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Damai Pangkal Damai

The Year of Z-vil Resistance

Nonviolent Resistance in Indonesia
and the World 2025

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Damai Pangkal Damai:

The Year of Z-vil Resistance

Nonviolent Resistance in Indonesia and the World 2025

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Damai Pangkal Damai (DPD), which loosely translates as “peace begets peace,” is a nonviolence database project and campaign initiated by the Institute of International Studies (IIS) –the research and advocacy arm of the Department of International Relations, Universitas Gadjah Mada (IR UGM).

DPD’s database records nonviolent actions that take place in Indonesia throughout Reformasi (the post-Suharto era, 1999 onwards). Meanwhile, DPD’s campaign focuses on disseminating information and analyses regarding methods and tactics of nonviolent action.

Commencing in 2021, DPD publishes yearly reflections on nonviolent resistance in Indonesia and worldwide, with the hope that the publications can serve as a useful resource to those who are committed to strengthening democracies. DPD believes that consolidation of democracy should not only be furthered through strengthening the structures that underpin democracy (free and fair elections, separation of power, etc.) but also through fortifying the cultural components of democracy—including the civil society’s and the state’s preference and skills in resolving conflicts through nonviolent means.

DPD extends its gratitude to the late Samsu Rizal Panggabean, the late Chaiwat Satha-Anand, Aghniadi, Arie Ros-tika Utami, Charles Butcher, Christopher Shay, Dian Adi MR, Elvira Rumkabu, Erica Chenoweth, Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, Inggit Kartika Dini, Jacky Manuputty, Jamila Raqib, Janjira Sombatpoonsiri, Joned Suryatmoko, Luqman-nul Hakim, Maulida Raviola, Melissa Kowara, Michael Beer, Muhammad Raafi, Muzaffar Salim, Nabilah Nur Abiyanti, Nisrina Nadhifah Rahman, Puri Kencana Putri, Sana Jaffrey, Tiffany Easthom, Treviliana Eka Putri, Veronique Dudouet, Wana Alamsyah, dan Zainal Abidin Bagir.



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Preface

The Year of Z-vil Resistance

Damai Pangkal Damai Team

2025 shall be remembered as the year where Generation Z across the globe championed civil resistance. In Nepal, Mongolia, Madagascar, and Bulgaria, they ousted the government. In Afghanistan, Iran, and Peru, they reignited the good fight. In Indonesia, the Philippines, Serbia, and the United States, they pushed back against shrinking civic spacetime. In the digital and the actual worlds, they fostered solidarity by repurposing a Jolly Roger from an anime. Around the world, they shaped the Israel-Palestine discourse, from “conflict” to “war,” to “occupation,” eventually to “genocide.”

This sixth edition of Damai Pangkal Damai’s (DPD) annual reflection wishes to celebrate the creativity and resilience of the youth. In chapter 1, diah illustrates how young activists not only invigorated pro-democracy movements but did so with commitments to depatriarchalize activism-scapes and to weave activism into everyday activities. If anything, the aggressive criminalization of hundreds of youths throughout the second half of 2025 attest to the fact that the youth have been pushing the right buttons.

In chapter 2, Dhania analyzes how youth groups serve as the backbone of most maximalist campaigns in 2025. While one can argue that revolutions had always been started by the younger generation, the chapter shows that it is not simply a matter of clashing generational values. The ingenuity of leaderless movements stepping up amidst lack of credible opposition deserve its own attention.

In chapter 3, Daniel looks closely at the maximalist campaign brought about by Serbian students. Going against a regime that seems to be playing every possible trick in the authoritarian playbook, students and activists seem to always have an extra trick up their sleeves. It is not farfetched to argue that Serbian students may be writing the new chapters of the anti-authoritarian playbook.

Lastly, in chapter 4, Maurizka discusses #BreakTheSiege, particularly on how efforts to break into the besieged Gaza has become more forceful than ever in 2025. While said efforts were carried out by generations of activists, Gen-Z laid down important infrastructures. Amongst others, it changed the discourse in a way that enabled the world to talk about Israeli crimes against humanity and Palestinian liberation without being smeared as antisemitic.

This edition was put together under challenging circumstances. Based in Indonesia, team members were physically and emotionally stretched thin amidst criminalization of friends and colleagues, safeguarding of immediate circles, and reluctant consumption of ever-so-depressing news updates, not to mention navigating daily roles as parents, students, trainers, researchers, etc., often with guilt and anxiety. But it is exactly in delving into stories of resistance waged by ordinary citizens worldwide and observing youth leadership that each team member found hope.

A more technical challenge was to duly incorporate new developments of events. Between conducting desk research, drafting the bahasa Indonesia version of the annual reflection, publishing the bahasa Indonesia version, drafting the English version, and preparing to publish the English version, a lot has happened. The beginning of 2026 had been a mix of relief, seeing that many young friends and colleagues who had been arbitrarily detained and criminalized were dismissed of all charges, as well as rage, as Andrie Yunus, a prominent young human rights defender was at the receiving end of an acid attack. Amidst all that, the situation in West Asia, especially Iran, escalated quickly: government crackdown of protests, foreign bombardment, and regional/global crisis. Also, flotillas had sailed to break into besieged Cuba and announced plans to sail again into Gaza. So many updates, so little capacity to update our chapters.

2026 marks the 10 year anniversary of DPD. Once envisioned only as a database project to record nonviolent actions taking place in Indonesia 1999 onwards, DPD seemed to have a life of its own—heartwarming and unnerving at the same time. As we move forward, here are the things from 2025 we would like to underline:

Damai Pangkal Damai (DPD) adopts Thomas Weber and Robert Burrowes' definition of nonviolence as "an umbrella term for describing a range of methods for dealing with conflict, which share the common principle that physical violence, at least against other people, is not used." Equivalent terminologies include active nonviolence, nonviolent conflict, nonviolent action, direct action, nonviolent resistance, civil resistance, and people power.

DPD also refers to Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolent actions, classified into three categories: (1) non-violent protest and persuasion, (2) non-cooperation, and (3) nonviolent intervention.

Source:

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part 2: The Methods of Nonviolent Action* (Bedford: Porter Sargent Publishing, 1973).

Thomas Weber and Robert J. Burrowes, "Nonviolence: An Introduction," *Peace Dossier* 27, no 2 (February 1991).



Rebel with More Than a Cause. One may argue that revolutions have always been driven by young people. In saying this, one should not lose sight of Gen Z's unique contributions throughout 2025. More than just rallying people, they brought in new ways of mobilizing the masses. Rhizomatic instead of rigidly and hierarchically structured, leaderless instead of dependent on central figures, inclusive instead of putting a high bar for engaging in activism, depatriarchalized instead of championing hypermasculine vibes, as well as taking in collective care work as the backbone of, not mere add-ons to, activism. Rather than treating resistance as mere ad hoc activities, Gen Zs weave activism into everyday activities, such as picnics, concerts, dancing, cycling, social media postings, fashion, and humor. They rebel not just because it is what young people do, but because they understand that the default ways of doing things—including protests—had to go should one desire meaningful social justice.



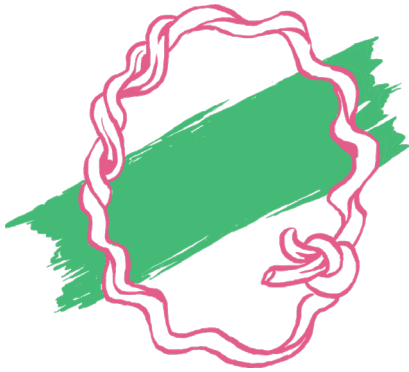
Stepping Up the Good Fight. After years of stagnation, 2025 saw increases in the frequency, repertoires, and intensities of nonviolent resistance in Indonesia. In addition to doubling in amount, they showcased more diverse participants, more daring tactics, and longer duration of protests. While the “classic combo” of marches and demonstrations, accompanied by banners, posters, speeches, and art performances still dominate, 2025 celebrated utilization of new methods such as nonviolent raids, speak-ins, picketing, nonviolent obstructions, and establishing social institutions. Protests usually lasting half a day now carried on until the next day. Additionally, the creative use of popular culture references allowed citizens to easily signal their support, thus facilitating processes of finding allies and building coalitions.



Nonviolent Discipline. As nonviolent movements stepped up their game, regimes seem to also ramp up repression. In the aftermath of the August 2025 protests in Indonesia, more than a thousand citizens were arbitrarily detained, where hundreds were brought to trial and eventually found guilty. Likewise, many citizens of Serbia, Iran, Georgia, the United Kingdom, the United States, etc., who peacefully protested for the love and betterment of their countries, were criminalized. So were global citizens who attempted to end Israel's occupation of Palestine. Taking on Hannah Arendt's thoughts, one can argue that the more the state has to rely on violence, the more the state exposes its own weaknesses. As remaining nonviolent in the face of ruthless violence is difficult, movements need to be more active in designing practical techniques and training activists in nonviolent discipline.



Up, Down, and Intersectional. As we learn from Afghanistan, Iran, Tunisia, Georgia, etc., movements may have to go on hiatus, reorient from being “maximalist” to “reformist,” and, such, to keep the flame of resistance alive—as going full frontal against the regime may squish the good fight altogether. During that period of hiatus and/or reorientation, movements rebuild their bases. Among the movements revamped in 2025, the strongest were the ones that managed to link issues such as the collapse of a canopy (Serbia), burial of family members (Iran), lavish lifestyle of elites (Nepal, Mongolia), electricity cut (Madagascar), to systemic issues such as corruption, democracy, gender equity, etc. More than being cross-sectoral, the movements approach social justice issues intersectionally. Here, they center the most vulnerable in the society, given the intersection of their identities—gender, age, class, religion, ethnicity, ability/disability, etc.

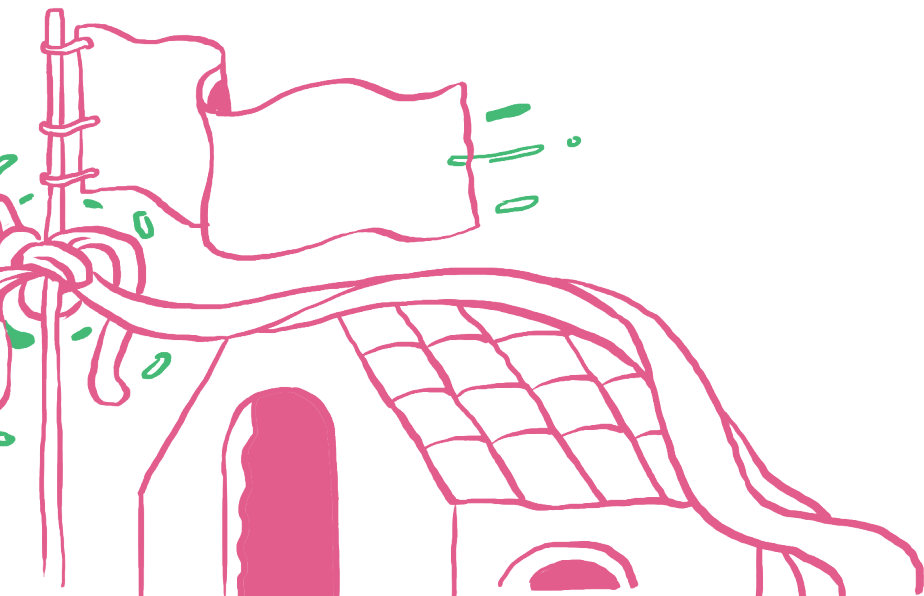


Collective Care. It is costly to fight the regime. To make sure that no single activist bears on their own the political, social, economic, physical, and mental costs of picking up the good fight, collective care needs to be established as an important infrastructure of resistance. The year 2025 witnessed various forms of collective care, from solidarity camps in Pati, Indonesia, birthday celebrations of political prisoners in Georgia, “festive” burials in Iran, village outreach by students in Serbia, neighborhood watch in the United States, etc. People shared their food, means of transportation, time, energy, and other resources to show they care. Many of them stepped up to take care of protests’ logistics, communication networks, legal aid, medical emergencies, etc. There is a shared understanding that everyone plays important roles, be it on the front lines or providing care. Amidst a fast-paced and digitalizing world, such care-oriented, unhurried, intentional, in-person interactions amongst citizens serve as a reminder that we are all in this out of our civic duty and our love of humanity.





Vision, Vision, Vision. What happens after a bad policy is repealed or a bad government is overthrown? What needs to be put in place so that we do not have to always brace for the next bad policy and/or government? As poignantly said by Naomi Klein, “no is not enough.” It is not just about what we want to move away from, but what we want to move towards. In Nepal, upon ousting the dictator, young people met through Discord to envision their shared future. In Serbia, amidst their efforts to bring down the dictator, students cycled and walked to far-away villages and towns to meaningfully engage citizens in envisioning the country’s next chapter. Vision goes beyond the movement’s aims. Without a clear vision, where structures and cultures underpinning years of social injustices are dismantled and transformed, movements may be bound to repeat themselves albeit achieving their goals.



Indonesia 2025: Semakin Ditekan, Semakin Melawan!

diah kusumaningrum

Following over a decade of autocratization, it seems that Indonesia has moved into the autocratic consolidation phase. Not only has the quality of its elections declined, plans to disband local elections have been floated around the country.¹ Not only has its civic spacetime become “obstructed,” criminalization of activists has become more blatant and legalized, while the regime’s fraternization with authoritarian world leaders has become more open.²



The good news is, Indonesians are taking to the streets and to their gadgets to fight against the everyday social injustices they endure. Farmers, fisherpersons, and indigenous communities continuously defend their land and water against government-sponsored development projects. Mothers and their allies fiercely protest against the “free nutritious meal program” at schools. Drivers, factory workers, teachers, lecturers, and other precarious workers, rightfully demand decent living wages. Truck drivers, followed by netizens and neighborhoods across the country, enthusiastically hoist the pirate flag from One Piece comic to signal solidarity with the downtrodden. In several districts, people quickly mobilize to cancel the 150-400% hike of local property taxes. Led by the youth, the general public built upon 2024’s calls for action, from “blue alert” (Garuda Biru) to “black alert” (Garuda Hitam), from underlining Indonesia’s emergency (#DaruratIndonesia) to the need to reset the system (#ResetIndonesia). Indonesian diasporas proudly amplify said campaigns worldwide. Towards the end to 2025, Indonesians altogether strongly urge the government to appropriately respond to the devastating floods and landslides in Aceh and North Sumatera. Throughout the year, picnics, concerts, comedy shows, art exhibitions, film and music awarding events, seminars, courtrooms, and other “everyday activities” yielded the “spacetime” needed for ordinary people to defend civil liberties while extending collective care.

A number of scholars characterized the above movements as “rhizomatic.”³ Expanding horizontally under the ground (instead of vertically towards the sky), they have no single, predictable, trajectory. Even when they get broken, parts sprout anew to multiple directions. This allows for heterogenous movements to stay interconnected and resilient in the face of state repression. It is high time for said movements to figure out a strategy that works for their horizontal nature—without being limited by the repertoires developed by Indonesia’s 1990s movements, whose structures were vertical. While thousands of Indonesians have been arrested throughout 2025, many more are aligning themselves with these rhizomatic networks. As poignantly put by a number of political detainees, *semakin ditekan, semakin melawan*: the more they repress us, the more we fight back.

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- 1 See [Varieties of Democracy \(V-Dem\)](#) and [Freedom House’s](#) annual report for the year 2025. V-Dem noted how Indonesia has gone through a democratic breakdown since 2024, where the country underwent decline from a “democratic grey zone” to an “autocratic grey zone,” eventually to an “electoral autocracy.”
 - 2 In 2025, [CIVICUS](#) placed Indonesia on its watchlist due to its obstructed and shrinking civic space-time. The [Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence \(KontraS\)](#) stated in its 2025 annual report that human rights in Indonesia had reached a catastrophic level.
 - 3 In her 2023 and 2024 writings, Yatun Sastramidjaya stated how youth movements in Southeast Asia, including in Indonesia, are rhizomatic in nature. In a 2025 writing, Amalinda Savirani, Diatyka Widya Permata Yasih, and Inaya Rakhmani explored the concept in more depth to illustrate Indonesian social movements.

2025 in Numbers

After years of stagnation, the number, repertoires, and intensity of nonviolent resistance in Indonesia show some increases in 2025.⁴ Damai Pangkal Damai's (DPD) main database, which exclusively takes data from Kompas daily, recorded 611 nonviolent actions throughout the year. As illustrated in Diagram 1, the number nearly doubled since 2024 (335 nonviolent actions) and went above the average throughout Reformasi (592 nonviolent actions). In total, DPD's main database has recorded 15,989 nonviolent actions between 1999 and 2025. Given that many instances of nonviolent actions were not reported by Kompas, thus not recorded in DPD's main database, the above numbers should be taken as low estimates.

Box 1

Protest and persuasion consists of methods where actors "simply" show that they are against or for something. This includes demonstrations, marches, parades, petitions, speeches, posters, and art happenings.

Noncooperation consists of methods where actors not only show resistance, but also withdraw their participation from the practices or institutions that they oppose. This includes strikes, boycotts, and divestments.

Nonviolent intervention consists of methods where actors not only show resistance and withdraw their participation, but also strive to disrupt the practices or institutions they oppose. This includes sit-ins, nonviolent obstructions, nonviolent occupations, etc.

Resource:

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.
Part 2: *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*
(Bedford: Porter Sargent Publishing, 1973).

Meanwhile, DPD's secondary database, which collects additional data from NGO reports, has recorded over 1,000 nonviolent actions throughout 2025. Believing that many more have not been documented, this too, should be seen as a low estimate. The gaps between DPD's main and secondary databases, as well as with the real number out there, serve as a reminder on how challenging it is to record instances of nonviolent action—without which it is difficult to evaluate and reflect on the nonviolent struggles that have been collectively waged.

In 2025, nonviolent actions in Indonesia became more diverse than before. Of the 198 methods of nonviolent actions (Sharp 1973, see Annex), 54 were utilized in 2025. As with previous years, most nonviolent actions in 2025 employed the "classic combo" of marches (method #38), demonstrations (method #47), speeches (method #1), posters and banners (method #8), slogans, chants, and hashtags (method #7), as well as art performances (method #36). They account for 94% of nonviolent actions in 2025 and 88.2% throughout Reformasi.

What is rather new in 2025, is that the classic combo was performed by a more diverse group of actors and took place longer than usual. In addition to university students and activists per usual, mothers, high school students, social media influencers, and small town residents showed up in numbers, on the streets, parliament buildings, police stations, and courtrooms.

⁴ DPD's main database can be accessed through ugm.id/DPDdatabase (case sensitive).

Diagram 1

Number of nonviolent actions in Indonesia throughout Reformasi

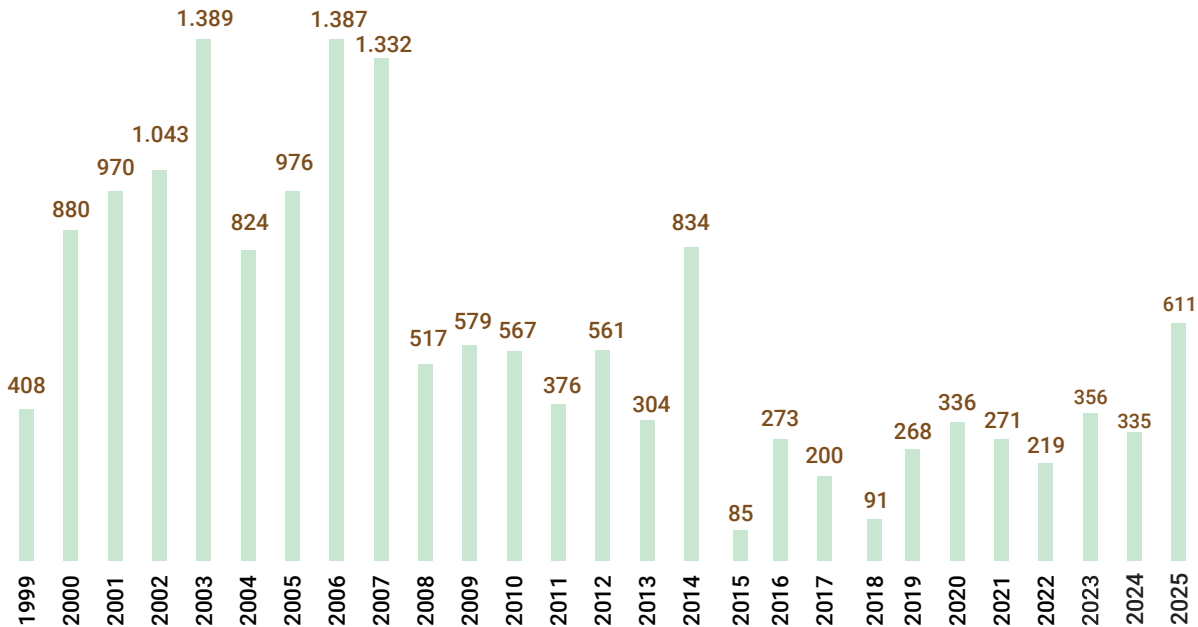


Diagram 2

Composition of nonviolent actions in Indonesia throughout Reformasi



Also, while previous demonstrations usually end at sundown, in 2025, a number of them went on for days. This included Piknik Melawan (loosely translated as resistance picnic), a youth-led encampment in front of the parliament building to stop the revised Military Law from coming into effect, which went on for more than a week. Similarly, an encampment was held for days by artists and activists in front of the United States’ Embassy to protest the country’s complicity in the genocide in Gaza. Very notable was the over two-week long picketing and occupation by lay residents of Pati to condemn the local property tax hike.

The longer the movement, the more crucial are its support systems. Under the slogan “*warga bantu warga*” (loosely translated as citizens aiding citizens) pop-up kitchens, donations, street paramedics, legal aid, and other alternative social institutions (method #179) were organized in many cities. To counter state propaganda, teach-in (method #50) and speak-in (method #177) were utilized. Sometimes, speak-in was combined with raiding (method #168) government events or conducted as “*sousveillance*,” which is the opposite of surveillance—that is, to record and disseminate audio/video proof of police brutality.

Also popular in 2025 was consumer boycott (method #71) against brands supporting Israel’s zionism and genocide of Palestinians. In a similar vein, a number of musicians withdrew their songs from Spotify and/or cancelled their participation in concerts that took sponsorship from fossil fuel companies (method #79).

In general, most nonviolent actions in 2025 relied on methods of protest and persuasion (see Diagram 2). Nevertheless, compared to previous years, there has been an increase in the use of methods of noncooperation, as well as methods of nonviolent intervention. It can be said that in 2025, Indonesia saw increases in the numbers of nonviolent actions, the repertoires used, and the intensity of the struggles.

2024’s Main Themes

It is very likely that what would linger in the nation’s collective memory regarding 2025 nonviolent resistance in Indonesia is the #ResetIndonesia uprising, which took place late August until early September. However, it should be kept in mind that such a massive movement was only possible due to a series of earlier protests.

Consistently picketing (method #16) in front of the presidential palace since 2007, Aksi Kamisan has played an important role in shaping and sustaining nonviolent resistance in Indonesia. Currently spread out in over 30 cities across the country, Aksi Kamisan introduced a distinct set of repertoires: silence (method #52), donning black umbrellas and attires (methods #18 and #19), speeches (method #1), artistic expressions (method #36) as well as sending letters (method #2) to Indonesia’s State Secretary. Moreover, it managed to institutionalize Thursday afternoons, 4-5pm, as designated spacetime for defending democracy. It now serves as a melting pot for seasoned activists and those who are new to protests; for students, artists, journalists, social media influencers, workers, parents, and others whose circles have not intersected before.

The growing awareness since 2023 and 2024⁵ of Indonesia’s shrinking civic spacetime, which amongst others was facilitated by Aksi Kamisan, has made it somewhat easier in 2025 to mobilize around the issue of impunity of past human rights violations and state brutality. As the state introduced revisions to the military law, the criminal procedure code, and history

5 See Diah Kusumaningrum et al. (2024)’s baseline study on civic space-time, and Luqman-nul Hakim et al. (2025)’s civic spacetime monitoring report on Yogyakarta. Both were published as part of the Connect, Defend, Act! program by Hivos and Humanis.

books, as well as declared Suharto as a national hero, civil society actors organized petitions (method #6), forums to call out and speak-in (methods #50 and #177) against such harmful initiatives, nonviolent raids (method #168) of government meetings, picketings (method #16), blockades (method #172), occupations (method #173), and alternative social institutions (method #179).

The repertoires of nonviolent raids (method #168) and speak-ins (method #177) indeed stood out in 2025. As a parliamentary commission met at Fairmont Hotel to secretly draft revisions to the military law that would allow for the military to encroach into civilian matters, KontraS' staff members barged in and called out such ill-procedured practice.⁶ During an international nickel conference, Greenpeace and Papuan activists gatecrashed its plenary session.⁷ Amidst a parliamentarian visit to the Yogyakarta provincial police headquarter, the head of Universitas Gadjah Mada's student body burst in to demand the release of May Day protesters.⁸ Similarly, activists from Lokataru walked into the Jakarta provincial police headquarter to demand the release of around 600 students and activists who have been arbitrarily detained.⁹ When Cilegon's local parliament conducted their concluding session, a number of students forced their way in, demanding their representatives to meaningfully address the most pressing issues: poverty, silencing of critiques, and corruption.¹⁰ Students and activists raided an event in Bengkulu to protest against gold mining in Seluma.¹¹ Also, in numerous court sessions, family and friends yelled out their unwavering support to their loved ones who were criminalised by the regime.

In terms of speak-ins, a number of them took place in public events. During the Indonesian Film Festival, the best supporting actor took his time on stage to shed light on state violence and discrimination.¹² Similarly, a musician who championed five categories at the Indonesian Music Award dedicated his win to Sumarsih, a mother who initiated Aksi Kamisan, whose son was killed in the 1998 student demonstration.¹³ Meanwhile, amidst a graduation ceremony, Universitas Indonesia's chancellor was yelled at as "zionist," following the university's decision to platform a zionist guest speaker.¹⁴

Other repertoires on the rise in 2025 were the combination of picketing (method #16) and establishing alternative social institutions (method #179). In order to make sure that revisions to the military law do not come into effect, youth groups initiated Piknik Melawan, where they camped outside the parliament building.¹⁵ Each time their tents were removed by authorities,

6 Mahkamah Konstitusi Republik Indonesia, "*Aktivist KontraS Ungkap Aksi Interupsi Rapat Pembahasan RUU TNI di Hotel*," July 14, 2025.

7 Igor O'Neill, "*Greenpeace and Raja Ampat Youth Confront Nickel Industry during Conference*," Greenpeace, June 3, 2025.

8 kumparanNEWS, "*BEM UGM Bentangkan Poster 'Bebaskan Kawan Kami' di Depan Kapolda DIY-Komisi III*," July 3, 2025.

9 Nabilila Azzahra, "*Lokataru Catat 600 Orang Ditangkap Polisi dalam Demo Hari Ini*," Tempo, August 28, 2025.

10 Iskandar Nasution, "*Ricuh di DPRD Cilegon! Mahasiswa HMI Protes Kemiskinan, D diusir Saat Sidang Paripurna*," iNews Pandeglang, August 15, 2025.

11 Phesi Ester Julikawati, "*Demonstran Geruduk Diskusi Rencana Tambang Emas di Seluma*," Tempo, October 12, 2025.

12 kumparanHITS, "*Kalahkan Reza Rahadian, Omara Jadi Pemeran Pendukung Pria Terbaik di FFI 2025*," November 20, 2025.

13 Bagus Pribadi, "*Boyong 5 Piala AMI Awards 2025, Baskara Putra Dedikasikan untuk Sumarsih*," Tempo, November 20, 2025.

14 Yogi Ernes, "*Viral Rektor UI Diteriaki 'Zionis' Saat Acara Wisuda, Ini Penjelasan Kampus*," detikNEWS, September 12, 2025.

15 Salsabila Putri Pertiwi, "*Okupasi Ruang Lewat Aksi Piknik Melawan, Demo Damai yang Tetap Bikin Pemerintah Gerah*," Konde.co, April 17, 2025.

they then put them up again. While most activism spacetime felt masculine and serious, Piknik Melawan intentionally kept the atmosphere light and inclusive. There, Gen-Z were seen casually and joyously playing cards, singing, sharing food, painting nails, reading, and engaging in everyday leisure activities. This quickly garnered sympathy and support from other generations, who then helped provide logistics, media exposure, as well as medical and legal services.

Also foundational to #ResetIndonesia were the year in year out fight that farmers, fisherpersons, indigenous communities, and peasants put up to defend their living space from land-grabbing and watergrabbing practices. As reported by Konsorsium Pembaruan Agraria, there were 341 incidents of agrarian conflicts, which affected 428 villages and many of them saw the involvement of the military.¹⁶ Amidst violent repression, protesters organized blockades (method #172) and occupied (method #173) disputed areas. Some even put their bodies on the line, exposing themselves to danger (method #158) and interjecting (method #171) their opponents' moves. These include a mother in Kampung Kolam, Batam, who got buried in sand as a bulldozer pushed through,¹⁷ as well as a Sukahaji resident who got shot as mothers resolutely occupied their land.¹⁸

To gain a wider support for their cause, environmental defenders organized series of demonstrations (method #47), deputations and group lobby (methods #13 and #15), as well as online campaigns (methods #50, #8, and #7). Most demonstrations were rolled out outside local government buildings, courts, and ministerial offices in Jakarta. They aptly made use of special events, such as anti-mining day, farmers' day, environment day, and trials of environmental defenders.

The fight against landgrabbing and watergrabbing also utilized religious processions (method #40). In North Maluku, 11 residents of Maba Sangaji performed *tolak bala*, an indigenous ritual to repel danger.¹⁹ In Papua, Awyu community erected red crosses and performed *sasi*, an indigenous ritual to close off the sea and forest from extractive activities.²⁰ In East Nusa Tenggara, the Ende Diocese published a pastoral letter to condemn a geothermal project.²¹ Meanwhile, youth groups haunted and taunted (methods #31 and #32) the Minister for Energy and Minerals during his visit to Papua, highlighting the destruction caused by mining and palm oil projects.²²

In terms of industrial conflicts, 2025 witnessed new waves of protests from lecturers and intensified protests from laborers and gig workers, especially online taxi drivers. Teaching staff from universities across Indonesia, whose benefits have not been paid since 2020, banded

16 Consortium for Agrarian Reform (KPA), "*Tancap Gas di Jalur yang Salah. Paradox Kebijakan Agraria Prabowo-Gibran 2025: Menolak Koreksi, Mereproduksi Krisis.*" Catatan Akhir Tahun 2025.

17 Berita Borneo, "*Rela Tertimbun Demi Pertahanan Tanahnya.*" April 22, 2025.

18 LBH Bandung, "*Konflik Tanah dan Penggusuran Paksa di Sukahaji Melanggar Hukum dan HAM.*" Pernyataan Sikap, March 12, 2025.

19 Rabul Sawal, "*5 Bulan Bui karena Warga Maba Sangaji Jaga Hutan dari Nikel.*" Mongabay, October 23, 2025.

20 Cypri Jehan Paju Dale, "*Mengenal Gerakan Palang Adat dan Salib Merah di Papua Selatan.*" Jubi, June 5, 2025.

21 Ebed De Rosary, "*Enam Uskup Ende Tolak Proyek Geothermal, Begini Perkembangannya.*" Mongabay, April 6, 2025.

22 Maichel and Irfan Maullana, "*Bahlil Disoraki Aktivis di Sorong, Massa Protes Tambang Nikel Raja Ampat: Papua Bukan Tanah Kosong.*" Kompas.com, June 7, 2025.

under Serikat Pekerja Kampus (loosely translated as Campus Workers' Union). In addition to applying the classic combo of demonstrations, posters, slogans, speeches, and arts (methods #47, #8, #7, #1 and #36), they released statements (methods #3 and #5) as well as engaged with stakeholders through deputations and group lobby (methods #13 and #15).²³ Meanwhile, doubling down on their repertoires, online taxi drivers performed strikes (methods #97) by turning off their taxi hailing applications, demonstrating (method #47), and organizing motorcades (method #42). This year around, they managed to garner more sympathy from the general public, especially after the death of Affan Kurniawan, an online taxi driver who got run over by a police vehicle.²⁴

May Day 2025 yielded an important momentum for a more massive movement. In multiple cities, their use of the classic combo (methods #47, #8, #7, #1 and #36) was met with police violence. Many got injured, detained, and criminalized—including paramedics and highschoolers. Their next big demonstration on August 28th, against outsourcing and cheap labor, which was also met with police violence, became the starting point of #ResetIndonesia.

A few weeks before #ResetIndonesia, residents in a number of districts protested against the local property tax hike.²⁵ Residents of Pati were the first to come together for this cause. On August 1st, they established a camp in front of the mayor's office. In the following days and weeks, the camp grew in size and became a hub for civil society actors and residents in general to discuss everyday social injustices. They gathered at the camp to picket (method #16) and bring in donations (method #179). Mid August, they launched a massive demonstration (method #47) calling for the mayor to resign despite him already agreeing to cancel the 250% local property tax hike. In Bone, August 12th, students staged a demonstration in front of the mayor's office to demand the cancellation of the 300% local property tax hike. This was followed up by a long march (method #38) and a more massive demonstration (method #47) the week after. Meanwhile, in Cirebon, residents released a declaration (method #5) against the 1,000% local tax hike while signalling that they have started organizing for a massive demonstration in the coming weeks. In all three districts, the tax hike was cancelled.

On the one hand, #ResetIndonesia was born out of the everyday hardships endured by many Indonesians—low wages, unemployment, encroachment of living spaces, police brutality, criminalization of activists, etc. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine #ResetIndonesia taking shape without the utilization of certain symbols and colors (methods #18, #19, #7, and #8), which resonated with a wide spectrum of Indonesians.

In the second half of 2024, thousands of Indonesians took to the street to heed the call of "Garuda Biru" (loosely translated as blue eagle). This blue rendition of Indonesia's coat of arms, in the style of the Indonesia's Emergency Alert System, signalled the urgency of safeguarding

23 kumparanNEWS, "*Seruan 'Tukin Cair' Warnai Demo Dosen ASN di Depan Istana*," February 3, 2025.

24 Adil Al Hasan, "*Serukan Matikan Aplikasi Massal dan Turun ke Jalan, Serikat Ojol Protes soal Ketenagakerjaan*," Tempo, May 16, 2025.

25 Achmad Ghiffary Mannan, "*Unjuk Rasa Warga Pati Akibat Kenaikan Pajak 'Gila-gilaan' Menjelar ke Cirebon dan Bone*," Tempo, August 18, 2025.

the Constitutional Court's decision amidst politicians' attempts to play with election regulations. In early 2025, "Garuda Merah" (loosely translated as red eagle) was briefly circulated in social media to bring attention to enormous education funding cuts. In February 2025, the image transformed into "Garuda Hitam" (loosely translated as black eagle), accentuating a dark prognosis of Indonesia's democracy.

Then, towards the end of July 2025, Jolly Roger was seen at the back of many trucks. This black flag, taken from the One Piece comic, quickly became a unifying symbol of resistance. Amidst the social convention of households, neighborhoods, and offices hoisting Indonesia's national flag throughout the month of August—in celebration of the nation's independence day, August 17th—many chose to put up Jolly Roger instead, or together with the national flag (method #18, #8, and #7). Then, as the late August demonstrations led to arbitrary arrests of hundred of activists, the death of an online taxi driver, and head-on confrontations by mothers towards security officers, the general public took on "resistance blue," "hero green," and "brave pink" as color palettes to signify their support for the uprising (method #18). As can be found in the digital space, green and pink dominate #ResetIndonesia-related designs.

As reported by the media and other civil society organizations, #ResetIndonesia brought together millions of Indonesians, on the streets and on their gadgets—including Indonesian diasporas in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, Germany, etc. Inside and outside the country, they organized demonstrations (method #47) as well as press releases and interviews with foreign media (method #3, #5, and #50).

Moreover, they engaged in various forms of sousveillance and callout (method #177). They fearlessly recorded and disseminated videos proving that the acts of violence and destroying public facilities were not committed by protesters, as claimed by the regime. They established proof that protesters kept to their nonviolent discipline, that the unrest that followed the demonstrations had more to do with the state's choice to respond violently to peaceful protests. They also countered a number of widespread misinformation: that the president has apologized to the people, that the protesters destroyed public facilities, that the uprising was instigated by foreign forces, etc. Other forms of sousveillance and callout included taking and circulating photographs of politicians who chose to escape the chaos by travelling abroad as well confronting politicians who chose to carry on with their vacation abroad. There were also calls to unfollow and boycott (method #55) pro-regime influencers who actively tried to deny, blur, or distract from the ongoing state violence.

Late August up to early September, numerous online meetings (method #48) were held to consolidate the widespread grievances into actionable demands. This resulted in a set of demands known as 17+8 (symbolizing Indonesia's date of independence, August 17th), which was declared (method #5) and officially presented to the parliament (method #13).²⁶ Up to the finalization of this chapter, no single demand has been meaningfully fulfilled.

26 Dinda Shabrina, "What Are the 17+8 People's Demands in Indonesia That Have and Have Not Been Met?" Tempo, September 7, 2025.

As #ResetIndonesia rolled out across the nation, Indonesians built various alternative social institutions (method #179). These include crowdfunding platforms, emergency health care, legal aid, psychological first aid and counseling, scheduled visits to support political detainees, etc. Such care work are crucial infrastructures of resistance, which help ensure that no single citizen bears on their own the political, social, economic, psychological, and physical costs of resisting.

One movement that started at the beginning of 2025 but only gained significant traction after #ResetIndonesia was the anti-MBG movement. MBG stands for *makan bergizi gratis*, loosely translated as free nutritious school meals. Mothers, students, teachers, and their allies have called out (methods #177 and #50) this signature program of the president as not nutritious (among others, they contain ultra processed food and/or food that has turned bad), not free (paid using funds that could be used to pay for teachers' benefits), and corruption-laden (commissioned to kitchens owned by those linked to security officers and parliamentarians).²⁷ In addition to utilizing the classic combo (methods #47, #8, #7, #1, and #36), they took and circulated photos of the food trays received by students, in order to expose the damning realities of MBG, amidst prohibitions by the government to do so (methods #134 and #63). Some chose to perform disguised disobedience (method #136), while others choose to establish monitoring systems and databases (methods #177) to document violations and harms related to the project. As repressions went up in the aftermath of #ResetIndonesia, anti-MBG protests by mothers and their allies opened up "new" and "safer" spacetime for protests, as at issue at stake is considered "low-key," "domestic," "feminine," and "motherly." Nevertheless, it should be noted that organizers of anti-MBG protests fully understood that their struggle goes beyond defending the well-being of students; that their protests entail anti-corruption, anti-nepotism, anti-militarism, anti-sexism, and pro-democracy sentiments.

The nationwide solidarity brought about by #ResetIndonesia once again prevailed in the form of a unified demand from citizens throughout Indonesia for the government to declare the floods and landslides that took place in North Sumatra and Aceh in December as national catastrophes, as well as to acknowledge them as man-made. In addition to putting together online campaigns (methods #8 and #50), they recorded and circulated videos (methods #177) to counter the government's claims that the floods and landslides were solely caused by extreme weather and that the recovery process was almost complete. Amidst government's reluctance to allocate national resources for Aceh, citizens across Indonesia also collected and delivered relief packages (method #179). In Aceh, citizens held rallies (method #47) and put up white flags (method #18) to signify their powerlessness in the face of devastating floods and landslides.²⁸ Up to the finalization of this chapter, many houses and villages in Aceh have not seen meaningful recovery, if any at all.

²⁷ Media Wahyudi Askar, "*Makan (Tidak) Bergizi (Tidak) Gratis*," CELIOS 2025, available on www.celios.co.id

²⁸ BBC News Indonesia, "*Bendera Putih di Aceh, Kondisi Aceh Begitu Buruk, Kami Tidak Baik-baik Saja*" – *Apa Respons Pemerintah Pusat?*" December 18, 2025.

From Collective Care to Collective Victory

Looking back at the numbers and discussions above, it is safe to say that nonviolent resistance in Indonesia has intensified throughout 2025. What is also worth noting is that said resistance has become more intersectoral and intersectional. It has brought together those who previously worked within the silos of their professions. It has also raised awareness that each person has distinct sets of vulnerabilities, depending on the intersection of their gender identities, age group, class, religion, ethnicity, ability/disability, etc.²⁹ Such a commitment to intersectionality encourages individuals and groups to center lived experiences of the most vulnerable, while decentering themselves. At the practical level, this urged activists to shy away from their previous approaches, which tend to be hypermasculine and deprioritize youth, women, and environmental issues. Also, it opened ample spaces for individuals and groups to take on care work as the backbone of activism.

Of the various demographic groups that made up the 2025 protests, young men seem to be criminalized the most.³⁰ This is not to say that young women had it easier, seeing that they were at the receiving end of sexual violence, be it during demonstrations or in detainment. Also, this is not to say that SOGIESC minorities were not affected—already marginalized in Indonesia’s more democratic days, they endured even more marginalization throughout the years of autocratization. Moreover, this does not mean that indigenous communities and precarious workers were unsusceptible, as they have always been at the forefront in enduring everyday state violence.

As of 31 December 2025, Gerakan Muda Lawan Kriminalitas (loosely translated as Youth Against Criminalization) recorded 652 arrests against civilians, in relation to the end of August demonstrations.³¹ Of these, 522 were detained, 88 convicted, 17 set free or had their case suspended, 24 unknown, and 1 person, Alfarisi, died in prison. It is important to note that 8 amongst them are women and 19 are children, who bear unique vulnerabilities vis a vis Indonesia’s legal system.³²

With those numbers in mind, it is not farfetched to argue that there has been systematic efforts to stifle young men’s participation in pro-social justice struggles. In campuses, they are faced with tuition hikes, prompting them to graduate as soon as possible as well as to invest their time in student exchange programs and internships instead of in student movements—basically becoming the “good students” the regime wanted them to be. In workplaces, they are occupied with maintaining their jobs to be able to fulfil their economic needs (as well as their family’s, especially for those who are part of the sandwich generation) amidst high inflation

29 An important feminist methodology, the term “intersectionality” was coined and popularized by Kimberlé Crenshaw. Read one of her writings [here](#).

30 A number of human rights organizations put together an independent fact finding commission. Its report, launched just before DPD published its bahasa Indonesia version of this annual reflection, saw the government’s responses to the August protests as the biggest operation since Reformasi to silence youth.

31 Read Gerakan Muda Lawan Kriminalisasi’s position statement [here](#).

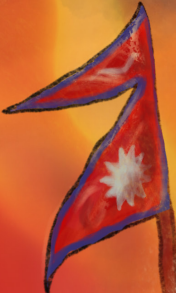
32 See Gerakan Muda Lawan Kriminalisasi’s post [here](#).

and unemployment rates. In the streets, they endure repression and criminalization. That said, while committed to providing collective care for all, there is a need to come up with specific collective care strategies for young men. Very importantly, these strategies need to be part of a greater move to depatriarchalize not only activism spacetime but also Indonesia's collective imaginations of social justice.

Speaking of collective imaginations, quite some scholars and activists have compared 2025 activism in Indonesia to that of in 1998. It should be noted that in the 1990s, Indonesia was riding the third wave of democratization, whereas Indonesia is currently swept by the third wave of autocratization. That said, it may be more accurate to compare the ongoing movements in Indonesia to that of in the 1970s, when the world was in the middle of the second wave of autocratization. This means that the ongoing movements in Indonesia should not simply adopt, nor be asked to adopt, strategies from the 1990s movements. They may be better off learning from the more recent strategies developed by youths in Serbia (see Daniel Petz's chapter) as well as in Nepal, Bangladesh, Chile, etc. (see Dhanisa Salsha Handiani's chapter). Also, they may benefit from revisiting strategies from the failed 1970s movements.

It is high time that Indonesian civil society actors take on wargaming: simulate various scenarios, anticipate their opponents' moves, and develop tactics that potentially impose the most pressing dilemma actions. Needless to say, such wargaming needs to take into account the rhizomatic nature of today's movements. Which strategies would be best for leaderless movements, which have no formal organization and no single trajectory, which grow horizontally and easily change forms, which have their own sense of humor and cultural references, which civic spacetime spans both in the conventional and digital realms?

The young activists who made up most of 2025 political detainees have invited the entire nation to "*semakin ditekan, semakin melawan,*" that is, to fight each instance of repression harder. We at Damai Pangkal Damai agree that repression and criminalization should not stifle resistance. If anything, the various forms of repression and criminalization are good indications that the regime is losing its footing. They learned from history that full-scale violence against nonviolent protests would yield a backfire effect, eventually leading to the regime losing legitimacy and having to surrender power. This is why regimes in many parts of the world forcefully criminalize nonviolent resistance: so that nobody dares to partake in it, so that anyone who dares to do so can be "legally" punished, so that regimes do not have to play out a scenario where backfire effects may take place.



DINDERS

Dinders

Maximalist Campaigns in 2025: The Year of Being Young, Wild, and Free

Dhania Salsha Handiani

2025 witnessed the roaring and unapologetic mobilization of people against autocratic regimes, many of which were driven by Gen Z.¹ Birthing iconic scenes, such as the utilization of an anime flag to signal resistance, as well as collective efforts of mothers carrying newspapers across the country, maximalist campaigns in 2025 not only presented themselves as the culmination of last year's perseverance, but also the overwhelming anger of the present.

What do we mean by maximalist campaigns? Adopting the definition set forth by the Non-violent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project,² this chapter defines maximalist campaigns as the mobilization of people with the aim of ousting an incumbent government based on popular discontent. This is to be distinguished from reformist campaigns, which are movements demanding specific policy changes and/or solutions to specific issues, with no explicit goal of toppling the regime altogether. Despite such differentiations, Damai Pangkal Damai (DPD) understands that the two can build on one another, where reformist campaigns can evolve into a maximalist one, and maximalist campaigns can reorient themselves to become reformist.

Just like last year's edition, this chapter expands on George Lakey's "Manifesto for Nonviolent Revolution"³ and Beautiful Trouble's framework on the "Movement Cycle."⁴ Lakey highlights how successful nonviolent revolutions go through the five stages of conscientization, organizing, confrontation, non-cooperation, and parallel government. Meanwhile, Beautiful Trouble underlines how social movements are not linear, but rather cyclical, with their ups and downs. Here, a movement's cycle comprises periods of enduring crisis (where discontent first emerges), uprising (where aforementioned discontent grows into large-scale mobilization), peak (where the movement starts to attract significant attention), contraction (where the movement is faced with pushbacks and potential burnout), evolution period (where the movement bounces back and reorients itself from the aforesaid burnout), and new normal (where the movement once again picks up steam to carry out future resistance).

How does 2025 differ from 2024? In 2024, we have seen how movements simmered down in Thailand, Myanmar, and Peru, endured in Iran, Afghanistan, and Tunisia, as well as achieved their goals in Bangladesh and Guatemala. 2024 also hosted the emergence of new campaigns in Kenya, South Korea, and Georgia, alongside right-wing campaigns in Colombia, Spain, and Poland.

1 Gen Z, or Generation Z, refers to people born between 1997 and 2012. At the time of writing, Gen Zs were around 14 to 29 year olds.

2 Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, "What is a maximalist campaign?," 2023.

3 George Lakey, *A Manifesto for Nonviolent Revolution*. Philadelphia: Movement for a New Society, 1976.

4 Beautiful Trouble, "*The Movement Cycle*," 2024.

In 2025, we were met with both familiar and fresh faces. Aside from the waning of resistance in Afghanistan, 2025 saw continued movements in Iran, Tunisia, Georgia, Kenya, and Peru. Fueled by the spirit of the youngsters, 2025 also hosted new but heavily charged movements in Nepal, Mongolia, Madagascar, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Turkey, which shared the icons used in the (soon-to-be maximalist?) campaigns in Indonesia and the Philippines. The year also bore witness to the brewing of resistance against the expansion of rule in the Central African Republic, Togo, Mali, and the United States, as well as the tenacity of right wing forces in Spain and Poland.

Continuations from 2024

In 2025, a number of movements de-escalated, escalated, and persisted from the previous year. While the **Afghan** protests once again took a more discreet form, towards the end of 2025, **Iran** witnessed the resurrection of a nationwide mobilization. As the protest movements in **Tunisia** and **Georgia** persisted by reshifting their focus to countering persecutions and criminal charges, resistance in **Kenya** and **Peru** persevered through Gen Z's renewed vigor and the international call to wave the Straw Hat Pirates' Jolly Roger—a pirate flag from the One Piece manga that symbolizes resistance against oppression and authoritarianism.

In September 2024, to condemn a series of new restrictions enacted by the Taliban, ten Afghan women initiated a public protest in the streets of Kabul, escalating a year-long online campaign demanding the restitution of women's voices in public.⁵ However, faced with state violence, which included physical and psychological threats towards women protesters,⁶ acts of resistance once again reverted to more subtle forms of indoor protests and individual symbolic acts such as dancing in mosques (method #36 and #63).⁷

On the other hand, 2025 saw the evolution of **Iran's** 2024 "quiet revolution," which initially centered around the killing of Mahsa Amini by the morality police. While protests in the previous year primarily took the more low-key forms of women refusing to wear headscarves in public (method #135), street graffiti (method #8), and the solidarity closure of a handful of shops (method #119),⁸ 2025 witnessed the emergence of more intensive methods, such as nationwide demonstrations (method #47), general strikes (method #117), and the "Dance of Mourning" at the funerals of those killed by the state (methods #36, #45, and #135).⁹ Said escalation is buttressed by the expansion of popular demands, from merely revolving around morality police, to frustration over the country's record-high inflation in October 2025, depreciation of currency against the US dollar, and, consequently, the sharp decline of economic and living conditions.

5 Ruchi Kumar, "*If We Don't, Who Will?—How Women in Afghanistan Are Speaking Out*," The Persistent, October 22, 2025.

6 Sara, "*How we women of Afghanistan are defying Taliban repression*," Atlantic Council, November 19, 2025.

7 Zahra Nader and Sayed Abdali, "*That video saved our lives: how women are defying the Taliban's brutal crackdown on protest*," The Guardian, December 29, 2025.

8 Bahar Makooi, "*Two years after the death of Mahsa Amini, a 'quiet revolution' is still under way in Iran*," France24, September 16, 2024.

9 Soulmaz Eikdar, "*Iranian Mourners Defy the Regime by Dancing at the Graves*," IranWire, February 23, 2026.

As such, unlike previous protests that primarily relied on the participation of women and youth of Iran, the 2025 protests saw initiatives taken by traders and shopkeepers who collectively shut down their shops (method #119) and started marching down Saadi Street in Tehran (method #38), which triggered similar days-long marches in major cities such as Isfahan, Shiraz, and Mashhad.¹⁰ The ripple effect, too, reached students who joined the resistance by abandoning classes (method #62), occupying universities (method #173), and participating in street demonstrations (method #47).¹¹ More than just protesting, the assemblage of tens of thousands of Iranians in the streets also spurred blockades of major streets (method #172), alongside chants like “Death to the dictator!” that was otherwise not heard during the quiet revolution (method #7).¹²

In other places, resistance persisted as an ode to those criminalized in earlier protest episodes in 2024. In light of President Kais Saied’s growing authoritarianism and crackdown on the opposition, thousands of protesters held weekly rallies and demonstrations (method #38 and #47) in **Tunisia**’s capital city throughout 2025, chanting “the people want the fall of the regime” (method #7) and demanding the release of jailed politicians, journalists, and activists through the display of signs (method #8) and portraits (method #25).¹³

In **Georgia**, leaderless protest movements—which initially emerged to condemn the country’s suspension of its European Union membership and the rigging of parliamentary elections in October 2024—continued in 2025 because of, and despite, arrests. To condemn the detention of activists, artists, and journalists, Georgians held solidarity rallies (method #38) while reading out the names of those imprisoned (method #1), often interwoven with acts of disobedience such as wearing banned face masks of officials (method #141) and blocking major roads (method #172).¹⁴ The resistance’s vigor was sustained by the mothers of those detained, who travelled extensively across the country to meet fellow compatriots as well as to circulate letters and leaflets written by their imprisoned child (method #2 and #9),¹⁵ inviting the general public to celebrate the birthdays of those detained (method #48).¹⁶ To keep the momentum going, protests were done thematically: pelting judges with eggs to specifically condemn judicial bias (method #30),¹⁷ camping in front of the Rustaveli Avenue to confront hypocritical government officials who attended the commemoration of the 9 April 1989 Soviet crackdown (method #31),¹⁸ and conducting solidarity protests with striking miners on Labour Day (method #47).¹⁹ In doing the aforesaid activities, protesters often showed up handcuffed to one another to avoid arrests (method #171).²⁰

10 The Associated Press, “*Protests erupt in Iran over currency’s plunge to record low*,” December 29, 2025.

11 Deepa Parent and William Christou, “*We want the mullahs gone: economic crisis sparks biggest protests in Iran since 2022*,” The Guardian, December 31, 2025.

12 Omid Barin, “*Iran’s economic crisis, political discontent threaten regime*,” Deutsche Welle, December 31, 2025.

13 Al Jazeera, “*Enough repression: Thousands of Tunisians protest against Kais Saied*,” November 23, 2025.

14 OC Media, “*Georgia marks a year of protests*,” Global Voices, December 7, 2025.

15 Mariam Nikuradze, “*Letters to the citizens of Georgia: the newspapers delivered by the mothers of the jailed*,” OC Media, October 1, 2025.

16 Xandie (Alexandra) Kuenning, “*Journalists rally outside Rustavi prison to mark Mzia Amaglobeli’s birthday*,” OC Media, May 13, 2025.

17 Civil Georgia, “*Judges’ Corporate Event Met With Public Backlash, Several Protesters Arrested*,” January 13, 2025.

18 OC Media, “*Georgia marks a year of protests*,” Global Voices, December 7, 2025.

19 OC Media, “*Georgia marks a year of protests*,” Global Voices, December 7, 2025.

20 OC Media, “*Georgia marks a year of protests*,” Global Voices, December 7, 2025.

Meanwhile, the persistence shown by protest movements in Kenya and Peru was significantly nurtured by the youth. After successfully getting the tax bill withdrawn in 2024 through a series of street demonstrations, strikes, and online interventions, Gen Zs in **Kenya** continued to conduct demonstrations in 27 counties, expressing their persisting dissatisfaction with President William Ruto's administration, who they believe is responsible for the country's corruption, high cost of living, and mass youth unemployment.²¹ Meanwhile, despite losing a bit of steam in 2024, protests against President Dina Boluarte's conservative government in **Peru** were revitalized by youths who coordinated nationwide demonstrations through social media such as WhatsApp, TikTok, Discord, and Telegram. These protests were triggered by the president's pension reform, featuring a mandatory contribution from all workers over the age of 18 despite the country's unstable employment.²² Later joined by unions of bus and taxi drivers who have been constantly doing strikes (method #97), the masses managed to successfully oust Boluarte in October 2025.²³ Throughout the protests, participants waved the One Piece flag (method #18), inspired by youth-led protests in Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines (further discussed in the next section).

While different from one another, the above movements underscored the importance of flexibility and dynamism in sustaining, and even elevating, a movement's prominence over the years. By quickly and critically framing the recent economic recession as a political crisis, Iran's maximalist protests were able to revitalize themselves in number and intensity by getting more citizens involved. More than merely surviving burnout and contraction phases, the "quiet revolution" managed to reinvent itself as the biggest in Iran since 1979 and 2022.²⁴ Here, the centrality of women's rights issues prevailed through the chants "woman, life, freedom."²⁵

In Tunisia and Georgia, choosing to specifically denounce the government's crackdown on protesters and creatively work around repressive regulations emboldened the resistance not only through dismantling fear amongst citizens, but also through making the government question the effectiveness of their repression. By launching protests thematically, the people of Georgia mindfully addressed (rather than repress) the possibility of burnout, allowing them to face the contraction phase head-on. Meanwhile, the active decision to shine light on the issue of youth unemployment and find meaning in the shared symbol of the One Piece flag allowed resistance movements in Kenya and Peru to reassemble a solid base, primarily comprised of young people, which thus allows for a sharper plan of outreach and consolidation of the pathway from the "uprising" to the "peak" period.

21 Meron Elias, "[A Year After Protests Rocked Kenya, Kenyan Youth Return to the Streets](#)," International Crisis Group, June 26, 2025.

22 Victoria Valenzuela, "[Youth-led protesters ousted Peru's president, and they're not done](#)," Waging Nonviolence, November 18, 2025.

23 Victoria Valenzuela, "[Youth-led protesters ousted Peru's president, and they're not done](#)," Waging Nonviolence, November 18, 2025.

24 Mezha, "[Iran Nationwide Protests Challenge Regime Amid Economic Crisis](#)," January 8, 2026.

25 Deepa Parent and William Christou, "[We want the mullahs gone: economic crisis sparks biggest protests in Iran since 2022](#)," The Guardian, December 31, 2025.

Big Breakthroughs in 2025: The Year of Gen Z?

The year 2025 also witnessed the emergence of the remarkable “one-and-done” maximalist campaigns in Nepal, Mongolia, Madagascar, and Bulgaria, and notably sizable ones in Serbia and Turkey. While protests in Indonesia and the Philippines have not (yet?) explicitly demanded government stepdown, they are worth mentioning, if only for the witty use of the One Piece flag, which later served as an inspiration to maximalist campaigns in other parts of the world. In these instances, Gen Z particularly took center stage in the resistance, emanating creativity and budding cross-country collaborations.

In Nepal, the people’s anger bloomed through the week-long #NepoBaby campaign on social media (method #7 and #32), initiated by tech-savvy youth and aimed at exposing the over-the-top lifestyles of the Nepali politicians’ children, funded by their parents’ corruption.²⁶ In Mongolia, a group of young people played with the same sentiment by collectively scrutinizing a social media post that showcases Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene’s son’s fancy birthday and engagement party (methods #31 and #32), further creating an online petition that demands political accountability (method #6).²⁷ Meanwhile, in Madagascar, youth-led protests were sparked by ongoing water and power cuts amidst a high rate of unemployment and a high cost of living.²⁸ Similarly, the youth of Bulgaria started to mobilize themselves in response to the controversial state budget allocation that necessitates a tax rise, bolstered by their longstanding condemnation of corruption and nepotism committed by Prime Minister Boyko Borisov and oligarch Delyan Peevski.²⁹

In such cases, the anti-government protests in Nepal, Mongolia, Madagascar, and Bulgaria were able to swiftly reach the “enduring crisis” and “uprising” phases of the resistance by strongly appealing to the “ruling elite vs ordinary people” framework, which allowed more people to relate to the movement and get involved in the mobilization. In Nepal, for example, the #NepoBaby campaign smoothly led to the online organization of the country’s forthcoming protests. When the Nepali government declared a ban on social media, the people took it as a sign to immediately flood the streets. Accommodated by the “Youths Against Corruption” Discord channel, the youth first set the stage on September 8 by protesting, chanting, singing, and dancing (method #7, #8, #36, #37, and #47) in Kathmandu.³⁰ Over the next few hours, the number grew to thousands of people, with the One Piece flags woven throughout the crowd (method #18).³¹

Similarly, in Mongolia, due to widespread socialization on the internet, the anti-government campaign was quick to transform into week-long protests, which went hand-in-hand with

26 The Daily Star, “*What sparked Nepal’s Gen Z protests and rise of ‘Nepo kid’ campaign?*,” Asia News Network, September 10, 2025.

27 Bolor Lkhaajav, “*Here Comes the Youth: Mongolia’s Mobilization of Protest to Oust the Government*,” Arctus Analytics, May 26, 2025.

28 Sammy Awami, “*Police fire rubber bullets as Madagascar protesters reject president’s promises*,” BBC Africa, October 9, 2025.

29 Ivaylo Dinev, “*Why Bulgaria Became a Success Story for Gen Z Protests*,” ZOIS Spotlight, January 28, 2026.

30 Amish Raj Mulmi, “*From Streets to Discord: How Nepal’s Gen Z Toppled a Government*,” Carnegie Endowment, September 24, 2025.

31 Amish Raj Mulmi, “*From Streets to Discord: How Nepal’s Gen Z Toppled a Government*,” Carnegie Endowment, September 24, 2025.

digital protests in the form of videos and songs circulated on social media platforms.³² Due to the campaign's "entertaining" and "welcoming" nature, more diverse segments of society were thus more compelled to participate, as seen in the eventual participation of hundreds of students, academics, activists, workers, and retirees in said protests.³³ In Madagascar, the same vibrant attitude was channeled into the streets of the capital, Antananarivo, where protests against President Andry Rajoelina were marked by speeches, flag-waving, dancing, and cheering, accompanied by a flow of rap and reggae beats (method #1, #7, #8, #18, #36, #37, and #47).³⁴ Meanwhile, the success of the Bulgarian youth movement in mobilizing hundreds of thousands to the streets was sustained by their collaboration with the We Continue the Change – Democratic Bulgaria coalition. Aside from allowing them to effectively disseminate information to a wider range of people, such a collaboration also adds to the youth's credibility when making their calls to action. As such, their online campaigns on TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook were able to get young doctors, ethnic minority groups, opposition parties, influencers, and other segments of civil society to collectively join the resistance.³⁵ Demonstrations in the capital city, Sofia, later saw the solid creation of human chains around the parliament building (method #47 and #171).³⁶

As such, the size of the masses had enabled resistance in Nepal, Mongolia, Madagascar, and Bulgaria to gradually intensify their pressure, allowing them to secure concession after concession. In the act, they ensured that pressure was applied to specific targets, thus showcasing how the masses were able to outnumber the elites. When the police started repressing the Nepali protesters, killing 19 protestors and injuring 100 others along the way,³⁷ the people doubled in anger and completely disregarded the newly imposed curfews (method #141), continuing their street protests (method #47) and occupation of major government buildings and private residences of state officials (method #173).³⁸ The next day, a number of ministers and members of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) announced their resignation, including Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.³⁹

Similarly, the Mongolian youth movement's 21-day protests managed to push enough members of parliament to withdraw their support from the coalition government, resulting in Prime Minister Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene's eventual resignation on June 3.⁴⁰ The same happened in Bulgaria, where Prime Minister Rosen Zhelyazkov declared his cabinet's resignation on December 11, three weeks after the eruption of protests.⁴¹

32 Bolor Lkhaajav, "[Here Comes the Youth: Mongolia's Mobilization of Protest to Oust the Government](#)," Arctus Analytics, May 26, 2025.

33 Bolor Lkhaajav, "[Here Comes the Youth: Mongolia's Mobilization of Protest to Oust the Government](#)," Arctus Analytics, May 26, 2025.

34 Rachel Savage and Teddy Rahenintsoa, "[Gen Z gave us the victory: how young protesters toppled Madagascar's leader](#)," The Guardian, October 17, 2025.

35 Ivaylo Dinev, "[Why Bulgaria Became a Success Story for Gen Z Protests](#)," ZOIS Spotlight, January 28, 2026.

36 Al Jazeera, "[Bulgarian government resigns after mass protests](#)," December 11, 2025.

37 Sumina Suwal, "[The 2025 Gen Z Uprising in Nepal: A Three-Part Analysis](#)," Harvard T.H. Chan, November 17, 2025.

38 THT Online, "[Gen Z protesters set fire at President's Office](#)," The Himalayan, September 9, 2025.

39 THT Online, "[Gen Z protesters set fire at President's Office](#)," The Himalayan, September 9, 2025.

40 Le Monde, "[Mongolia's prime minister resigns after losing a vote of confidence in parliament](#)," June 3, 2025; Bolor Lkhaajav, "[The Fall of Mongolia's Coalition Government](#)," The Diplomat, June 4, 2025.

41 Al Jazeera, "[Bulgarian government resigns after mass protests](#)," December 11, 2025.

Rather dissimilar was the trajectory in Madagascar. Here, protests continued even after the dissolution of the prime minister and the entire cabinet by President Rajoelina. Following the protestors' refusal to have a dialogue with the president, several elite military units started to rebel against Rajoelina's orders, where soldiers eventually joined the people's protests in the main square of Antananarivo (method #148).⁴² As such, other than being pushed by the demand of the people, the president was also ousted due to Colonel Michael Randrianirina's military takeover.⁴³

Other lively protests in 2025 include the ones in Serbia⁴⁴ and Turkey. While stemming from different issues, popular unrest in the two countries grew steadily throughout the year. In Serbia, discontent was triggered by the collapse of the Novi Sad railway station canopy in 2024, killing a total of 15 people, which Serbians then pinned on the government's corruption.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the Turkish protests were founded on the arrest of Istanbul mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and 100 other opposition members by the Turkish authorities, which many believe was the incumbent President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's effort to eliminate his political rivals.⁴⁶

While the newly emerging movements in Serbia and Turkey might not have concluded 2025 with the outright achievement of their goal(s), they have definitely made their presence loud and known. In Serbia, the pathway to the "uprising" phase of their movement was notably nurtured by the youth's aptness in spreading the word about the resistance. What was once an isolated protest on the collapse of the railway station canopy managed to grow into a broad-based anti-government protest through their community outreach. Through an online solidarity letter (method #2 and #4) that garnered the support of 5,000 university professors and 85 faculties in the country, students were able to kick-start a nationwide occupation of universities (method #173) in demand of government accountability.⁴⁷ This phenomenon eventually grew into street protests (method #47) in 400 different towns and cities,⁴⁸ which featured the participation of secondary school students, teachers, farmers, artists, lawyers, media associations, and hundreds of thousands of Serbians in what is dubbed "the biggest rally in modern Serbian history."⁴⁹ On top of said showdown, 80 Serbian students also organized a 13-day bike journey to deliver a letter to lawmakers in the European Parliament in Strasbourg (method #2, #43, and #158), in which they were warmly welcomed by Serbian diasporas across numerous European cities.⁵⁰ With words travelling internationally, Serbians back home were able to escalate protests into ones that incorporated general strikes (method #117) and roadblocks across the country (method #172), with the collective call for a snap election.⁵¹ At this point, demand

42 AP News, "[A timeline of all the major events in Madagascar's military coup](#)," October 16, 2025.

43 AP News, "[A timeline of all the major events in Madagascar's military coup](#)," October 16, 2025.

44 See Daniel Petz' chapter for further reading on Serbia.

45 Ivaylo Dinev, "[The Student Revolt in Serbia: Vučić's Nemesis?](#)" ZOiS, January 29, 2025.

46 Mehmet Emin Caliskan, "[Protesters say Istanbul mayor detention is a blow to democracy](#)," Reuters, March 19, 2025.

47 Ivaylo Dinev, "[The Student Revolt in Serbia: Vučić's Nemesis?](#)" ZOiS, January 29, 2025.

48 Mina Trpkovic and Christin Stuhlen, "[Uprisings in Serbia. Struggle\(s\) against a resilient regime](#)," PRIF, March 21, 2025.

49 Katarina Baletic, "[Mass Rallies, Marches and Roadblocks Dominate Serbia's Streets in 2025](#)," Balkan Insight, December 22, 2025.

50 European Western Balkans, "[After cycling to Strasbourg, Serbian students meet with EP and CoE representatives](#)," April 16, 2025.

51 Katarina Baletic, "[Mass Rallies, Marches and Roadblocks Dominate Serbia's Streets in 2025](#)," Balkan Insight, December 22, 2025.

no longer revolved around accountability over the Novi Sad incident, but also President Aleksandar Vučić's deep-seated corruption and authoritarianism.

The Turkish people's inclination to go all out in protests, on the other hand, was buttressed by calls to action from prominent figures across the country. Following invitations from the Republican People's Party (CHP)'s leaders to mobilize against the "coup attempt" by the incumbent Turkish president,⁵² tens of thousands of people started demonstrating in front of the municipal offices of Istanbul, chanting "Imamoglu, you are not alone!" and "Erdogan, dictator!" (method #7).⁵³ Emboldened by the officials and lawmakers who took matters to the streets, protests furthermore broke out in many other cities, including Ankara, Bolu, İzmir, Samsun, Antalya, Balıkesir, Eskişehir, Mersin, Muğla, Bursa, Aydın, Adana, Denizli, Trabzon, Çorum, Konya, Sakarya, Amasya, Giresun, Rize, Kırıkkale, and Karabük—many of which were organized by students across multiple Turkish universities (method #47).⁵⁴ Later joined by labour unions, civil rights groups, and other segments of society, the protests highlighted how the arrest of Istanbul's mayor could very well happen to the next ordinary citizen, conveyed through slogans such as "Susma, sustukça, sıra sana gelecek!" ("Don't stay quiet, the longer you do, it will be your turn!") and "Hükümet istifa!" ("Government, resign!") amidst the banging of pots and pans (method #28) reminiscent of the 2013 Gezi Park protests.⁵⁵

As they embody different stages of resistance, the abovementioned Gen Z-dominated movements have relied heavily on one another for inspiration and as possible blueprints. Interestingly, this included the protests in Indonesia and the Philippines, which might not have (yet?) necessarily categorized themselves as maximalist, but have spurred on the existence of maximalist campaigns in the abovementioned countries.

The One Piece flag, for instance, was first notably used as a symbol of discontent with the everyday hardships felt by lay Indonesians. To commemorate their upcoming 80th Independence Day on August 17, citizens started putting up the One Piece flag—in place of, or alongside, the red-and-white national flag—outside their houses and on their vehicles (method #18) to criticize the government's corruption and questionable policies.⁵⁶ As the campaign spread, leading up to various protests across the country,⁵⁷ government officials eventually condemned the usage of the flag, citing it as a disrespect towards the sanctity of the national flag, further threatening those who commit the act with treason and jail time.⁵⁸

Through videos uploaded on TikTok and Instagram by Indonesian netizens, the rise of the One Piece flag was then emulated by the Gen Z movements in other countries, including Nepal

52 Ece Toksabay and Ezgi Erkoyun, "Turkey detains Istanbul mayor in what opposition calls 'coup,'" Reuters, March 19, 2025.

53 Al-Monitor, "Protests in Turkey as Imamoglu, key Erdogan rival, is arrested," March 19, 2025; Selin Girit, Toby Luckhurts, and Hafsa Khalil, "Protests erupt in Turkey after Erdogan rival arrested," BBC News, March 19, 2025.

54 Nicolas Bourcier, "How a handful of Turkish students with 'nothing left to lose' spurred a protest movement," Le Monde, March 25, 2025.

55 Financial Times, "Turkey detains hundreds of protesters as demonstrations over mayor's arrest intensify," March 22, 2025.

56 Donny Dwisatryo Priyantoro and Azwar Ferdian, "Marak Sopir Truk Pasang Bendera One Piece," Kompas, August 6, 2025; Tempo, "Fenomena Pengibaran Bendera One Piece Menjelang HUT Kemerdekaan RI ke-80," August 4, 2025.

57 See diah kusumaningrum's chapter for further reading on Indonesia.

58 Amnesty International Indonesia, "Indonesia: Stop crackdown on One Piece anime flag ahead of Independence Day," August 8, 2025.

and the Philippines, in the following month of September. In the Philippines, the flag was woven amidst protests against the government's corruption of flood control projects, accompanied by the throwing of mud and water-filled balloons towards government offices and the properties of contractors involved (method #47 and #30).⁵⁹ The particular success of the Nepali youth in securing their demands thus triggered the mobilization of other youth-led movements in Kenya, Peru, Madagascar, and Serbia under the same flag. A Malagasy slam poetry performer, who was active in the protests in Madagascar, commented how the Nepali success "just sparked stars in their [our] eyes."⁶⁰ More than a symbolic inspiration, however, these youth groups have also actively collaborated and learned from the successes of one another by joining the Nepali "Youths Against Corruption" Discord channel.⁶¹

As such, the emergence of a uniting symbol, namely the One Piece flag, can perhaps serve several different functions. For movements that have existed since 2024 like Kenya and Peru, picking up the flag—especially after the success of another movement—can very well signal to their respective governments that resistance is very much alive, and can go up a notch if needed. Meanwhile, for movements that emerged in 2025, waving the skeleton-adorned flag can serve as a litmus test to see whether enough people will rally behind the movement during the "uprising" phase, before embarking on the "peak" and "proceeding" phases. In the case of Indonesia and the Philippines, said escalation may perhaps not only include an intensification of repertoires of contention, but a shift from a reformist orientation to a maximalist one.

Budding Resistance against Expansion

Aside from continuations and big breakthroughs, the year 2025 also witnessed the brewing of maximalist campaigns that were founded on the people's non-acceptance of their incumbent government's plan (or current execution) of extended rule. Such cases were seen in a number of countries in the African continent, namely the Central African Republic, Togo, and Mali, alongside the United States.

In the Central African Republic, public discontent unfolded as demonstrations in the streets of Bangui, as rumours of President Faustin-Archange Touadéra's third term in office surfaced.⁶² The people's staunch disapproval of a third term was founded on the deteriorating quality of their life under Touadéra, which features limited access to basic public and education services. In Togo, anger amongst the youth and activists was fuelled by President Faure Gnassingbé's plan of revamping the country's presidential system into a parliamentary one, further creating the "President of the Council of Ministers" role that he would personally assume to extend his reign of power, thus threatening Togo's state of democracy.⁶³ Meanwhile, Mali saw its first-ever

⁵⁹ Sam Beltran, "*Protests erupt in Philippines over 'stolen' flood control funds: 'drowning in money.'*" South China Morning Post, September 8, 2025.

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Grenier, "*What the 'One Piece' pirate flag means in Gen Z protests.*" The Guardian, August 10, 2025.

⁶¹ Rachel Savage and Teddy Rahenintsoa, "*Gen Z gave us the victory: how young protesters toppled Madagascar's leader.*" The Guardian, October 17, 2025.

⁶² Africa News, "*Central African opposition leads mass protest against Touadéra's third-term bid.*" April 4, 2025.

⁶³ Paul Melly, "*Furious protests at move to cement Togo ruling family's grip on power.*" BBC News, July 24, 2025.

pro-democracy protests since the military junta's inception in 2020, as a response to the transitional government's plan of disbanding all political parties in the country.⁶⁴

In all these countries, resistance primarily took the form of protests and persuasions, which served as a foundation to the "enduring crisis" phase. In the Central African Republic, demonstrations were attended by thousands of people, where people's anger materialized in marches to the country's national anthem (method #38 and #37), as they held "Stop the Third Term" banners (method #7 and #8).⁶⁵ In Togo, thousands under the "Hands Off My Constitution" coalition similarly flooded the streets (method #47) in the capital city, Lomé, where some set up barricades with burning tyres to ward off the police force (method #171).⁶⁶ Mali's demonstrations, on the other hand, were centered on the Palais de la Culture, where hundreds chanted slogans and carried signs demanding the dictator to step down (method #47, #7, and #8).⁶⁷ Alongside street protests, civil society actors, labour leaders, and members of political parties in Mali also congregated to hold a press conference (method #5) to condemn the junta and demand "a rapid and credible return to constitutional order through the organization of transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections."⁶⁸

While they have not grown as massively as the movements mentioned in the two previous sections, the rise of resistance in these three countries were crucial in a number of aspects. Firstly, they served as a critical signalling mechanism—one that should be taken as a warning by their respective governments of the fact that a breach of democracy will not be tolerated by the people. Here, the subsequent repression from Gnassingbé's government in Togo and the crackdown by Mali's military leadership went to show that the governments do see the people's resistance as a genuine obstruction. Secondly, the movements may very well serve as a test run, one that tells the organizers of the protests whether more people are interested in joining the cause for them to be able to escalate the resistance. In doing so, the resistance in the Central African Republic, Togo, and Mali can perhaps also learn from the experiences of mobilization in Kenya, whose endurance managed to transcend the years, or Madagascar, whose emergence in the year 2025 yielded significant results.

As also seen in Indonesia and the Philippines, the recent mobilization in the United States might not (yet) present itself as a maximalist campaign; however, it did explicitly reject the expansion of the repressive state, which had become increasingly prevalent in 2025, under the presidency of Donald Trump. Condemning the proposition of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and an increasingly militaristic immigration system, millions of people held street demonstrations (method #47) in multiple cities under the "No Kings" banner (method #7).⁶⁹ Through public speeches and the wearing of festive attributes (methods #1, #18, and #19), the people chanted

64 GlobalPost, "[First Pro-Democracy Protests in Mali in Four Years of Military Rule](#)," May 8, 2025.

65 Africa News, "[Central African opposition leads mass protest against Touadéra's third-term bid](#)," April 4, 2025.

66 News Agencies, "[Security forces disperse Togo protesters demanding president's resignation](#)," Al Jazeera, June 27, 2025.

67 Baba Ahmed, "[Hundreds of activists stage Mali's first pro-democracy rally in years since coups](#)," AP News, May 5, 2025.

68 Baba Ahmed, "[Hundreds of activists stage Mali's first pro-democracy rally in years since coups](#)," AP News, May 5, 2025.

69 No Kings, "[No Kings Protests Conclude with Overwhelming Peace Unity Across the Country](#)," June 14, 2025; Giselle Ruhiiyih Ewing, "[The Resistance 2.0 arrived with nationwide 'No Kings' protests](#)," Politico, 14 Juni 2025.

and displayed messages of “No Kings, but yaaas queen,” “The only minorities destroying this country are billionaires,” and “Hey hey, ho, ho, Donald Trump has got to go.”⁷⁰

Faced with illegal arrests, harassments, and killings by the ICE agents, the people, too, started to act as shields for one another. Aside from making use of conventional methods such as organizing demonstrations (method #47), displaying posters (#7 and #8), writing open letters to senators (method #2), creating human chains (method #171), and establishing blockades (method #172), the people further adopted various forms of “tactical frivolity.” Such a tactic features the conduct of seemingly “silly” and “ridiculous” acts of resistance, which can actually be very disarming in nature⁷¹—take, for example, going to street protests in frog, duck, and dinosaur costumes (method #19),⁷² doing nude bicycle protest rides (method #22 and #42),⁷³ blasting loud music outside hotels suspected of hosting the ICE agents (method #31 and #36),⁷⁴ and so on. More than for tactical reasons, said actions were also done to debunk the various accusations that paint anti-ICE protesters as “violent extremists.”⁷⁵

While they have not grown as massively as the movements mentioned in the two previous sections, the rise of resistance in these four countries is crucial in a number of aspects. Firstly, they serve as a critical signalling mechanism—one that should be taken as a warning by their respective governments of the fact that a breach of democracy will not be tolerated by the people. Here, the subsequent repression from Gnassingbé’s government in Togo and the crackdown by Mali’s military leadership go to show that the governments do see the people’s resistance as a genuine obstruction. Secondly, the movements may very well serve as a test run, one that tells the organizers of the protests whether more people are interested in joining the cause for them to be able to escalate the resistance.

Campaigns of the Right

Yet again, 2025 (unfortunately) also played host to the mobilization of forces that target governments for anti-democratic reasons, namely in **Spain** and **Poland**.

In Spain, such mobilization took the form of protests in the capital Madrid, targeting the country’s socialist prime minister, Pedro Sánchez. Claimed to be attended by tens of thousands of people, the crowd demanded the resignation of Sánchez and the conduct of a snap general election based on allegations of corruption involving his family and administration. Led by the conservative People’s Party (PP), the crowd would wave the Spanish flag and hold placards donning the slogan “This is it: mafia or democracy?” to essentially condemn Sánchez’s

70 Giselle Ruhyyih Ewing, “*The Resistance 2.0 arrived with nationwide ‘No Kings’ protests.*” June Politico, 2025.

71 Christie Thompson, “*The ICE Protest Frogs Have a Long History of ‘Tactical Frivolity’ Behind Them.*” The Marshall Project, October 22, 2025.

72 Christie Thompson, “*The ICE Protest Frogs Have a Long History of ‘Tactical Frivolity’ Behind Them.*” The Marshall Project, October 22, 2025.

73 Associated Press, “*‘Quintessentially Portland’: nude cyclists protest against national guard deployment.*” The Guardian, October 13, 2025.

74 Peyton Haug, “*G’night ICE, but first, some Rage Against the Machine.*” Minnesota Reformer, January 31, 2026.

75 Christie Thompson, “*The ICE Protest Frogs Have a Long History of ‘Tactical Frivolity’ Behind Them.*” The Marshall Project, October 22, 2025.

socialist policies.⁷⁶ Through the ensuing public speeches, attending PP leaders also emboldened the demand for the incumbent government's resignation by equating Sánchez's amicable relationship with Basque and Catalan activists to supporting "terrorist groups."⁷⁷

Meanwhile, in Poland, anti-democratic forces took the form of anti-immigration marches and protests that have occurred in more than 80 major cities such as Warsaw, Krakow, Poznan, Wroclaw, and Bialystok.⁷⁸ Led by the far-right Confederation Liberty and Independence Party, demands included the need to close borders with Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, and Slovakia, further advocating the need for soldiers to start shooting people who cross the country's border illegally.⁷⁹ Through many of their public speeches, leaders of the participating parties would also demand the resignation of Donald Tusk's government, citing that they have failed to curb illegal immigration.

The existence—or rather, persistence—of these movements consequently highlights how anti-democratic forces, too, see merit in popular mobilization to make a dent towards existing systems and governments. As such, beyond the reformist and maximalist dichotomies, the year 2025 further shows how imperative it is to pay attention to movements that appear to be non-violent⁸⁰ in their mobilization, but are unjust in nature and often backed by the authoritarian political forces of the country. Aside from being able to skillfully launch maximalist campaigns vis-à-vis an authoritarian regime, it is perhaps equally important to pick up skills that would ensure such anti-democratic forces do not get popular support to assume power since the outset.

What Next?

The year 2025 has ultimately equipped us with stories of nurtured patience and newfound vigor that keep the resistance alive. Several key takeaways can perhaps serve as foundations for movements in upcoming years.

Firstly, campaigns that emerged and re-emerged in 2025 have shed light on an important segment of society that is often undermined: the youth. From Nepal to Georgia, young people have shown that they are very capable of addressing injustice and autocratization through creative and coordinated means.⁸¹ They have projected how the combination of tech savvy, agenda-setting (i.e., "the people vs the elites"), and the utilization of a uniting symbol, such as the One Piece flag, allowed for a level of outreach needed to escalate a movement. Moreover, cross-country collaborations have also served as a critical avenue to learn tips and tricks from

76 Sam Jones, "[Thousands rally in Madrid to demand snap election over corruption allegations](#)," The Guardian, November 30, 2025.

77 Sam Jones, "[Thousands rally in Madrid to demand snap election over corruption allegations](#)," The Guardian, November 30, 2025.

78 Katarzyna-Maria Skiba, "[Anti-immigration demonstrations take place in more than 80 cities across Poland](#)," EuroNews, July 19, 2025.

79 Katarzyna-Maria Skiba, "[Anti-immigration demonstrations take place in more than 80 cities across Poland](#)," EuroNews, July 19, 2025.

80 Not to be confused with "nonviolent". The hyphenated term "non-violent" is used to refer to movements that pragmatically use nonviolent tactics to pursue violent and anti-democratic goals.

81 Aside from the ones mentioned above, Gen Zs have also been doing protests in various other countries (Cameroon, Maldives, Mexico, Peru, East Timor, etc.) albeit reformist in orientation. Accounting for the fact that many maximalist campaigns often started as reformist, it should be in our interest to monitor these movements' trajectories in the long run.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Afghanistan		→	●←	●←	↑←	↓←
Albania			→	✓		
Algeria	→	↑→	↓→			
Bangladesh				→	✓	
Belarus	→	↓→	↓→			
Bulgaria	→	✓				
Central African Republic						→
Chile	→	✓				
China			→	✓		
Colombia	→	↑→				
Ecuador			→	✓		
El Salvador		→				
Georgia					→	↑→
Ghana					●→	●→
Guatemala		→	↑→	✓+←	✓+→	✓+→
Hong Kong	→	↓→	↓→			
Indonesia						←
Iran			→	↓→	↑→	↑→
Kenya					→	↑→
Kyrgyzstan	→					
Lebanon	→	↑→				
Madagascar				→	●→	✓+→
Malawi	→					
Mali						→
Mongolia						✓+→
Myanmar		→	↓→	↑→	↓→	
Nepal						✓+→
Panama			→	●←		
Peru	→			→	↓→	↑→
Philippines						←
Poland				→		
Russia		→	●←	●←		
Serbia						↑→
South Africa				→	●→	
South Korea					✓+→	
Sri Lanka			→	✓		
Sudan	→	↑→	↑→	↓→		
Syria				→		
Thailand	→	↓→	↓→	↑→	↓→	
Togo						→
Tunisia			→	●→	●→	↑→
Turkey						↑→
United States						←

Diagram 3

The trajectory of maximalist movements in the world (2020-2025)

Orientation	
→	Maximalist
←	Reformist
Intensity	
↑	Increases
↓	Decreases
●	Stagnant
Status	
✓	Successful

one another, as well as to serve as a leverage to get the government to know the extent to which a movement might grow.

Secondly, in addition to celebrating new key players in the activism arena, 2025 has also presented new “opponents” to look out for—right wing groups conducting non-violent mobilization who, instead of targeting an authoritarian state, aim to oust a left-leaning government. In the cases of Spain and Poland, a pro-social justice and pro-democracy counter-movement is needed to prevent the rise of an undemocratic regime that may then require the mobilization of people in a maximalist campaign in the long run.

Thirdly, it is important to note that the journey of most maximalist campaigns does not end following the ousting of an incumbent government. In Nepal, for example, organizing continues despite the movement’s success in pushing for the prime minister’s resignation. Utilizing the networks and social capital acquired throughout the development of their maximalist campaign, the youth movement further ensured that the demands and ideals of their movement are of the new regime’s priority by discussing and shortlisting Nepal’s potential new ministers themselves, through the same Discord channel. Perhaps the same is to be done by the Malagasy movement, whose success in toppling down their previous government is preceded by a military transitional government.

Lastly, as consistently reiterated in DPD annual reflections throughout the years, it is important to note that a movement’s trajectory is not linear and should instead be seen as a cycle with inconsistent ups and downs. As such, taking a step back and reorienting a movement’s strategy should not be seen as a sign of weakness. Just like movements in Iran, Tunisia, and Georgia, to lie low or modify one’s priorities throughout the years is often needed to ensure sustenance in the face of an increasingly repressive government. Other than demanding the ousting of a regime, calls to release one’s loved ones from detainment are, for example, an equally important demand to keep the fire of the resistance burning. Here, care work in the form of celebrating the detainees’ birthdays outside of their cells and sending out the letters they wrote from prison is an undeniably important pillar in strengthening the solidarity and sense of security needed for the people to commit to the movement.

Serbia Rises: Are Students Writing the Next Chapter of the Anti-Authoritarian Playbook?

Daniel Petz

Since the collapse of the canopy at the newly renovated train station in Novi Sad, 1 November 2024, Serbia has witnessed the rise of extremely fierce and innovative student-led protests. Protesters refused to see the event, which took 16 lives,¹ as an accident. Instead, they pinned it on systemic corruption under the autocratizing rule of President Aleksandar Vučić.

Serbia's trajectory towards electoral autocracy is part of a worldwide third wave of autocratization. Here, democratically elected rulers use their power to subvert democratic institutions and limit civil liberties. Keeping in mind Chenoweth's findings that maximalist campaigns have become less successful in the last decade,² it is important to learn from Serbian activists ways to counter a regime that is becoming increasingly "masterful" in stifling protests. While still ongoing, their wide and creative repertoires of nonviolent action have so far proven to be adept at responding to the government's authoritarian policies and increasing repression. It is not farfetched to argue that Serbian students are writing the next chapter of the anti-authoritarian playbook.



1 The initial death toll was 15 persons. One woman died several weeks after the collapse, bringing the death toll to 16.

2 Erica Chenoweth, "The future of nonviolent resistance," *Journal of Democracy*, 31(3), 69-84, 2020.

The Ebb and Flow of Movements in Pre-2025 Serbia

The 2025 student movements in Serbia need to be understood within the long history of pro-democratic movements in the country. In the early 1990s, Serbian ultranationalism under Slobodan Milošević led to the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, where grave human rights violations took place in Croatia and Bosnia—including ethnic cleansing and genocide in Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serb army and Serbian paramilitaries. In 1998, with Serbia and Montenegro as its remaining parts, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia waged war to deny the Albanian-majority province of Kosovo its independence. This was followed by NATO intervention, the bombing of Serbia, the withdrawal of Serbian troops from Kosovo, the establishment of UN administration in Kosovo, eventually leading to Kosovo’s independence, which Serbia has not acknowledged up to this day.

Amidst aforementioned episodes of violence, Milošević’s rule was contested by multiple waves of protests. The first was in 1996, where the opposition claimed that local elections were rigged. The second took off in 1998, led by Otpor! student movement, eventually becoming the Bulldozer Revolution that brought Milošević down in October 2000. Right after the revolution, Serbia democratized and Milošević was arrested and tried in The Hague by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.³

In 2006, Montenegro voted to become independent and Serbia declared independence. In 2009, Serbia applied for European Union membership and received candidate status in 2012. In 2012, a series of nationalist protests brought a coalition, which included Vučić’s ultranationalist Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), to power. Vučić, who served as Milošević’s Minister of Information in 1998-2000, became Minister of Defence. In 2014, as his party won the majority, Vučić became prime minister. In 2017 and 2022, he was elected and re-elected as the president of Serbia. It was during Vučić’s rule that Serbia experienced democratic backsliding.⁴ His reign has been linked to massive crackdowns on independent media and freedom of expression, cooptation of media for state propaganda, and systemic corruption. Vučić has also moved Serbia close to Putin’s Russia and not condemned Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Democratic backsliding in Serbia under Vučić has not been uncontested. Already in 2017, there were massive protests surrounding the presidential election, which was marred by voter intimidation and media domination by Vučić and his party. A second wave of protests took place from 2018 to 2020 under the slogans of “Stop bloody shirts” and “1 of 5 million” against autocratization and increasing government violence. The protests were triggered by an assault in November 2018 on Borko Stefanović, an opposition politician, as well as assaults on

³ Slobodan Milošević died of a heart attack in his prison cell in The Hague, on March 11, 2006, just months before a verdict was expected in his four year trial for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

⁴ In 2019, Freedom House downgraded Serbia from “free” to “partly free.” Meanwhile, since 2014, Varieties of Democracy classified Serbia as an electoral autocracy.

investigative journalists, plagiarism scandals, and weapons sales to Yemen.⁵ Protesters called for freedom of press, political freedom, electoral reform, new elections, and more government transparency, condemning what they perceive as Vučić's increasingly authoritarian tendencies.

To counter the protests, Vučić launched the "Future of Serbia" campaign. Pro-government rallies were held in all districts of Serbia, while the government-coopted media constantly demonized protesters and opposition leaders, spreading disinformation to the general public. Vladimir Putin's 2019 state visit was turned into a massive propaganda event for the regime. Protesters called for a boycott of the 2020 parliamentary elections, resulting in less than 50 percent voter turnout, but still yielded a large majority for Vučić and his allies. Under Covid-19 restrictions, protests quieted down in 2020.

Upon his 2022 reelection, in March 2023 Vučić established the People's Movement for the State, a supra-party force consisting of a number of political parties and movements. Following a school shooting in Belgrade, a wave of protests started in 2023. These "Serbia against violence" rallies and street blockades took place in numerous cities. The government inadequately responded to the demands by merely introducing some gun-safety measures, including an amnesty for citizens to surrender illegal weapons. For the large part of it, Vučić described protesters as "hyenas and vultures," accused the opposition of attempting to kill him or to stage a coup d'état, and organized a pro-government rally attended by 40-50 thousand participants.

The 2025 Protests

It is clear that the 2025 protests in Serbia were part of a long and proud tradition of student movements that has been contesting autocratization for over a decade. What should also be clear is that the movement's repertoires are developed in response to Vučić's control of the media, capture of state resources, labeling of protesters as unpatriotic, mobilization of pro-government counter rallies, and unwillingness to give in to protesters' demands—hoping that the movement runs out of steam.⁶

So while the immediate trigger for the current wave of civil resistance in Serbia was the collapse of the canopy at the train station in Novi Sad, students and activists organized the protests around the issue of government negligence and corruption. While nowhere close to being complete, the following timeline highlights some of the major protest events and the government's reactions.

⁵ Dr. Zoran Lutovac, "[Stop to bloody shirts](#)," IPS News, 8 January 2019.

⁶ See my article in Damai Pangkal Damai's [2024 Annual Reflection](#) on pro-regime mobilization in autocratic and autocratizing countries.

2024

- 2-4 November** ● Early protests largely took the form of silent vigils. The government denied any renovation had taken place, contrary to evidence.
- 5 November** ● Protesters surrounded Novi Sad's city hall.⁷ They smeared posters of the president and prime minister with red paint to indicate blood on these politicians' hands. The Minister of Transportation resigned, 13 officials were arrested and indicted.⁸
- Late November** ● Protests escalated as students and faculty members of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Novi Sad got attacked by pro-government supporters. Students then occupied more than 50 university buildings and numerous high schools in Novi Sad and Belgrade.⁹ In support of the protests, farmers put up road blockades. To commemorate the 15 victims of the collapsed canopy, activists started to perform weekly 15-minute road blockades on Fridays, at the hour and minute when the catastrophe took place.¹⁰ Voices from within the ruling party tried to frame the protests as anarcho-terrorist and anti-Serbian. For example, a high-ranking member of the government party tweeted: "We must fight against anarcho-terrorists, fake commie intellectuals, the pseudo-elite that is ravaging Serbia with anti-Serbian attitudes. It is time to stop this social scum. In every place and at every step. First of all, in every discussion, and God forbid, if necessary, with force. This scum will no longer be able to terrorize this country. Long live Serbia and just fight bravely."¹¹ There were instances where drivers drove their car into groups of protesters, causing injuries. On 11 December, the government did make a number of concessions, including a promise to make public the documents related to the collapse of the canopy, as well as to release detained protesters and pardon convicted protesters. While this was the first since 2012 that the government made significant concessions, Vučić declined to resign.¹²
- December** ● About 100,000 protesters gathered in Belgrade to protest against police brutality and the use of government-paid thugs to attack civil resisters, making it one of the largest protests in Serbian history.¹³ Repression increased, with student activists receiving phone calls from the Serbian intelligence agency, inviting them to come in for "a friendly chat." Several Croatian students were accused by the government to have been organizing the protests on behalf of the Croatian intelligence agency. Their names were published without their consent by pro-government media, to the extent that they had to leave Serbia.¹⁴ In late December, Vučić announced the formation of a 17,000-member strong "loyalty faction" consisting of party members.¹⁵

7 Al Jazeera, "Police fire tear gas at Serbians protesting deadly roof collapse," 6 November 2024.

8 Deutsche Welle, "Serbia: Ex-minister among 13 indicted for station collapse," 30 December 2024.

9 Andrej Cvetić, "Students in Serbia Block Universities in Search of Justice," University News, 30 December 2024.

10 Jovana Gec, "Traffic blockades held throughout Serbia against populist government over roof collapse tragedy," Associated Press, 13 December 2024)

11 Glas javnosti, "Srbiji prete sukoblj. Duka zapenio i izveđao opoziciju, SNS-ovce pozvao da budu spremni da biju," 21 November 2024.

12 Reuters, "Serbia's Vučić promises to meet protesters' demands after train station disaster," 12 December 2024.

13 Le Monde, "Tens of thousands protest in Serbian capital against government," 22 December 2024.

14 Independent, "Croatia protests detention and deportation of 5 citizens in neighboring Serbia," 23 January 2025.

15 Slobodan Georgijev, "Ski jumping for loyalists," VREME, 8 January 2025.

2025

- 11 January** ● Protesters gathered in front of the intelligence service's headquarters in Novi Sad and invited the agents "to a friendly chat." They also targeted the Constitutional Court of Serbia. Most protests started with 15 minutes of silence.¹⁶ Early January, Vučić announced that education workers taking part in strikes would be sacked and replaced. Over 100 teachers had been dismissed, as well as 25 head-teachers and co-principals.¹⁷
- 14 January** ● Serbia's largest educators' union announced a 1-day general strike on the first day of the new semester.¹⁸
- 17 January** ● A large protest took place at the headquarter of the national TV station, where protesters read out a list of demands, including the filing of charges against all attackers of protesters, the release of imprisoned protesters, the release of documents related to the collapse of canopy, and an increase of funding for universities. Students paraded a giant cobra sculpture in response to Vučić's threats that he would deploy his Cobra special forces to crush protesters. Students also brought a giant sandwich that holds 200 Euros for the head of the TV station, pointing to the fact that pro-government protesters often received money and sandwiches from the government.¹⁹ Throughout January there are again numerous instances of violence against protesters. On 21 January, hooded persons put up banners on the Belgrade highway, showing a picture of a flipped middle finger, with the inscription, "This is the response of the Serbian people to your colour revolution."²⁰
- 24 January** ● A general strike was widely observed.²¹
- 27 January** ● Students and cyclists blockaded one of Belgrade's major intersections for 24 hours.²² On 28 January, students in Novi Sad were attacked by masked individuals carrying baseball bats in front of the local offices of SNS—several were injured. Protests condemning the attack emerged, prompting Serbia's prime minister Miloš Vučević, and the mayor of Novi Sad Milan Đurić, both members of SNS, to resign. Vučić said he will pardon students and teachers involved in the protests and announced a major cabinet reshuffle.²³

16 Independent, "[Thousands of students protest in Serbia against violation of civil rights, spy agency crackdown](#)," 12 January 2025.

17 Sally Gimson, "[On the ground in Serbia: Student protests lead to crackdown on human rights](#)," 22 December 2025.

18 N1 News, "[At the protest of educators, the independent trade union declared a general strike](#)," 20 January 2025.

19 Gavin Blackburn, "[Thousands protest outside Serbia's state TV accusing it of pro-government bias](#)," Euro News, 18 January 2025.

20 N1 News, "[Anti-protest banners with bloody hand giving the middle finger appear in Belgrade](#)," 21 January 2025.

21 Katarina Baletic & Milica Stojanovic, "[Tens of Thousands Join Serbian Protests Amid Nationwide Strike Effort](#)," Balkan Insight, 24 January 2025.

22 Euro News, "[Serbian university students stage 24-hour blockade in Belgrade over deadly canopy collapse](#)," 27 January 2025.

23 European West Balkans, "[Serbian PM Miloš Vučević resigns following the latest violent attack on protesting students](#)," 28 January 2025.

30 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hundreds of students from Belgrade embarked on a two-day walk from Belgrade to Novi Sad in order to support their Novi Sad colleagues in blocking all three bridges in the city, marking three months since the collapse of the canopy.²⁴
3 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The prosecutor's office in Novi Sad launched investigations, looking into probable corruption behind the collapse of the canopy. On 6 February, the government raised the budget for higher education by 20 percent, fulfilling one of the students' demands.²⁵
7 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lawyers organized a protest in front of the Serbian TV station.²⁶
15 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 15 hours rally was held in Kragujevac to commemorate the anniversary of Serbia's first constitution, the 1835 declaration of the "Constitution of Happiness." This was attended by around 165,000 protesters, many of them were students who travelled by foot, for as far as 150 kilometres.²⁷ That same day, Vučić held a counter-rally in Sremska Mitrovica, where he framed protesters as an attempt by foreign forces to stage a colour revolution.²⁸
11 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students blockaded the national TV station in Belgrade and Novi Sad to highlight its pro-government bias.²⁹
15 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students held the "15th for 15 protests," with supporters coming from all over the country. The gathering in front of the national assembly, attended by approximately half a million protesters, was likely the largest protest in Serbia's history.³⁰ A government affiliated group calling itself "Students 2.0" or "Students Who Want to Study" set up a protest camp at Belgrade's Pionirski Park, close to parliament and the presidential office. They were joined by former members of the disbanded Special Operations Unit (JSO), whose commanders were convicted of war crimes and political assassinations during the Balkan Wars of the 1990s.³¹ Those in the camp threw stones and bottles towards the protesters, while the government allegedly deployed a sonic weapon during the 15 minutes of silence—a stampede occurred; numerous protesters suffered unusual health symptoms.³²

24 Katarina Baletic & Milica Stojanovic, "*Serbian Students March from Belgrade to Novi Sad for Bridge Blockade*," Balkan Insight, 30 January 2025.

25 Valentina Bajic, "*Serbia's govt raises education budget amid student protests*," SeeNews, 7 February 2025.

26 VREME "*We are not a mob, but you are a scoundrel: Protest of lawyers in front of RTS*," 7 February 2025.

27 Iva Gajic & Branko Vockovic, "*Thousands Block Streets In Central Serbia As Protest Wave Continues*," Radio Free Europe, 15 February 2025.

28 N1 News, "*Protest in Kragujevac from the perspective of a DW reporter: 15 hours of euphoria on a cold February day*," 6 February 2025.

29 The Guardian, "*Students block access to Serbian state TV station amid nationwide protests*," 11 March 2025.

30 CNN News, "*Over 100,000 people rally in massive anti-corruption protest against Serbian government*," 15 March 2025.

31 Sanja Kljajic, "*Could Serbia's student protests bring down the government?*" Deutsche Welle, 14 March 2026.

32 Milica Radenković Jeremić & Lara Owen, "*Government denies using 'sonic cannon' at Serbia protests*," BBC News, 18 March 2025.

<p>March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students launched “A student in every village” program. Here, students travelled, often by foot, to hundreds of villages and small towns across Serbia to have conversations with the general public about the protests and need for reform, as well as to counter government propaganda, given its control over nearly all major media outlets in the country.³³
<p>Early April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 80 students embarked on a 1,300 km cycling tour from Belgrade to Strasbourg to alert the European parliament of the situation in Serbia. They stopped in major European cities, including Budapest, Bratislava, and Vienna, receiving public support including from the Serbian diaspora.³⁴ On April 12, Vučić held a rally on the slogan “We will not surrender Serbia” with around 55,000 people attending.³⁵ On April 16, several Croatian citizens with Serbian permanent residency were expelled from Serbia, due to their support of the protest on social media.³⁶
<p>25 April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 21 students embarked on a relay run from Serbia to Brussels to reach the European parliament.³⁷
<p>5 May</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seeing that the government showed no signs of meeting their demands, students called for early parliamentary elections. They announced a unified list of candidates. The idea is for universities to propose slates of candidates and then propose a list based on a sorting algorithm that upholds gender equality. To ensure candidates’ security, the lists would remain secret until elections are officially announced. Major opposition parties supported the call for early elections.³⁸ Also on 5 May, employees of judicial institutions across Serbia went on strike.
<p>28 June</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A major demonstration took place in Belgrade, attended by about 140,000 persons. Students signalled to fellow citizens “a green light” to initiate social, political, and moral actions.³⁹ Clashes with the police broke out. Many protesters were detained and criminally charged. In response to police brutality, protesters put up barricades along major roads in Belgrade, as well as roads and bridges across Serbia. In some instances, members of the ruling parties are pelted with eggs. Protesters call for civil disobedience.⁴⁰

33 VREME, “A student in every village: Walking media in the Serbian media darkness,” 22 April 2025.

34 Katarina Baletic, “Serbian Students Bring Protest Cause to Strasbourg After Bicycle Marathon,” Balkan Insight, 16 April 2025.

35 Reuters, “Thousands gather at pro-government rally in Serbia,” 13 April 2025.

36 Obradović Neda Vulović, “Croatian citizen expelled from Serbia after supporting student protests,” N1 News, 8 April 2025.

37 Katarina Baletic, “Message to Europe: Serbian Student Protesters Begin Ultramarathon to Brussels,” Balkan Insight, 25 April 2025.

38 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, “Protests in Serbia enter a new phase as students officially demand snap elections,” May 2025.

39 Al Jazeera, “Serbian police arrest dozens in clashes with antigovernment protesters,” 28 June 2025.

40 Al Jazeera, “Thousands set up street blockades in Serbia after crackdown on protesters,” 29 June 2025.

<p>Early July</p>	<p>● Police broke up road-blocks and detained many protesters. Police in riot gear forced entry into the Faculty of Law at University of Belgrade, detaining about 20 students. The police denied violating the autonomy of campus.⁴¹ Human rights groups and the Council of Europe expressed concern over excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, and numerous injuries sustained by demonstrators.⁴²</p>
<p>1 August</p>	<p>● 11 persons, including the former Serbian trade minister were arrested on suspicion of corruption linked to the Novi Sad and other infrastructure projects.⁴³ In a televised broadcast, Vučić raised concerns about what he described as “selective justice” and accused the head of the Organised Crime Prosecutor’s Office of acting at the behest of unspecified “Europeans.”⁴⁴</p>
<p>12 August</p>	<p>● Protesters in Vrbas and Bačka Palanka were attacked by masked groups, while the police largely stood by.⁴⁵ Vučić declared on TV, “This is the phase of despair and helplessness, when you have nothing more to offer the citizens except beatings, clubs, and all the rest.”⁴⁶ The 12 August events sparked a wave of unrest across Serbia. From 14 to 16 August, amid rising repression, protests escalated with demonstrators spray-painting, vandalizing, and defacing offices of the SNS, SPS, and SRS—first in Novi Sad, then across the country—often clashing with police protecting these sites.⁴⁷ In the last week of August, the regime organized numerous pro-regime rallies to end protesters’ blockades.</p>
<p>9 September</p>	<p>● Fans of the Serbia National Football team shouted anti-Vučić chants during the European qualifier against England.⁴⁸ In response, Serbian riot police stormed one of the fan sectors in the stadium.</p>
<p>20 Sep</p>	<p>● Vučić held a military parade in Belgrade. As a counter move, students held a quiet “peaceful assembly to support the army.” Dressed in white, the event was to undermine the government’s instrumentalization of soldiers and to highlight that the military belongs not to the regime, but all Serbians.⁴⁹</p>
<p>8 October</p>	<p>● “Stop brutality” website, a joint project among academics and IT professionals, was launched. It aims to collect cases of physical and legal violence against civilians in a single database “for the day after,” to make sure perpetrators of violence against protesters could be prosecuted once the current regime is no longer in power.⁵⁰</p>

41 Katarina Baletic, “[Serbian Riot Police Filmed Arresting Student Protesters at Faculty Entrances](#),” Balkan Insight, 3 July 2025.

42 Jovana Gec, “[Europe’s human rights watchdog concerned over use of force against Serbia anti-corruption protesters](#),” Associated Press, 4 July 2025.

43 Milica Stojanovic, “[Serbian Ex-Minister Arrested for Suspected Corruption Over Railway Upgrade](#),” 1 August 2025.

44 Nedeljnik, “[Vučić o JTOK: Zašto ste uhapsili 3 potpisnika a ne i četvrtog?](#)” 2 August 2025.

45 Civil Rights Defenders, “[Serbian police allow masked goons to beat citizens](#),” 14 August 2025.

46 Jessie Williams, “[Violent clashes escalate at anti-government protests in Serbia](#),” The Guardian, 16 August 2025.

47 Reuters, “[Protesters in Serbia’s north demolish ruling party offices](#),” 15 August 2025.

48 Jack Flintham, “[Riot police charge into crowd during Serbia vs England as child lifted out](#),” The Daily Mirror, 9 September 2025.

49 See Dejan Mihajlović’s Bluesky [post](#), 18 September 2025.

50 VREME, “[The website “Stop Brutality” started collecting cases of violence against citizens](#),” 8 October 2025.

<p>1 November</p>	<p>● Hundreds of thousand protesters gathered in Novi Sad to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the collapse of the canopy. Some protesters from Novi Pazar walked 16 days and more than 400 km to take part in the protest. The protest started at 11.52 am (the exact time when the canopy collapsed) with 16 minutes of silence.⁵¹ While remaining defiant, Vučić in a televised speech apologized for his occasionally harsh rhetorics and declared the 1 November a day of national mourning.</p>
<p>11 November</p>	<p>● Thousands of protesters formed a human shield surrounding the bombed-out former Yugoslav army headquarter (damaged during the 1999 NATO bombing), about to be developed into a luxury hotel by a group linked to Jared Kushner. This development project was supported by the Serbian government.⁵²</p>
<p>17 November</p>	<p>● The mother of one of the victims ended her 15-day hunger strike in front of the Serbian parliament.⁵³ Over 30 high schools in Belgrade declared one- or two-day school strikes and marched to the site of the hunger strike to show solidarity.</p>
<p>December</p>	<p>● Students collected signatures from all over Serbia to call for early elections.⁵⁴ On 15 December, organized crime prosecutors arrested Serbia's Minister of Culture and other suspects related to falsifying documents for the former Army headquarter redevelopment project.⁵⁵ Vučić claimed that those opposing the "Trump Tower" were trying to destroy Serbia.⁵⁶</p>

If anything, the above dynamics pointed at six important features sustaining the Serbian pro-democracy movement: (1) decentralized student leadership, (2) unified and clear messaging and demands, (3) innovative and flexible tactics, (4) nonviolent discipline, (5) domestic and international outreach, and (6) government' strategy.

While previous protest movements were largely led by opposition parties, the current movement is entirely led by students. Amidst low approval ratings toward Serbian political parties, students stepped up and took the reins of the opposition. Intentionally by design, the movement is leaderless, where students organized regular plenary meetings to propose, debate, and vote on tactics. Decisions were results of collective deliberation and strategies that were then securely shared. Here, students developed a robust protest infrastructure, built on strongholds of occupied campuses, with volunteers from different university departments (IT, law, etc.) organizing logistics, legal aid, technological infrastructure, and secure communications. Transparency is held high with the movement providing public logs detailing donations and expenses, highlighting a culture of collective ownership and trust.⁵⁷ During protests, tactical

51 Oliver Holmes, "[Huge crowds gather on first anniversary of Serbian train station disaster](#)," The Guardian, 1 November 2025.

52 CNN, "[Serbian protesters vow to prevent real estate project linked to Trump son-in-law Kushner](#)," 12 November 2025.

53 Reuters, "[Serbian mother ends hunger strike, wants to live to join protests](#)," 18 November 2025.

54 Jovana Gec, "[Protesting students in Serbia urge support for early election they hope will oust Vučić](#)," ABC News, 28 December 2025.

55 Jovana Gec, "[Serbia organized crime prosecutors charge minister, others in connection with Kushner-linked project](#)" ABC News, 15 December 2025.

56 Tom Burgis, "[Serbian president threatens reprisals after plans for Belgrade Trump Tower thwarted](#)," The Guardian, 16 December 2025.

57 Breza Race Maksimovic & Srdja Popovic, "How Serbian Students Created the Largest Protest Movement in Decades," *Journal of Democracy*, August 2025.

teams diffused tensions, live streamers documented state brutality, and medical volunteers maintained hotline support. Support by faculty members and university leadership was crucial to the movement—realizing this, the government started targeting high school teachers and university lecturers with repressive actions.

From the onset, the movement clearly linked Novi Sad grievances to demands of justice and government accountability. Protests usually started with 15 minute vigils to commemorate the 15 initial victims. The anti-corruption angle provided an opening to more widely criticize the Serbian government and put pressure on it. From the get-go, students highlighted that their aim was to restore the credibility of Serbia's institutions, many of which have been subverted by Vučić and his allies, including the media, police, courts, parliament, etc. In the early stages of the protests, students underlined that it was not Vučić's job to deal with the collapse of canopy, but of police and courts.⁵⁸ This needs to be seen against the backdrop of Vučić's encroachment into a wide range of government institutions.

Once attacks and repression against students started, they widened their demands that attackers be held accountable, protesters be dismissed from arrests and criminal charges, as well as public universities' funding to be increased.⁵⁹ Only after government repression escalated, including the likely use of a sonic weapon on the 15 March protest, students upped their demands, calling for early elections and proposing university-based candidature lists, sidelining traditional political parties.

By being persistent and innovative in its tactics, the movement managed to keep constant pressure on the regime. As mentioned above, one of the core activities of the campaign were vigils, often linked with blockades. These were held weekly, particularly on Fridays 11.52am, the exact time when the Novi Sad train station canopy collapsed. Occupation of university and high school buildings, combined with school strikes helped provide infrastructures for the protest movement.

Overall, there is a mix of major demonstrations at politically significant institutions (parliament, national TV station, Novi Sad train station, courts, etc.) often on politically significant dates (the anniversary of Serbia's first constitution, the 1-year commemoration of the train station collapse) and numerous smaller, more localized protests. The sheer number of protests is stunning, with Vučić claiming in August that at that point more than 23,000 unauthorized protests had taken place. The dispersed nature of the protests had made it more difficult for security services to monitor and suppress them. Also, it highlights the rootedness of the protest movements in the wider population. On several occasions, protesters applied more "casual" repertoires, such as slow-walking across zebra crosses to blockade traffic without necessarily breaking any rules.

58 Dejan Mihajlović, "*UKW137 Serbien: Der Präsident ist nicht zuständig.*" Podcast, 28 April 2025.

59 See students' demands at <https://studentskizahtevi.rs/eng/>

As the regime increased its repression, protesters engaged in wider street blockades, occupying major intersections and building barricades in May. Students blockaded the state TV station, to highlight its pro-government bias. On numerous instances, protesters used humor and street theatre, such as delivering a giant sandwich filled with a 200 Euro note to the head of Serbia's state TV station.

Students designed their protests in ways that would garner support from a wide-range of actors within society, eventually leading to numerous work stoppages and strikes throughout the year. They also targeted the regime's pillars of support, by, for example, holding a rally to support the troops when Vučić held a military parade in September, to remind the army that they were an army for all the people of Serbia and not only the regime.

As students decided to call for an early election, they also announced a system that would break through the elitist election system while securing candidates' safety. This highly innovative strategy entailed students and lecturers developing a secret candidate list. Several opposition parties have signaled support for early elections. They see the students' plan as more than challenging the regime, but also upending Serbian politics as usual, amidst the low support and credibility that opposition parties have.

While protesters were frequently harassed and attacked by government supporters, government-affiliated thugs, and security forces, they managed to hold strict nonviolent discipline for most of the protests throughout the year. When things seemed to be escalating, they usually ended protests early. They also meticulously cleaned up after protests and street blockades. There were some instances of vandalism and some clashes, particularly in August, after protesters were violently attacked and security forces became more repressive, but since then the movement has again managed to hold nonviolent discipline.

One of the main innovative features of the Serbian movement was students seeking alliances and reaching out to the Serbian population. From the beginning, the movement encouraged support from a wide range of groups, including cyclists, farmers, truck drivers, football supporters, lawyers, health workers, laborers, etc. The success of this strategy was reflected in the number of rallies, blockades, and strikes initiated by said groups.

The most ingenious strategy though, was "A student in every village," where students reached out to smaller cities and rural communities throughout Serbia. Students walked, biked, or drove to villages to engage with the local population. Mostly, the movement sent students who were local to the respective village, town, or region, as they would likely be able to communicate better with their neighbors and co-citizens. Given that Vučić controls most of the media, this strategy also aimed at providing counter-narratives to the regime's propaganda and spread the protests country-wide, not only centered at major cities. The success of the strategy is apparent in the widespread support for the students amongst the civilian population, as well as the prevalence of protests in smaller urban and rural locations. In several instances, students

also used hiking, marching, running or biking to link rural areas to their protest movement, with some groups marching over 400 km to join the 1 year commemoration of the collapse of the canopy.

Given its complicated relationship with Serbia,⁶⁰ support from the European Union was lagging. Accordingly, the Serbian students cycled and relay-ran to directly engage with European Parliamentarians and European Union leaders. Through this strategy, they also rallied support from the Serbian diaspora in major cities such as Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna, Munich, etc.

The government's strategy shifted significantly throughout the protests. At the beginning, it was on the defensive and made some concessions, while encouraging "uncivil society" actors to attack protesters, even providing them with cash incentives and food. Then, the government started framing the protest movement as foreign-inspired, i.e. by invoking the specter of a foreign-led color revolution, by framing Croatian students as conspirators, and by framing the movement as being a European Union-based protest movement. The government also targeted educators that supported the student movement, first by not paying salaries, then by firing many of them and replacing them with pro-regime stooges.

Once the movement shifted into a more maximalist mode, the regime became more repressive, one prime example being the use of some form of sonic weapon on 15 March 2025. Also, police and security forces have over time become much more invasive, storming blockades and university campuses, arresting and charging over 1000 protesters.

Anti-Authoritarian Moves from Serbia

While each pro-democracy movement is unique, there are certainly lessons that may apply across the board. Amidst rampant authoritarian learning, it is crucial that pro-democracy forces pick a thing or two from one another's successes and failures.

On one side, Vučić seemed to have applied the authoritarian playbook to the fullest: framing protesters as foreign lackeys and agents of chaos, controlling the media and using government institutions against protesters, organizing pro-government rallies and protest camps, mobilizing thugs to target protesters, ramping up repression, arrest, and criminalization against protesters, likely using sonic weapon against protesters, etc.

On the other side, one year into the movement, students were undeterred and did not budge. They forced the regime to make several concessions in the first months of the protests as well as strengthened remaining independent institutions, such as the anti-organized crime prosecutors to investigate government corruption. Then, as the government made no more concessions following the 15 March attack, students engaged in a maximalist campaign, calling for early elections. The government's attempts to coax the movement into violence through

⁶⁰ Serbia is a candidate for accession to the EU and has major lithium reserves that the EU might want to exploit. Therefore, while Vučić has frequently flirted with Putin, Trump, and Orban, the EU has been timid in criticizing his regime. After regime repression escalated in the summer, some EU institutions found a more critical voice.

increasing repression between June and August also have failed, with nonviolent discipline being restored after the events of mid-August. In a survey, 54 percent of respondents claimed to support the university's list of candidates, while only 42 percent supported Vučić's coalition.⁶¹

Both the protest movement and the government have at various times switched tactics in response to each other's response. Currently, they seem to have reached a kind of stalemate. Yet, there are a number of tactics worth adding into the anti-authoritarian playbook.

First, amidst a lack of credible opposition and/or political parties co-opted by the regime, new actors need to step up to fill the void. In Serbia, students heeded the call and managed to build a broad-based civil society coalition.

Second, there is no necessary need for inspiring figures to lead the movement. Collective leadership styles, while by no means perfect, prevents movements from being decapitated and makes it harder for government repression.

Third, engagement with the broader population, including in small towns and rural areas, is important to breach rural-urban divide and counter government propaganda.

Fourth, pressuring institutions to perform their constitutional duties allows individuals and agencies to become braver in doing their job and in challenging autocratization.

Fifth, civil resistance movements need to clearly display their persistence, given that the current cohort of autocrats are not easily giving in to demands and are willing to sit protest movements out.

Sixth, staying nonviolent amidst oppression is hard but extremely important. Nonviolent discipline should not be left to the strength of commitments, but detailed tactics and training.

Seventh, experimentation with tactics and strategies is highly important. Serbia's movement gained their edge by adeptly adapting tactics based on their opponents' moves and responses, using humour and imposing difficult dilemma actions on their opponents.

Eighth, centering a specific, widely shared grievance and staying on message builds up the pressure on the opponent.

Ninth, opposing authoritarian governments is not enough. Viable alternatives towards democratization are needed, i.e. electoral systems that would restore meaningful representation of civil society, not reinstalment of elites.

Tenth, as autocrats learn from one another, civil resistance movements need to engage in collective experimenting and learning to adjust to an international environment that is increasingly hostile to pro-democracy movements.

⁶¹ Tatyana Kecic, "[Serbia polls spell trouble for Vučić](#)," IntelliNews, 17 July 2025.



Breaking the Siege for a Free Palestine: A Renewed Hope in 2025?

Maurizka Callista Chairunnisa

*"For every single one you try to shut, a thousand will rise.
And we are an infinite number when we're together."
@globalsumudflotilla 2025*

Decades on, in the face of genocide and ecocide, the struggle for a free Palestine endures. In Damai Pangkal Damai (DPD)'s 2023 annual reflection, Kai Peter Stabell highlighted the need to rewrite the journey in a way that accentuates nonviolent resistance in Palestine, often overshadowed by accounts of armed resistance.¹ In a similar vein, this year's edition wishes to shed light on a particular set of nonviolent resistance campaigns to break Israel's illegal siege of Gaza.

While such campaigns have emerged since Israel tightened its blockade over Gaza's land, sea, and air in 2007, the year 2025 witnessed how they transformed into a series of more massive and intense actions, often known as #BreakTheSiege.² In 2025, from both the land and the sea, more than 4,600 persons from over 50 countries attempted to break into Gaza, bringing with them humanitarian aid.³ These numbers are only small fractions of a way larger pool of individuals, which include the missions' extensive supporters and those who did not pass the selection to be on the frontline. Global Sumud Flotilla, for example, received approximately 30,000 applications, but was only able to onboard a handful participants due to the mission's specific requirements.⁴

The full blockade of Gaza which came to force since 2 March 2025 has prompted #BreakTheSiege movements to take extra maneuvers. While previous #BreakTheSiege missions tend to focus on the sea with a few boats involved, its missions in 2025 were richer in terms of initiatives and methods. From the voyages of Freedom Flotilla Coalition and Global Sumud Flotilla, the land convoy of Global March to Gaza, to the general strikes led by Italian labor unions, the 2025 #BreakTheSiege proliferated into a global-scale movement backed up by extensive networks of support. In the 2025 #BreakTheSiege, nonviolent raids (method #168) were employed alongside marches (method #38), rallies (method #47), online campaigns (methods #7, #8, #50, and #177), strikes (methods #97, #106, and #117), and hunger strikes (method #159).

1 See Kai Peter Stabell's chapter, "Awakening to Justice: A New Chapter in Palestinian Nonviolent Resistance" in the Damai Pangkal Damai 2023 Annual Reflection, *"A Race Against Time: Nonviolent Resistance in Indonesia and the World 2023"* (Yogyakarta: IIS Press 2024)

2 Between the writing and publishing of this article, [Freedom Flotilla Coalition](#) dan [Global Sumud Flotilla](#) announced their Spring 2026 #BreakTheSiege missions.

3 For more detailed accounts on the impacts of the siege of Gaza, see UN OCHA's report, *"Gaza Strip | The humanitarian impact of 15 years of the blockade – June 2022"*, published on June 30, 2022.

4 Nico Calabrese, Cyn Huang, Andrew Sebald, *"Breaking the Siege: Interview with a Global Sumud Flotilla Member,"* The Call, November 25, 2025.

2025 #BreakTheSiege: Portraits of Resilience

The past decades have seen not only one or two, but plenty of attempts to break Israel's long-standing siege in Gaza. They mainly involved flotillas, a fleet of boats sailing together across international waters in the Mediterranean Sea towards Palestinian territorial waters. Some were successful in accomplishing their missions. For example, throughout the period of August to December to 2008, five boat trips of the Free Gaza Movement coalition managed to successfully reach Gaza.⁵ The first ones were "Free Gaza" and "Liberty" fishing boats, which successfully brought to Gaza 44 activists from 17 countries. Waiting on the shore, Palestinian residents delightfully welcomed the activists who then spent six days in Gaza. From visiting schools and hospitals to fishing together with locals, activists meaningfully spent their time in Gaza. In December 2008, the humanitarian boat "Dignity" sailed multiple times to Gaza, delivering medical supplies while bringing onboard health workers, journalists, lawyers, students, and even parliamentarians from a number of countries.⁶ Sometimes Dignity transported wounded Palestinians who required serious medical treatment abroad. Sometimes it served as a gateway for Palestinians who were to pursue their studies in the UK. Also in 2008, the government of Libya attempted to deliver through the sea humanitarian aid to Gaza, albeit forced to make their way back by Israeli forces. On the other hand, Qatar's delegations who sailed with Dignity managed to deliver aid to Gaza.⁷

Unfortunately, towards the end of 2008, Israel intercepted and attacked all Gaza-bound boats. Defying its previous successes, Dignity was attacked by Israel and forced to detour in December 2008 at international waters; later in 2009, the "Spirit of Humanity" were forced to do the same.⁸ The most appalling was what happened to "Mavi Marmara," a repurposed ferry that led the Free Gaza Movement's Freedom Flotilla I mission. In 2010, Mavi Marmara was violently raided by Israeli forces, causing the death of 10 activists and injuries to around 50 others.⁹

Commemorating the first anniversary of the Mavi Marmara incident, Free Gaza Movement launched the Freedom Flotilla II mission, also known as Stay Human.¹⁰ The third Freedom Flotilla mission, organized by Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC), was later launched in 2015.¹¹ It was followed by the "Zaytouna-Oliva" boat of the Women's Boat to Gaza mission in 2016,¹² the Just Future for Palestine mission in 2018, the missions of the "Handala" fishing boat in 2023 and 2024, as well as the Break the Siege mission in 2024.¹³ As indicated by their names, Women's Boat to Gaza was an all-women mission with all women crew members and passengers, whereas Just Future for Palestine was a mission to ensure a just future for Palestinian children,

5 Free Gaza Movement, "[History of the Free Gaza Boats to Gaza](#)," March 4, 2018.

6 Free Gaza Movement, "[History of the Free Gaza Boats to Gaza](#)," March 4, 2018.

7 Palestine Monitor, "[OPT: Breaking the siege, again and again](#)," June 2, 2009.

8 Marium Ali, "[Freedom Flotillas: A history of attempts to break Israel's siege of Gaza](#)," Al Jazeera, June 9, 2025.

9 Ali Murat Alhas, "[IHH Turki peringati korban serangan kapal Mavi Marmara](#)," Anadolu Ajansı, June 4, 2020.

10 TRT World, "[From Mavi Marmara to Madleen: How Freedom Flotilla challenges Israel's Gaza blockade](#)," June 9, 2025.

11 Marium Ali, "[Freedom Flotillas: A history of attempts to break Israel's siege of Gaza](#)," Al Jazeera, June 9, 2025.

12 Eoin Wilson, "[Women's Boat to Gaza ready to break blockade](#)," The Electronic Intifada, September 27, 2016.

13 Just Future for Palestine, "[About Us](#)," 2018.

the largest demographic group in Palestine. It was unfortunate that no boat has successfully reached Gaza due to Israel's interceptions and attacks.¹⁴

The 2025 series of #BreakTheSiege displayed undeterred resilience. Two months after Israel enforced a full blockade of Gaza on the land and the sea, FFC sent off the "Conscience" passenger ship from Malta in early May to distribute food, medical supplies, and other necessary humanitarian aid.¹⁵ Yet, "Conscience" was unable to sail further as Israel struck the boat with drones.¹⁶

Two weeks afterwards, FFC released a statement that the "Madleen" boat was prepared to set sail.¹⁷ Departing from the port of Catania, Italy, on 1 June 2025, Madleen was stopped by Israel at international waters eight days into its voyage.¹⁸ In the early hours of the day, Israeli forces confiscated the aid onboard, jammed communication signals, and kidnapped 12 passengers of Madleen (including the young Swedish activist, Greta Thunberg) before illegally detaining and deporting them. Around a month after Madleen's interception, FFC launched Handala to not only deliver humanitarian aid, but also to donate a fishing boat for Palestinian fisherpersons.¹⁹ The patterns of interception, abduction, imprisonment, and deportation kept repeating.

Aside from FFC, another participating coalition in the 2025 #BreakTheSiege is Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF). Approximately, 20 vessels under GSF's coordination began sailing from Barcelona, Spain, on 31 August 2025. Throughout GSF's journey, its fleet continued to expand as more vessels from Tunisia, Italy, and Greece joined the flotilla along the way—this included the humanitarian ship "Life Support" from EMERGENCY, an Italy-based nongovernmental organization. Ships from Sumud Nusantara, which boarded volunteers from Southeast Asian countries, also took part in GSF. As of September 2025, 42 GSF boats with a total of 462 passengers onboard sailed across the Mediterranean Sea.²⁰ FFC also expressed its support towards the voyage by launching the (repaired) Conscience passenger ship and several boats from the Thousand Madleens to Gaza (TMTG) mission to sail together with the GSF fleet.²¹ Yet, the boats from the GSF fleet, the Conscience ship, and TMTG boats were all intercepted and attacked by Israeli naval forces. All the ships' crews and passengers were abducted and illegally detained and deported, some of them ended up suffering from physical and psychological violence.

14 Jennifer Holleis, "[Gaza-bound flotillas: All you need to know](#)," DW, October 2, 2025.

15 Al Jazeera, "[Drones hit 'Freedom Flotilla' Gaza aid ship in international waters](#)," May 2, 2025.

16 Jason Burke, "[Gaza humanitarian aid ship 'bombed by drones' in waters off Malta](#)," The Guardian, May 2, 2025.

17 Freedom Flotilla Coalition, "[Freedom Flotilla Refuses Silence After Attack: 'Madleen' Will Sail for Gaza](#)," May 15, 2025.

18 Musthafa Abd. Rahman, "[Madleen dan Kisah Gagalnya Kapal Kemanusiaan Tembus Gaza](#)," Kompas, June 13, 2025.

19 Freedom Flotilla Coalition, "[The Freedom Flotilla is Setting Sail Again](#)," July 7, 2025.

20 Global Sumud Flotilla, "[GSF 2025 Overview](#)," 2025.

21 Freedom Flotilla Coalition, "[FFC Salutes Global Sumud Flotilla Launch](#)," September 1, 2025.

Since the end of 2008, no voyage has successfully made its way through the sea blockade of Gaza. Amidst Israel's deliberate actions to use starvation as a weapon of war,²² breaking the siege in order to deliver humanitarian aid to more than two million Palestinians in Gaza is crucial.²³

Resilience, Support Systems, (Re)framing, and Nonviolent Discipline

What makes the 2025 chapter of #BreakTheSiege different—more massive and intense, even stronger, compared to the previous years? Here are four of the many factors.

Resilience: When Relentless Attacks Met Undeterred Resistance

All flotilla missions since the end of 2008 faced similar repressions: ambushed, forced to detour and return, or forcibly dragged to the ports in Tel Aviv, with activists aboard being harassed and kidnapped. What made the 2025 missions remarkable was how fast they bounced back after each failure to reach Gaza. Every time a boat got attacked, another would sail immediately. Five voyages took place in the span of five months: Conscience (May), Madleen (June), Handala (July), the GSF fleet (August), and the second voyage of Conscience alongside TMTG vessels (September). In each of those voyages, activists, journalists, health workers, and civilians from various backgrounds were subjected to ruthless violence perpetrated by Israeli forces, including rape and sexual assault.²⁴ Such violent responses were part of Israel's larger repertoire of systematic violence. It is noteworthy that each act of violence by Israeli forces was met with a set of repertoires of nonviolent actions by pro-Palestinian activists.

The persistent efforts to break into the besieged Gaza counted as nonviolent raids (method #168).²⁵ Well aware that they might not be able to enter Gaza without a fight, activists still chose to challenge Israel's unlawful claims and blockades, exposing themselves to extreme dangers (method #158). In solidarity, they carried the Palestinian flag and colors of red, black, green, and white across the vast blue ocean (methods #18 and #19). These were often accompanied by pro-Palestinian slogans painted on the hull, along with banners hung up at every possible corner (methods #7 and #8). The vessels proudly conveyed the messages of their missions.

Components of civil disobedience (method #141) were apparent in #BreakTheSiege missions, particularly given the illegitimacy of Israel's occupation and blockades. No legitimate laws supported Israel's accusations that the boats and ships of #BreakTheSiege violated Israel's territorial borders. If anything, what has always been illegal was Israel's siege over Gaza. It

²² Amnesty International, "[Gaza: Evidence points to Israel's continued use of starvation to inflict genocide against Palestinians](#)," July 3, 2025.

²³ UN News, "[UN warns of 'catastrophic hunger' in Gaza as Israel announces humanitarian pauses](#)," July 27, 2025.

²⁴ Freedom Flotilla Coalition, "[FFC Condemns Sexual Assaults by Israeli Forces](#)," January 2, 2026.

²⁵ Gene Sharp, "[The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part 2: The Methods of Nonviolent Action](#)" (Bedford: Porter Sargent Publishing, 1973).

violated numerous international laws, from the Articles 23, 55, and 56 of Geneva Convention,²⁶ to Articles 102-104 of San Remo Manual,²⁷ and the Articles 8 of Rome Statute.²⁸ Indeed, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in its Articles 87, 89, 92, 97, and 110, has guaranteed the freedom of navigation in the high seas and prohibited the interference towards ships sailing for peaceful purposes.²⁹

While believing that the law was on their side, activists prepared themselves to be imprisoned (method #195) and exposed to danger (method #158). Furthermore, some activists,³⁰ including Thiago Ávila from Brazil,³¹ went on hunger strikes (method #159) to not only show their protests against Israeli authorities, but to also stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people and detainees who were forced to live in severe starvation. If there was a certain message to be conveyed through the activists' choices of actions, it must be that nonviolence is more than practical tactics—nonviolence is the soul of the resistance itself, onboard the boats and beyond.

Support Systems: When Turf Meets the Surf

Unlike their predecessors, the 2025 #BreakTheSiege missions on the sea were accompanied by similar missions on land, along with other efforts to disrupt the global supply chain.

To date, the 2025 Global March to Gaza was the largest initiative to break Israel's land blockade of Gaza. In June, thousands of volunteers from different parts of the globe headed towards North Africa. Aiming to break the siege of Gaza through Rafah, hundreds departed from Tunisia in a convoy of buses travelling across Libya and Egypt.³² In Egypt, approximately 4,000 volunteers from more than 50 countries gathered before moving together in marches and convoys—all these happening at land as Madleen sailed at sea.³³ Unfortunately, the Global March to Gaza participants were deported by the authorities in Egypt even though they had obtained entry permits from the Embassy of Egypt in their home countries.³⁴ While the Global March to Gaza mostly took place as marches and convoys (methods #38 and #42), they also counted as nonviolent raids (method #168) seeking to break the ongoing siege of Gaza.

26 Articles 23, 55, and 56 of the Geneva Convention mandate the states to allow the distribution of humanitarian aid for civilians, and that the occupying power shall ensure the adequate provision of food supply and medical aid for the population living in the occupied area. (*Geneva Convention IV*, 1949).

27 Article 102 of the San Remo Manual prohibits any blockades intentionally established to starve the civilian population and deny them essential objects for their survival, while Article 103-104 stipulate that the blockading party must provide sufficient food and other essential supplies for the civilian population and allow the distribution of medical supplies for the wounded civilians and armed forces. (*San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea*, 1994).

28 Article 8 of the Rome Statute about War Crimes stipulates that the intentional use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, including through intentional restrictions of humanitarian aid, is categorized as a form of war crimes. (*Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, 1998).

29 *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, 1982.

30 Sita Planasari, "Global Sumud Flotilla Activists Launch Hunger Strike in Israeli Detention," Tempo English, October 4, 2025.

31 Zein Khalil & Mohammad Sio, "Brazilian activist on seized Gaza aid ship has begun hunger strike: Rights organization," Anadolu Ajansı, June 11, 2025

32 French 24, "Break the siege: Tunisians launch 'symbolic' Gaza-bound mass land convoy," June 9, 2025.

33 Meriem Hadjal, "The Global March to Gaza," New International, July 6, 2025.

34 Meriem Hadjal, "The Global March to Gaza," New International, July 6, 2025; Jenna Martin, "The Global March to Gaza ended in violence. Activists remain undeterred," Prism, June 25, 2025.

As Madleen got intercepted by Israeli forces, tens of thousands people rallied (method #47) across various cities in Italy, Netherlands, UK, Spain, Germany, France, and Greece.³⁵ Loud and clear in their slogans and posters (methods #7 and #8), they demanded the release of Madleen crew members and passengers, as well as their governments to engage in concrete actions to help distribute humanitarian aid to Gaza.³⁶

Later, following attacks towards the GSF fleet, general strikes were launched in Italy (method #117). Under the coordination of *Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro*, Italy's largest labor union, and the grassroots-based union *Unione Sindacale di Base*, cities across Italy were paralyzed for 24 hours.³⁷ Ports, railways, and domestic flights were disrupted.³⁸ Schools and universities had to close as teachers, lecturers, staff, and students occupied the streets. Standing in solidarity with Palestine, they pressured Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni to defend GSF activists.³⁹ These strikes and demonstrations did not come out of the blue. Not only were they planned, they had also been openly announced before the GSF fleet set sail, where dockworkers in the port of Genoa promised to strike and shut the port down if GSF ships got attacked by Israeli forces.⁴⁰

It is important to put the abovementioned initiatives as part of the greater pro-Palestinian struggles. Since October 2023, monthly demonstrations have taken place in front of the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, with thousands showing up to support Palestinian independence.⁴¹ The Red Line for Gaza, formerly known as major demonstrations in Den Haag and Brussels, has expanded into larger movements. Under the tagline of Red Line for Gaza, UK-based organizations, including but not limited to Oxfam, Choose Love, War Child UK, Greenpeace, and Mothers' Manifesto, organized the delivery of letters (method #2) to parliamentary members, urging the UK government to end its complicity in the genocide and to uphold Palestinians' rights to live, particularly those in Gaza.⁴²

Reframing: From Conflict to War, to Colonization, to Genocide

In comparison to previous missions, the 2025 #BreakTheSiege received overwhelming public attention and support. This was not simply a function of better media and social media strategies, but mostly sustained by efforts to reframe discourses surrounding Palestine.

While previous generations seemed to be reluctant in expressing pro-Palestinian sentiments, mostly out of fear of being seen as antisemitic, Generation Z embodies the opposite: they are loud and clear in their support of a free and independent Palestine. Throughout recent

35 Ana Vračar, "Over 150,000 protest across Europe against Gaza blockade and attack on 'Madleen,'" Peoples Dispatch, June 10, 2025.

36 Ana Vračar, "Over 150,000 protest across Europe against Gaza blockade and attack on 'Madleen,'" Peoples Dispatch, June 10, 2025.

37 Tasnima Uddin, "The Making of Italy's Pro-Palestine General Strike," Jacobin, October 16, 2025.

38 Gavin Blackburn & Giorgia Orlandi, "Italy paralysed by nationwide strike in solidarity with intercepted Gaza aid flotilla," Euro News, October 3, 2025.

39 France 24, "Protests worldwide condemn Israeli interception of Gaza flotilla," October 2, 2025.

40 Hannah Roberts, "Dockworkers in Italy threaten total block on Israel trade," Politico, September 28, 2025.

41 ABC, "Melbourne's weekly pro-Palestine rallies to turn monthly," February 12, 2025.

42 Oxfam, "Red Line for Gaza," 2025.

years, they criticized the terms “Israeli-Palestinian conflict” and “Arab-Israeli war” as being reductionist. They pointed out that such terms overlook the facts that the parties were nowhere near equal in terms of power relations, and that such imbalance of power relations had led to disproportionate use of violence between the parties.

Gen Z advocated for the terms “occupation,” “colonization,” and “genocide,” which reflect the situation more accurately. Such reframing was sustained by Gen-Z’s constant exposure to the graphic content of Israel’s brutality and Palestinians’ suffering through social media, their levels of education and literacy when it comes to social justice issues, as well as the time elapsed between the trauma of Holocaust and the atrocities in Gaza—all of which freeing Gen Z from being beholden of probable antisemitic accusations.⁴³

Another factor worth mentioning was the movements’ ability to minimize reliance on mainstream mass media. Anticipating restrictions or other impediments from conventional media, the FFC, GSF, and similar coalitions chose to establish and manage their own media teams (method #180). Instead of waiting to be covered by mainstream media, their communication teams made use of social media and other supporting tools to publish real-time and delayed broadcasts of developments in Palestine and pro-Palestinian movements. In the end, the persistent and continuously expanding #BreakTheSiege stories become too newsworthy for the mainstream media to overlook.

Through its official page, YouTube channel, as well as Instagram and Telegram accounts, FFC conducted livestreams of its flotillas’ journeys and provided online real-time trackers of its vessels. Through Instagram, GSF regularly posted mission updates and “Questions from The Shore,” where activists on the boats recorded short videos to answer questions collected from students in Gaza. Moreover, through social media, the activists shared first-hand accounts of what it was like being at the frontline.

When Madleen got attacked, FFC published videos and voice recordings of those onboard, as well as CCTV recordings which documented every detail of the incident—the drones surrounding the vessel, the spraying of unknown substance resembling a white paint, the disturbing noises played by Israeli forces, up to the jamming of communication signals.

When communications with Madleen had been lost, FFC immediately released pre-recorded videos from Madleen’s passengers. The videos contain similar statements, “If you see this video, we have been intercepted and abducted by Israeli forces or their allies,” and the requests for their respective governments to urge Israel to release them.⁴⁴

With the details of Madleen’s journey and interception already widely circulated through social media, it was not difficult to counter Israel’s negative propaganda. In fact, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs’s tweet about Madleen, degrading it as “selfie yacht” received sharp

43 Beril Canakci, “2 years of Gaza genocide: Gen Z challenges Europe on Israel,” Anadolu Ajansi, October 8, 2025.

44 Democracy Now, ““Kidnapped in Int’l Waters”: Israel Intercepts Gaza-Bound Aid Ship, Detains Greta Thunberg & Others,” June 9, 2025.

backlash. Netizens replied to the tweet with selfies of Israeli soldiers, along with the hashtag #selfiegenocide and comments calling out Israel's hypocrisy.⁴⁵ The selfies mostly captured Israeli soldiers proudly posing amidst situations that could count as war crimes.⁴⁶ Within these digital spaces, baseless claims from Israel have more chances than ever to be countered by the factual truth.

Gen Z has indeed been successful in reframing the discourse. Surveys in the US⁴⁷ and some European countries⁴⁸ revealed declining support towards Israel, especially among youngsters. In the end of 2023, debunking allegations that TikTok was manipulating its algorithm to boost pro-Palestine content, the social media company clarified that the majority of its users—aged 18 to 34—were, in fact, actively interacting with pro-Palestine content, hence generating positive feedback loops.⁴⁹ To put it simply, it was never about algorithm manipulation: many young people do support Palestine! Beyond digital spaces, their support were shown in student encampments and occupation of campus buildings (method #173) as well as calls for universities to end their complicity in the ongoing genocide in Palestine.

Nonviolent Discipline: When Push Comes to Shove

As any nonviolent resistance campaigns would, #BreakTheSiege missions made sure that organizations and individuals involved are not only committed to, but also well-trained in, nonviolent discipline. The more violent the Israeli forces are, the more crucial it is to skillfully apply methods of nonviolent actions, to enforce moral and political jiu-jitsu.⁵⁰

Among others, FFC and GSF volunteers had to complete intensive training on nonviolence as part of the selection process. In FFC's pre-departure training, volunteers simulated what might happen if their boats were intercepted by Israeli forces and how they could defend themselves without resorting to violence.⁵¹ Similarly, as illustrated by Mauricio Morales, a journalist who participated in GSF to report for Al Jazeera, volunteers were taught on how to respond when their ship was intercepted or attacked, how they should raise their hands in unthreatening or unprovocative gestures in the face of Israeli forces.⁵²

Said training sessions were not just conducted prior to departure, but throughout GSF's voyage, as part of volunteers' daily routines. A former GSF volunteer, Fatima Hendricks, shared how GSF emphasized that nonviolence is not avoidance of conflict, but rather an active and dynamic method of actions.⁵³

45 Reem Aouir, "[Madleen: Social media users slam Israel's 'mocking' of Gaza flotilla activists](#)," Middle East Eye, June 9, 2025.

46 Reem Aouir, "[Madleen: Social media users slam Israel's 'mocking' of Gaza flotilla activists](#)," Middle East Eye, June 9, 2025.

47 Middle East Eye, "[US poll finds 60 percent of Gen Z voters back Hamas over Israel in Gaza war](#)," August 31, 2025.

48 Beril Canakci, "[2 years of Gaza genocide: Gen Z challenges Europe on Israel](#)," Anadolu Ajansi, October 8, 2025.

49 Jules Roscoe, "[TikTok Says It's Not the Algorithm, Teens Are Just Pro-Palestine](#)," VICE, November 13, 2023.

50 See Richard Gregg's conception of moral jiu-jitsu in Chapter 2 of Richard Gregg, "[The Power of Nonviolence](#)" (Cambridge University Press 2018) and Gene Sharp's conception of political jiu-jitsu in chapter 12 of Gene Sharp, "[The Politics of Nonviolent Action](#)" (Bedford: Porter Sargent Publishing, 1973).

51 Jacobo Garcia, "[Freedom Flotilla taking aid to Gaza trains for boarding by Israeli special forces](#)," El País, April 25, 2024.

52 Mauricio Morales, "[A day on board the Global Sumud Flotilla heading for Gaza](#)," Al Jazeera, September 7, 2025.

53 Fatima Hendricks, "[The Sumud of Direct Nonviolent Action](#)," Common Dreams, September 24, 2025.

It is important to note that pre-2025 missions also provided training on nonviolent resistance. If anything, the 2010 Mavi Marmara incident attests to the importance of upholding nonviolent discipline. Amidst contested versions on the events, some accounts pointed at the use of violence by activists against Israeli forces.⁵⁴

A key factor sustaining nonviolent discipline at the frontline was the missions' infrastructures, which included legal experts and lawyers, who are well positioned to underline the legality of the volunteers' acts. "Adalah," the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, fiercely provided legal defense for the detained volunteers. Condemning Israel's abduction, detainment, and solitary confinement of volunteers aboard Madleen and Handala, Adalah demanded the immediate release of the volunteers.⁵⁵ In the following months, Adalah lawyers represented around 500 detained volunteers of GSF, Conscience, and TMTG missions, while documenting testimonials of the detained volunteers regarding the acts of violence they endured since being abducted by Israeli forces.⁵⁶

Legal support was also provided by Irish and British lawyers onboard "Shireen," who sailed alongside the GSF fleet.⁵⁷ Shireen's mission was not to enter the besieged Gaza, but to monitor the GSF fleet as well as release real-time communiques and legal responses as the fleet sailed across international waters.⁵⁸ GSF was also supported by the Worldwide Lawyers Association (WOLAS) and global-scale legal teams. More than affirming the lawfulness of the #BreakTheSiege missions, the aforementioned strong legal support drew more attention to Israel's recurring violations of international law.

To Keep on Sailing and Resisting

While there is nothing new in nonviolently breaking into Israel's unlawful siege of Palestine, 2025 brought in a renewed hope. Throughout the year, various #BreakTheSiege missions showed how resilience, support systems, reframing of discourses, and nonviolent discipline managed to turn the resistance up quite some notches.⁵⁹ Said missions need to be understood in the broader context of the Palestinian struggle for independence. As illustrated by Stabell, Palestinians had waged nonviolent resistance even before the state of Israel was superimposed on their territory—that is, in their fight against British colonial rule and Zionist immigration practices.⁶⁰

54 Nathan Schneider, *"Gaza, the Mavi Marmara, and the prospects of fighting back,"* Waging Nonviolence, June 2, 2010.

55 Freedom Flotilla Coalition, *"Freedom Flotilla Volunteers on the 'Madleen' face Solitary Confinement – Update from Adalah Legal team,"* June 11, 2025. See also Adalah, *"Freedom Flotilla Boat 'Handala' – All Updates,"* July 28, 2025.

56 Adalah, *"Adalah's Legal Representation of the Freedom Flotilla Participants to Break the Siege on Gaza,"* October 12, 2025.

57 Irish Legal News, *"Irish lawyers set sail alongside Gaza aid flotilla,"* September 8, 2025.

58 The Journal, *"Lawyer sailing toward Gaza: I can't stand idly by while the rule of law is decimated,"* September 14, 2025.

59 Among others, the year 2025 saw a coalition of Global South states, the [Hague Group](#), coming together, committed to uphold legal and diplomatic efforts to stand against Israel's violations of international law.

60 See Kai Peter Stabell's chapter, "Awakening to Justice: A New Chapter in Palestinian Nonviolent Resistance" in the Damai Pangkal Damai 2023 Annual Reflection, *"A Race Against Time: Nonviolent Resistance in Indonesia and the World 2023"* (Yogyakarta: IIS Press 2024)

It is important to keep in mind that nonviolent resistance is about imposing the right dilemma action on the opponents. As stated by Sørensen & Martin, the 2010 Freedom Flotilla voyage imposed a dilemma action on Israel by presenting two equally difficult options: letting the ships continue to sail and reach Gaza would show that Israel give in to the pressure, while stopping the voyage would reaffirm Israel's violent and illegal stances.⁶¹

In 2025, stronger infrastructures of resistance had allowed for stronger dilemma actions to be imposed on Israeli forces. Intercepting flotillas and detaining the activists while claiming legality of their actions? This became more difficult for Israeli forces when millions of netizens keep an eye on them through social media. Hundreds of thousands people across the globe would instantly organize rallies and strikes to urge their government to stand against Israel. Countless violations of law by Israel would soon be exposed by lawyers and legal experts. The other option: allowing humanitarian flotillas to deliver aid to Gaza? This is an equally hard pill for Israel to swallow, as it would mean corroborating the facts that Israel has been using starvation and suffering of Palestinians in Gaza as a weapon of war.

⁶¹ Majken Jul Sørensen & Brian Martin, "[The Dilemma Action: Analysis of an Activist Technique](#)," PEACE & CHANGE 29, no. 1 (January 2014): 73-100.

METHODS OF PROTEST AND PERSUASION

- #1 Public Speeches
- #2 Letters of Opposition or Support
- #3 Declarations by Organizations and Institutions
- #4 Signed Public Statements
- #5 Declarations of Indictment and Intention
- #6 Group or Mass Petitions
- #7 Slogans, Caricature, and Symbols
- #8 Banners, Posters, and Displayed Communications
- #9 Leaflets, Pamphlets and Books
- #10 Newspapers and Journals
- #11 Records, Radio and Television
- #12 Skywriting and Earthwriting
- #13 Deputations
- #14 Mock Awards
- #15 Group Lobbying
- #16 Picketing
- #17 Mock Elections
- #18 Displays of Flags and Symbolic Colors
- #19 Wearing of Symbols
- #20 Prayers and Worship
- #21 Delivering Symbolic Objects
- #22 Protest Disrobings
- #23 Destruction of Own Property
- #24 Symbolic Lights
- #25 Displays of Portrait
- #26 Paint as Protest
- #27 New Signs and Names
- #28 Symbolic Sounds
- #29 Symbolic Reclamation
- #30 Rude Gestures
- #31 "Haunting" Officials
- #32 Taunting Officials
- #33 Fraternalization

- #34 Vigils
- #35 Humorous Skits and Pranks
- #36 Performances of Plays and Music
- #37 Singing
- #38 Marches
- #39 Parades
- #40 Religious Processions
- #41 Pilgrimages
- #42 Motorcades
- #43 Political Mourning
- #44 Mock Funerals
- #45 Demonstrative Funerals
- #46 Homage at Burial Places
- #47 Assemblies of Protest or Support
- #48 Protest Meetings
- #49 Camouflaged Meetings of Protest
- #50 Teach-ins
- #51 Walkouts
- #52 Silence
- #53 Renouncing Honors
- #54 Turning One's Back

METHODS OF NONCOOPERATION

- #55 Social Boycott
- #56 Selective Social Boycott
- #57 Lysistratic Nonaction
- #58 Excommunication
- #59 Interdict
- #60 Suspension of Social and Sports Activities
- #61 Boycott of Social Affairs
- #62 Student Strike
- #63 Social Disobedience
- #64 Withdrawal from Social Institutions
- #65 Stay-at-home
- #66 Total Personal Noncooperation
- #67 "Flight" of Workers

- #68 Sanctuary
- #69 Collective Disappearance
- #70 Protest Emigration (Hijrat)
- #71 Consumers' Boycott
- #72 Nonconsumption of Boycotted Goods
- #73 Policy of Austerity
- #74 Rent Withholding
- #75 Refusal to Rent
- #76 National Consumers' Boycott
- #77 International Consumers' Boycott
- #78 Workmen's Boycott
- #79 Producers' Boycott
- #80 Suppliers' and Handlers' Boycott
- #81 Traders' Boycott
- #82 Refusal to Let or Sell Property
- #83 Lockout
- #84 Refusal of Industrial Assistance
- #85 Merchants' "General Strike"
- #86 Withdrawal of Bank Deposits
- #87 Refusal to Pay Fees, Dues and Assessment
- #88 Refusal to Pay Debts or Interest
- #89 Severance of Funds and Credit
- #90 Revenue Refusal
- #91 Refusal of a Government's Money
- #92 Domestic Embargo
- #93 Blacklisting of Traders
- #94 International Sellers' Embargo
- #95 International Buyers' Embargo
- #96 International Trade Embargo
- #97 Protest Strike
- #98 Quickie Walkout (Lightning Strike)
- #99 Peasant Strike
- #100 Farm Workers' Strike
- #101 Refusal of Impressed Labor
- #102 Prisoners' Strike
- #103 Craft Strike

#104 Professional Strike
 #105 Establishment Strike
 #106 Industry Strike
 #107 Sympathetic Strike
 #108 Detailed Strike
 #109 Bumper Strike
 #110 Slowdown Strike
 #111 Working-to-rule Strike
 #112 Reporting "Sick" (Sick-in)
 #113 Strike by Resignation
 #114 Limited Strike
 #115 Selective Strike
 #116 Generalized Strike
 #117 General Strike
 #118 Hartal
 #119 Economic Shutdown
 #120 Withholding or Withdrawal of Allegiance
 #121 Refusal of Public Support
 #122 Literature and Speeches Advocating Resistance
 #123 Boycott of Legislative Bodies
 #124 Boycott of Elections
 #125 Boycott of Government Employment and Positions
 #126 Boycott of Government Department, Agencies and Other Bodies
 #127 Withdrawal from Government Educational Institutions
 #128 Boycott of Government-supported Organizations
 #129 Refusal of Assistance to Enforcement Agents
 #130 Removal of Own Signs and Placemarks
 #131 Refusal to Accept Appointed Officials
 #132 Refusal to Dissolve Existing Institutions
 #133 Reluctant and Slow Compliances
 #134 Nonobedience in Absence of Direct Supervision
 #135 Popular Nonobedience

#136 Disguised Nonobedience
 #137 Refusal of an Assemblage or Meeting to Disperse
 #138 Sitdown
 #139 Noncooperation with Conscription and Deportation
 #140 Hiding, Escape and False Identities
 #141 Civil Disobedience of "Illegitimate" Laws
 #142 Selective Refusal of Assistance by Government Aides
 #143 Blocking of Lines of Command and Information
 #144 Stalling and Obstruction
 #145 General Administrative Noncooperation
 #146 Judicial noncooperation
 #147 Deliberate Inefficiency and Selective Noncooperation by Enforcement Agents
 #148 Mutiny
 #149 Quasi-Legal Evasions and Delays
 #150 Noncooperation by Constituent Governmental Units
 #151 Changes in Diplomatic and Other Representation
 #152 Delay and Cancellation of Diplomatic Events
 #153 Withholding of Diplomatic Recognition
 #154 Severance of Diplomatic Relations
 #155 Withdrawal from International Organization
 #156 Refusal of Membership in International Bodies
 #157 Expulsion from International Organization

METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

#158 Self-Exposure to the Elements
 #159 The Fast
 #160 Reverse Trial
 #161 Nonviolent Harassment
 #162 Sit-in
 #163 Stand-in

#164 Ride-in
 #165 Wade-in
 #166 Mill-in
 #167 Pray-in
 #168 Nonviolent Raids
 #169 Nonviolent Air Raids
 #170 Nonviolent Invasion
 #171 Nonviolent Interjection
 #172 Nonviolent Obstruction
 #173 Nonviolent Occupation
 #174 Establishing New Social Patterns
 #175 Overloading of Facilities
 #176 Stall-in
 #177 Speak-in
 #178 Guerrilla Theater
 #179 Alternative Social Institutions
 #180 Alternative Communication System
 #181 Reverse Strike
 #182 Stay-in Strike
 #183 Nonviolent Land Seizure
 #184 Defiance of Blockades
 #185 Politically Motivated Counterfeiting
 #186 Preclusive Purchasing
 #187 Seizure of assets
 #188 Dumping
 #189 Selective Patronage
 #190 Alternative Markets
 #191 Alternative Transportation System
 #192 Alternative Economic Institutions
 #193 Overloading of Administrative Systems
 #194 Disclosing Identities of Secret Agents
 #195 Seeking Imprisonment
 #196 Civil Disobedience of "Neutral" Laws
 #197 Work-on without Collaboration
 #198 Dual Sovereignty and Parallel Government

Source:

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action. Part 2: The Methods of Nonviolent Action* (Bedford: Porter Sargent Publishing, 1973).

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