers. We develop a detailed advocacy plan for every situation, reaching out to all parties who might positively influence the outcome we seek.

PROGRAMMING

A core CIVIC value is belief that civilian harm is not inevitable in armed conflict. We work with communities to improve their protection and provide tools for them to engage with government, militaries and other stakeholders to ensure their needs are understood and met. We believe that communities in conflict know what is best for them and we help them tell their stories.

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN POPULATED AREAS

On November 18, 2022, the first ever international agreement to reduce the harm caused to civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) was adopted by 82 states in Dublin, Ireland. With many of today's global conflicts fought in densely populated cities, the political declaration is a crucial step in the protection of civilians.

The outcome is the culmination of a decade-long advocacy effort led by the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), of which CIVIC is a member of the steering committee, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations, and three years of diplomatic negotiations guided by the Government of Ireland.

From Syria to Ethiopia, Somalia to Ukraine, the disastrous impact of urban warfare on civilians are hard to ignore. Even though harm to civilians resulting from armed conflict in towns and cities is not a new phenomenon, measures to prevent, mitigate, and respond to civilian harm have been insufficient.

The declaration promotes stronger standards to protect civilians and commits states that endorse it to take action to implement it by making changes to their national policy and practice, including military policies and operational rules of engagement.

Ahead of the signing conference in Dublin, CIVIC published several press releases calling states to endorse the declaration and issued a brief to guide states in their implementation of the agreement as well as a primer on reducing civilian harm in urban military operations.



OCHA / Themba Linden

In 2023 and beyond, CIVIC will remain committed to reducing civilian harm by explosive weapons and ensuring meaningful change through the implementation of the commitments undertaken by signatory states. CIVIC, in partnership with PAX, also dedicated a podcast [episode](#) to this landmark initiative.

CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT, AND CIVILIAN PROTECTION

In 2022, CIVIC published two research reports exploring the ways climate change can create new threats to civilians and their protection in Iraq and Yemen.

CIVIC / Ali Najip

RISKING THE FUTURE: Climate Change, Environmental Destruction, and Conflict in Yemen



The findings of the reports illustrate the ways that climate change can compound existing protection challenges, both by making vulnerabilities more acute and complex, and by straining the protective capacities of states and communities. They also demonstrate that while civilians and communities develop their own strategies for adapting to the multiplier effect of climate change, more is needed to improve their capacity for self-protection and response.

In the coming years, climate change is expected to further exacerbate resource competition, displacement, and environmental degradation. While nothing can “predict” where or how violence will occur, studies show that climate change can place intense stress on communities and stretch the capacity of governments to respond. This can lead to friction among, between, and within communities, and can even trigger violence, especially in places with governance deficits. Sudden and gradual changes in the natural environment can also affect the vulnerabilities of civilians and communities, and alter the capacities needed to adapt.

Meanwhile, if not properly planned, managed, and channeled, government responses to insecurity as a result of climate change can actually exacerbate protection challenges through over-securitized responses such as by curbing rights to movement, expression, and assembly, much as was seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2023, CIVIC will continue exploring the linkages between climate change and armed conflict, and seek to integrate an environmental and climate sensitive approach into its programs and activities.

“IF I LEAVE... I CANNOT BREATHE”:

Climate Change and
Civilian Protection in Iraq

CIVIC/Mostafa Altafwe



PRIVATIZING WAR

Operations carried out by private military and security companies (PMSCs) in conflict-affected areas have a huge impact on the protection of civilians. The proliferation of contractors in conflict-affected areas over the last 30 years has been accompanied by concerns about violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws.

While PMSCs can be an attractive option for governments and militaries seeking external security support without the oversight and restrictions that can come with bi-lateral military support, their status as non-state actors presents unique challenges related to accountability and ensuring they abide by international humanitarian law and human rights law.

In 2022, CIVIC conducted research to better understand the impact of PMSCs on the protection of civilians, civilian harm reduction, and the need to hold PMSCs accountable whenever they commit violations. The report included several recommendations tailored to four types of actors: states, PMSCs, the UN, and INGOs.

In the absence of strong international accountability frameworks for PMSCs, it is extremely difficult to regulate and monitor their activities, as well as hold them liable when crimes are committed. Without a regulatory framework, their operations will continue to pose significant risks to civilians.



MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO OUR WORK

In May 2022, CIVIC launched its first Gender Action Plan (GAP) for the period 2022-2024. These are some of the achievements recorded following the launch:

- A Gender Focal Points (GFP) Network was established in which the representatives of all teams across CIVIC and GFP received training to strengthen their gender-related knowledge and capacity.
- CIVIC marked and honored important gender dates including International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, and joined for the first time the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence global campaign.
- Teams across CIVIC have integrated gender perspectives into their work, which has resulted in many successful enterprises from community-based initiatives, advocacy, and production of gender-focused research to improve representation of women and integration of gender perspectives in trainings of security forces.

In 2023, CIVIC will support staff in their efforts to mainstream gender into their work and develop gender-sensitive language to be used across the organization. We will also further pursue our efforts and commitment to advance gender equality and increase women's representation in CIVIC's internal culture, strategies, and programs.

New Global Advocacy Strategy Launched

In October 2022, CIVIC launched its global advocacy strategy. This strategy restates CIVIC's commitment to amplify the voices of communities in conflict and ensure that at the national, regional, and global levels, due attention is paid to the protection of civilians in conflict situations.

The Global Strategy provides a framework for maximizing our internal resources and vast footprints in shaping policies that provide optimal protection of civilians both locally and globally.

The Global Strategy recognizes the importance of building a strong ecosystem for the protection of civilians in conflict. To this end, the strategy sets out to invest in building networks of collaborators beyond our traditional partners. CIVIC has begun exploring relationships with veteran groups, celebrities and global influencers, traditional and religious institutions, multilateral bodies such as the World Bank, IMF, NGOs working on democracy and governance, Bar Associations, sports teams and brands. The Global Strategy recognizes the need of becoming more strategic in our partnerships to increase our chances of influencing those who play a key role in protecting civilians in conflict.

Therefore, CIVIC is also seeking to create joint advocacy initiatives with like-minded partners around common areas of focus such as the conflicts in Yemen, Ukraine, and the Sahel to achieve improved protection for civilians.

In 2022, CIVIC focused many of its efforts in clarifying our vision and systems for effective advocacy. We are building up our internal mechanisms and improving our internal capacity. Meanwhile, we are expanding our external outreach to duty bearers and other critical stakeholders to ensure that communities in conflict receive maximum protection, have a voice in their protection, and can be agents of their own protection concerns.



AFRICA

EAST AND HORN OF AFRICA



CIVIC's East and Horn of Africa program launched in 2021 to address the multiplicity of actors engaged in conflict environments throughout the region and the threats they pose to civilians.

In 2022, CIVIC supported local communities participating in Community Protection Groups (CPGs) in Lamu and Wajir counties in Kenya. Both counties have a history of inter-communal violence, attacks from al-Shabaab, and legacies of mistrust with the Kenyan security forces. Each group was comprised of 30 people largely representational of the local community. The CPGs have played a critical role between the communities and militaries in these locations, primarily by organizing and facilitating the first civilian-military dialogues in Wajir. Both parties were initially hesitant to speak with each other and eventually opened up for discussion. These dialogues provided a space for community leaders to present protection concerns to the military, including actions by the military that civilians perceived as attempts at intimidation or coercion. Both sides were also able to acknowledge instances where they had successfully worked together. They agreed to follow-up on the issues raised and arrange for subsequent dialogues.

“Who could have imagined that someone would come here and think of how to bring us to work with the military? We have lived like foreigners and never appreciated how the work of the military helps us. For us, they have always just been people who cause trouble and who each civilian should stay clear of. We are looking forward to constructive engagement with them based on the lessons we have received from this training.” - A CPG member in Wajir

In parallel, CIVIC conducted extensive civilian protection and Civilian Harm Mitigation (CHM) trainings of security forces throughout the year. CIVIC and the Somali National Army (SNA) began a series of conversations on integrating civilian harm mitigation into their training, which resulted in the first training of 21 members of the SNA in Mogadishu. Across the border in Kenya, CIVIC trained nearly 600 members of the Kenyan Defense Forces, including 330 officers and enlisted soldiers scheduled for deployment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of the East Africa Response Force (EARF), and others bound for Somalia. CIVIC also organized an inter-agency roundtable to discuss civilian protection with the International Peace Support Training Centre in June 2022.

NIGERIA



CIVIC / Damilola Onafuwa

Nigeria remained one of the most dangerous countries for civilians in 2022 with armed opposition groups operating widely, particularly in the Northeast region and the greater Lake Chad Basin. Instances of armed “banditry” have increased significantly throughout the Northwest and North-Central regions, where they regularly engage in kidnappings for ransom and other high-profile violence against local communities. States in the “Middle Belt” region have continued to suffer from inter-communal violence between pastoralists and farming communities that is often exacerbated by ethno-religious tensions. A multiplicity of community-based militias – formed in response to security threats – were responsible for more than 57 percent of total reported civilian fatalities in 2022.

This year, CIVIC continued to support improved civilian protection in Nigeria through engagement with local communities, advising and training security forces, and direct advocacy. This has included continued support to civilian community protection groups organized as “Community Protection Committees” in Borno state.

Impact on the Ground:

- In Dikwa, members of a local community protection committee filed a complaint alleging misconduct of a soldier extorting civilians at a security checkpoint. The incident was investigated and resulted in the soldier being demoted in rank and prohibited from taking part in civilian-led activities.
- In Konduga, civilians raised concerns with the Nigerian military over threats from armed opposition group members preventing them from accessing their farmlands. Nigeria Armed Forces launched an operation to dislodge the groups, allowing farmers to regain safe access to their land and harvest their crops.
- In Gwoza, community members have been killed and injured by IEDs and unexploded ordnance. In collaboration with UN Mine Action Service, CIVIC provided training to civilians to increase their awareness about landmines, unexploded ordnance, and explosive remnants of war, and how they could engage local security forces to report sightings and advocate for their concerns. Community members report this has reduced civilian casualties from such explosives.

In parallel, CIVIC continued its direct engagement with the Nigerian government and its military to develop best practices and strengthen knowledge on the protection of civilians. In 2022, CIVIC rolled out its first mobile-phone based training application where soldiers role-play the experience of women caught in a conflict zone and must decide how to best protect themselves and their family. More than 3,000 Nigerian soldiers and other security personnel operating in northeast Nigeria received the training through the app. CIVIC is planning to expand its usage across Nigeria in 2023.

To complement these activities, CIVIC continued to advocate for the Nigerian government and military to review their existing practices and adopt new ones to prevent and respond to civilian harm, such as airstrikes. In 2022, the government announced the formation of a committee to investigate these allegations and then make recommendations to mitigate future harm.

Finally, 2022 also saw the establishment of a Civilian Causality Tracking Analysis and Response Cell (CCTARC) within the 7th Division of the Nigerian Army headquartered in Maiduguri, Borno state and responsible for overseeing Operation Hadin Kai. This cell is the first of its kind in Nigeria and aims to help the military track, analyze, and respond to civilians that may be harmed by the military operations and then use the data to inform future planning.



OCHA / Otto Bakano

Civilians in the Central Sahel – Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger – continue to face insecurity and the threats of direct attacks by armed opposition groups. Military operations carried out by authorities have also caused significant harm to civilians and their communities. Reports of abuses and human rights violations perpetrated by armed actors and security forces are a regular occurrence throughout the region. Local populations are also increasingly at risk of communal violence between ethnic militias and “self-defense groups.”

In 2022, the Sahel recorded a startling 49 percent increase in civilian fatalities from armed opposition groups compared to 2021. The region now accounts for 60 percent of all civilian-targeted fatalities linked to armed opposition groups in Africa, according to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies.

The region has also faced significant political upheaval since April 2021, particularly following military coups in Burkina Faso (January 2022 and September 2022) and Mali (May 2021). The fluid political environment in the Sahel has created many challenges for CIVIC’s work and its staff, requiring us to continually adjust our approach to improve the protection of civilians in the region.

In response to the growing insecurity in Burkina Faso, CIVIC engaged with a group of civil society organizations (CSOs) to help them advocate for better protection outcomes. The group focused on the risks posed by the community militia groups popularly known as the VDP, which the government formalized into state-affiliated forces. As a result of these efforts, Burkina Faso’s Defense Council created the Brigade of Vigilance and Patriotic Defense (BVDP) to operate under the Ministry of National Defense. The brigade manages civilian auxiliaries who are hired to support Burkina Faso’s security forces in the fight against armed opposition groups, and monitor their behavior. The aim is to reduce the significant harm VDPs cause to civilians.

In neighboring Niger, the western region of Tillabéri remains the epicenter of attacks against civilians. In 2022, CIVIC significantly increased its engagement with Nigerien Armed Forces (FAN) to ensure the protection of civilians is integrated by all levels of the armed forces, from students at the École Militaire Supérieure to the office of the Nigerien Army Chief of Staff.

In 2022, CIVIC trained more than 700 security and Nigerien defense personnel and will deliver additional training in 2023. CIVIC and the FAN also agreed on establishing a mechanism to track civilian harm caused by armed actors in the FAN operational areas.



Increasing awareness about civilian harm and the many ways it can be remedied has been a significant component of CIVIC's work in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. On November 17, CIVIC organized a parliamentary discussion at the National Assembly of Niger. The event, which was broadcast live on national TV and radio stations, was a unique opportunity to inform parliamentarians and the general public about issues pertaining to the protection of civilians. During the session, several parliamentarians expressed concerns over the plight of civilians in the country and expressed interest in using CIVIC's POC evaluation toolkit.

EUROPE

Following COVID-19 limits on activity in Europe, the CIVIC team re-invigorated relationships with international organizations and individual governments and continued to push its European partners to improve their Protection of Civilian (POC) approaches and address emerging challenges.

As a result of war in Ukraine, advocacy in Europe mostly focused on the repercussions of the conflict. The toll of the Ukraine war on civilians—as well as their remarkable resilience and innovation in the face of adversity—brought increased attention to the consequences of large-scale, high-intensity conflict for civilians.

In this context, and in the run-up to NATO's adoption of the new Strategic Concept, CIVIC staff published commentaries on how the Concept should approach POC in the *NATO Review* and the *Royal United Services Institute*, met with national delegations and NATO staff, and coordinated with civil society organizations (CSO). The new *Strategic Concept* refers to protecting the Alliance populations as NATO's key task and explicitly mentions civilian harm mitigation as part of crisis management and capacity building missions.

The Alliance's Human Security Approach, encompassing civilian protection and published three months after the Concept, reiterates this approach and recommits Allies to “an ambitious human security agenda.” While these texts confirm that POC is a key priority for NATO and are in line with CIVIC's recommendations on crisis response operations, they leave one key gap: there is no specific language on preparing to protect civilians in high-intensity, large-scale combat operations on NATO territory. This, along with pushing for the implementation of commitments related to crisis response operations, will be the focus of CIVIC's future work.

In November, CIVIC trained 60 NATO's Human Security Focal Points on civilian harm mitigation.

Within the EU, CIVIC participated in several policy debates including the 2022 European Humanitarian Forum, the “Protection of Civilians in the Sahel” workshop, and EU-hosted conferences on Ukraine, the Sahel, and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

CIVIC also participated in the annual NGO-COARM Forum, bringing together representatives from civil society and the EU's Conventional Arms Working Party, and at the Arms Trade Treaty Conference of State Parties in Geneva, addressing arms deliveries to Ukraine.

In the Netherlands, the CSO consortium's three-year engagement with the Ministry of Defense (MOD) has contributed to the creation of a Protection of Civilians team within the ministry and commitment to a Dutch adaptation of the US Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP).

In the UK, CIVIC's input into MOD consultations is informing the implementation of the Ministry's 12-year Human Security Strategy (2020-2032) aiming to mainstream human security concerns across defense operations.

In Germany, which is in the process of adopting a new National Security Strategy (NSS), CIVIC staff published an op-ed with the *Global Public Policy Institute* on how to prioritize protection of civilians in national strategies and chaired an advocacy session with the German Foreign Office NSS penholder.





2022 was a life-changing year for millions in Ukraine as Russia launched a full-scale invasion on February 24. As reported by the United Nations and other human rights organizations, Russian forces have committed a series of violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) including indiscriminate and disproportionate shellings of civilian areas, which has had disastrous consequences on civilians and civilian property. Repeated attacks on energy infrastructure left millions of civilians without electricity, water, and heat as winter temperatures dropped below zero.

Under these circumstances, CIVIC's ability to operate in Ukraine, mostly led by Ukrainian nationals, was briefly affected as the security and safety of our staff and their families became our top priority. We had to review our programmatic approach to meet the challenges that the country faced.

Because of its existing relationships with local communities, civil society organizations, and military actors, CIVIC was able to swiftly pivot its approach to meet the needs of civilians through its community-based protection initiative. In 2022, CIVIC in Ukraine actively engaged with communities that have been affected by both shelling and occupation by Russian Armed Forces. CIVIC established Community Protection Groups (CPGs) to help people protect themselves from the impact of high intensity warfare in five different communities. The CPGs brought together member of their communities and their local authorities and military and security forces to discuss the threats and risks civilians faced and find solutions together for their protection.

In three of these communities, local authorities recognized the work conducted by the CPGs to be essential for the protection of civilians and decided to institutionalize their roles. Being recognized by their local government, these groups can now access funds from local institutions to develop and implement their activities. Throughout 2022, CIVIC facilitated 14 meetings throughout Ukraine with CPGs and 112 community members, of which 60 percent were women.

In parallel to supporting the creation of CPGs, CIVIC launched a "Local Initiatives Fund". The fund was created to finance the development and the implementation of activities by communities to enhance

their protection and provide them with access to reliable information related to threats and risks. In its first phase (September to December 2022), five local non-governmental organizations located in Poltava oblast received funds for building capacity of local residents and local authorities who have primary responsibility for the protection of civilians.

People in Ukraine, including CIVIC staff themselves, have demonstrated an incredible ability to organize, mobilize and respond to some of the protection needs their families and own communities face. In 2022, CIVIC conducted research about the role Ukrainian civilians have played in their own protection since the Russian invasion in February 2022. The research, which was published in March 2023, showed the innovative ways in which civilians have used self-protection when other support failed them.

Despite the war, CIVIC continued its cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, including the Territorial Defence Forces, on the protection of civilians. Such engagement became more important than ever, given the high level of armed hostilities civilians have been exposed to. In 2022, CIVIC conducted a series of 18 capacity-building sessions to 240 Territorial Defense Forces and Special Operations Forces officers.

MIDDLE EAST

Iraq



Iraq remains subject to regional tensions. A number of areas of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) have experienced sporadic attacks by artillery, drones, and rockets from Türkiye and Iran. At the same time, some armed forces and most of the non-state armed groups in Iraq are continuously violating international law, threatening civilians' lives.

In addition, climate related displacements, inter- and intra-communal tensions and divisions over cultural and religious identities remain and continue to be manipulated by various actors in Iraq. This poses a threat to the country's long-term political stability and social cohesion.

In response, to disproportionate and deadly use of force by Iraqi security forces to quell mass protests that erupted in 2019, CIVIC developed and delivered trainings on the use of force under International Human Rights Law to security forces in Nineveh and Kirkuk, conducted awareness sessions with the Ministry of Interior, and engaged in advocacy with the Prime Minister's office on the use of force towards civilians, including in times of protests. In August 2022, the Prime Minister finally issued directives on the use of force for upcoming protests which forbid the use of live bullets. The directives used language suggested by CIVIC on the importance of protecting civilians from harm.

Despite being the first country to implement a National Action Plan for UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Iraq still lags behind when it comes to gender equality. This gap extends to the security sector, as documented by CIVIC in a report published in March 2022. CIVIC found that Iraqi security forces are lacking female representation at the officer level, in training positions, and in tactical and operational roles. CIVIC shared its findings with CPGs, who carried out an advocacy campaign among security officials to ensure more women join security forces and that they are better represented. As a result, in 2022, newly recruited female officers conducted security patrols for the first time in the modern history of Kirkuk. During September 2022 in a landmark move, the Ministry of Interior publicly called for women to apply for the upcoming officers' course at the Police College.

Even though the Islamic State no longer controls territory in Iraq, military operations to eliminate the threat of the group and to prevent its re-emergence are ongoing. To mark the fifth anniversary of the liberation of Mosul from IS, CIVIC hosted in June 2022 its first National Conference on the Protection of Civilians in Iraq titled "Steps Forward and Challenges: Five Years After the Liberation of Mosul." Participants, gathered in Baghdad, acknowledged the importance of military and security trainings on the protection of civilians as well as regular support to civilian communities during and after conflict.

IMPACT ON THE GROUND!

- Because schools should be safe spaces for children and not used for military purposes, Community Protection Groups (CPGs), supported by CIVIC, negotiated the removal of military units in 15 schools and education institutes in Kirkuk and Nineveh. More than 20,000 girls and boys were able to return to their classroom and resume their education.
- Because displaced families from the conflict should be protected and receive support in rebuilding their lives, CPGs, supported by CIVIC, facilitated the return of nearly 10,000 displaced families to their areas of origin in Kirkuk and Nineveh.



A truce in Yemen brought a glimmer of hope to Yemenis, allowing them to envisage a better and safer future. The six-month truce shifted Yemen into a new phase, one that could represent the beginning of the end of this conflict. Conflict-related displacement and civilian casualties notably decreased, according to UN statistics. The truce also enabled movement allowing greater access to lifesaving services like medical care, or simply the hope to reunite with friends and family. Unfortunately, the truce, which ended in 2022, was not renewed. CIVIC, alongside hundreds of other organizations, have been calling for a renewed truce to pave the way to a real, long-lasting, and inclusive Yemeni peace process.

It's against this backdrop that CIVIC continued its support to civilians organized in community protection groups (CPGs). Several important initiatives undertaken in 2022 led to tangible results, including the release of dozens of people arbitrarily detained by armed actors, as well as the removal of check points and personnel involved in civilian harm.

CPGs continue to play a crucial role in the protection of civilians at the local level. For example, when fighting broke out between armed actors in Crater District in Aden in 2022, CPG members played an important role in convincing some of the forces to temporarily stop the clashes in order to enable the evacuation of citizens at risk of being caught in the crossfire.

One of the initiatives spearheaded by CPGs in Marib was the creation of an Early Warning Response System to identify possible conflict risk, alert and inform communities, and initiate timely responses for their protection. The system, supported by CIVIC, was adopted by Yemen's Executive Bureau for Internally Displaced Persons and was officially announced in an event in January 2023.

At the same time, CIVIC pursued its engagement with military and security actors as well as local communities to create conditions enabling the protection of civilians. In 2022, CIVIC in Yemen has expanded its geographical coverage and delved deeper in terms of the level of intervention.

For example, CIVIC's team in Yemen reached military and security actors in Aden, Taiz, Marib, Hadramut, the West Coast, and Shabwa to deliver training in Civilian Harm Mitigation (CHM) and Protection of Civilians (POC) and/or to initiate discussions on policies and practices that should be changed or adopted.

As a result of these engagements, CIVIC supported the drafting of a code of conduct for security actors. CIVIC ensured the incorporation of language related to the protection of civilians and removed gender discriminatory reference, amongst other amendments. The code of conduct is expected to be operational in 2023, leading to the institutionalization of best practice standards for security actors.

By the end of 2022, CIVIC in Yemen trained 787 military and security forces members in POC and CHM compared with 401 at the end of 2021.

In 2023, CIVIC will continue its engagement with local communities and security and military actors in all its locations. At the request of Yemen's Ministry of Defense, CIVIC will also support the development of a curriculum on the protection of civilians for new and past military recruits.

UNITED STATES

In 2022, the United States continued to use force around the world and was the largest supplier of security assistance and arms to other governments worldwide, selling more weapons than the next four countries combined. CIVIC continued to advocate for the adoption of new US laws and policies to strengthen how the U.S. prevents and responds to civilian harm in its own operations and security cooperation activities.



In August 2022, the Department of Defense (DoD) launched the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP), an unprecedented plan to prevent, track, and respond to civilian harm caused by US military operations. The CHMR-AP incorporates concrete policy proposals that echo CIVIC's and partners' longstanding recommendations. In 2023, CIVIC will continue to advocate for bold civilian harm prevention and mitigation policies, including robust implementation of the CHMR-AP and the forthcoming Department of Defense Instruction on civilian harm, and policies to rigorously investigate and ensure amends for past cases of civilian harm.

For much of the year, CIVIC's US Program and civil society partners engaged with members of Congress to institutionalize strong civilian harm prevention and response policies in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

The law, signed in December 2022, authorized \$25 million for CHMR-AP implementation (with a total of \$41.8 million appropriated by Congress); mandated the establishment of a Center of Excellence for civilian protection; extended the authorization for condolence payments; required a report on the US military's practices for distinguishing between civilians and combatants in its operations; and institutionalized stronger civilian harm reporting.

Being, by far, the world's leading exporter of weapons, stronger policies are sorely needed to ensure US arms do not fuel conflict, civilian harm, and human rights violations. This is why, in 2022, CIVIC launched the Arms Sales Accountability Project (ASAP). The campaign, supported by the Open Society Policy Center, brings together diverse organizations to undertake research, advocacy, and public engagement related to US arms sales and security assistance. In 2022, the coalition briefed officials at the Departments of State and Defense, sponsored strategic research, and advocated for legislative and executive branch reforms to US arms transfer policies. The campaign launched publicly in early 2023, calling for the US public to take action by demanding more accountability and transparency.

UNITED NATIONS

In 2022, CIVIC's UN program maintained its track record of influencing the mandates of the four largest UN peacekeeping operations in South Sudan (UNMISS), Mali (MINUSMA), Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), as well as several UN policies and practices, both at UNHQ and in field missions.



CIVIC's evidence-based advocacy strengthened the UN Security Council's (UNSC) mandate language related to the protection of civilians (POC), including on the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP), and civilian harm mitigation (CHM), community engagement and civil society inclusion, and on conflict-related sexual violence, among other topics. In addition to direct expert advisory support to the UNSC, the program convened several closed-door and public events.

As in previous years, CIVIC co-organized the UN Protection of Civilians Week for 2022 in New York City. POC Week 2022 garnered an unprecedented level of interest as Member States, UN bodies, and civil society partners co-hosted 15 side events to the annual Security Council debate on the protection of civilians.

CIVIC, along with several co-hosts, held an expert-level roundtable, “Prioritizing Protection of Civilians and Inclusive National Ownership in Peacekeeping Transitions,” which examined the practical implementation of Security Council 2594, including how civilian protection is prioritized during challenging periods of peace operations’ drawdowns and transitions.

CIVIC’s UN Program also published nine research publications during the course of 2022. The focus of these research publications included gauging the effectiveness of the casualty evacuation system within the MINUSMA, improving the ‘Do No Harm’ approach within UNMISS for better protection in South Sudan, and prioritizing the protection of civilians during peacekeeping transitions.

In 2022, CIVIC’s UN Program also partnered with the Department of Peace Operations to host a cross-mission workshop in Entebbe, Uganda, to exchange practices and lessons from peacekeepers on mitigating harm to civilians from peacekeeping operations. The workshop was an opportunity to share CIVIC’s research and lessons from non-peacekeeping contexts and facilitate new thinking on how the UN can better prevent, minimize, and address harm to civilians.

Throughout the year, the program convened several other events in New York and Geneva, including at the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment Forum on strategic approaches to protection of civilians policy at the UN, the Global Protection Forum on civil society inclusion in the security sector, a Conference of the Parties (COP27) side event on strengthening community resilience to climate-related security crises, as well as a seminar for Security Council members on the protection of civilians in urban warfare using CIVIC’s new [Primer on Civilian Harm Mitigation in Urban Operations](#).

CIVIC also organized a launch event with the Permanent Missions of the Netherlands and Switzerland to the UN to release our civil society toolkit. The event, “Local Civil Society and the Protection of Civilians,” featured the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms while Countering Terrorism. The UN team also represented CIVIC at several other events including the Berlin Climate Security Conference, Geneva Peace Week, and the International Code of Conduct Association (ICOCA).



RESEARCH, LEARNING, INNOVATION

Throughout 2022, Research, Learning, and Innovation (RLI)'s technical advisors provided consistent and high-quality support to CIVIC's regional and country programs through advisory services, support for specific initiatives, guidance, and training. Among the most notable initiatives, RLI partnered with CIVIC's Nigeria team in the development and roll-out of CIVIC's first ever gaming training tool, which allows Nigerian security forces trainees to immerse themselves in the reality of conflict-affected civilians.

In August 2022, RLI launched CIVIC's "Civil Society Toolkit", which includes a comprehensive evaluation framework for evaluating policies and practices for the protection of civilians and an advocacy guide for civil society organizations and coalitions. The toolkit—piloted in Niger, Ukraine, and Indonesia (and available in French, Arabic, Ukrainian, and English)—was launched during an online public event hosted by the governments of the Netherlands and Switzerland.

In 2022, the RLI unit also developed or finalized several initiatives to improve standards and quality of CIVIC's methods, practices, and products:

- CIVIC's first comprehensive, external evaluation of the progress of our strategic plan.
- New guidance to help better understand and navigate Armed Opposition Groups in the contexts where CIVIC conducts in-depth programming.
- New research process guidance to ensure consistency, quality, and integrity of CIVIC's research products were developed and disseminated to research staff across the organization.
- CIVIC's first Gender Action Plan, which contains specific and actionable measures to fully integrate gender across our programs, advocacy, communications, and staff development.

In 2022, the RLI unit also led CIVIC's first project activities in Indonesia, a country that has long dealt with an array of conflict challenges, yet has the opportunity to serve as a regional and global model of effective civilian protection. CIVIC launched a research partnership with the regional think tank CSIS Indonesia to examine risks faced by civilians in Papua, and convened civil society to identify gaps and opportunities to improve protection policy and practice.

As we move forward, the RLI unit will develop a framework for integrating climate change into CIVIC's programs and activities. It will lead a pilot research project geared toward understanding the effects of environmental change on the threats and vulnerabilities to civilians—and their capacity to protect themselves—in conflict.

Donors & Supporters

Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) is thankful for the generous support received from governments, multilateral, foundations, corporations, and individual donors. These partnerships are essential to building a world in which no civilian is harmed in conflict. We are particularly grateful to those who provided unrestricted core support this past year, which allows CIVIC to respond to the new challenges civilians in conflict face. On this page you will find a list of our supporters for the 2022 fiscal year (January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022) who gave generous gifts of \$1,000 or more.

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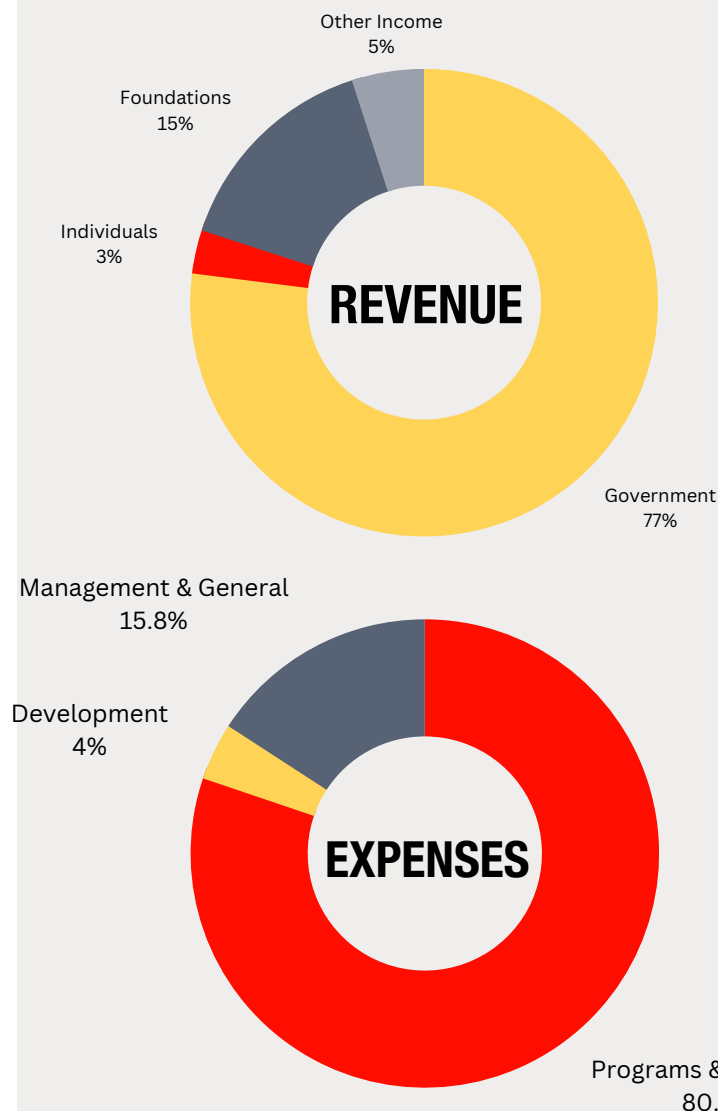
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2022 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES*

BUDGET CATEGORIES	PROGRAMS & ADVOCACY	SUPPORTING SERVICES			TOTAL EXPENSES
		Development	Management & General	Total	
	ACTUALS	ACTUALS	ACTUALS	ACTUALS	ACTUALS (AS OF: 12/31/22)
Salaries & Benefits	6,955,682	337,622	643,856	981,477	7,937,159
Consultants	971,339	113,606	434,789	548,394	1,519,734
Software Subscriptions	75,955	14,362	34,471	48,833	124,788
Meetings & Conferences	496,013	0	37,637	37,637	533,649
Rent & Utilities	392,307	0	497,184	497,184	889,491
Supplies & Equipment	236,307	1,050	15,640	16,690	252,996
Travel Expenses	817,190	574	187,848	188,422	1,005,612
Other Costs	170,265	11,703	115,227	126,930	297,195
EXPENSES TOTAL	\$10,115,058	\$478,915	\$1,966,651	\$2,445,567	\$ 12,560,625



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION†

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash & Cash Equivalents	9,950,585
Accounts Receivables	67,996
Contributions Receivables	3,274,632
Prepaid Expenses, etc.	251,437

Total Current Assets **\$ 13,544,651**

Property & Equipment, Net 102,157

TOTAL ASSETS **\$ 13,646,808**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts Payables & Accrued Expenses	520,770
Payroll Payables	985,637
Refundable Advances	3,388,432
Deferred Rent	41,176
Notes Payables	-

Total Liabilities **\$ 4,936,015**

Net Assets

Beginning	8,041,591
Change in Net Assets	669,202

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS **\$ 13,646,808**

*Preliminary unaudited financial information as of 31 December 2022

† As of 30 September 2022

CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT

RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.

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