

Civil Societies, Uncivil States

Exploring the Causes
and Consequences
of Using Lawfare to
Repress NGOs



Tuesday, April 25, 2023

4:45 p.m.

Beam Classroom,
Visual Arts Center

Recent decades have seen increasing government crackdown on civil society organizations, particularly through the use of “lawfare” as a means of repression.

Why is the use of lawfare increasing? What conditions make states more likely to use such strategy? Can the use of lawfare act as an early warning signal for worsening repression and human rights abuses in the future?

In this talk, Professor Chaudhry will illustrate how legalized repression lets governments maintain a democratic façade and allows an illusion of civic pluralism while simultaneously providing a new strategy to control opposing voices. Such repression may be the canary in the coal mine that indicates the setting of groundwork for future democratic erosion.

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Suparna Chaudhry is an assistant professor in the Department of International Affairs at Lewis & Clark College and an affiliated scholar with the International Justice Lab at William & Mary. She was previously a postdoctoral fellow in US foreign policy and international security at Dartmouth College. Her research and teaching interests include international law, human rights, and international organizations. Her work has been published in *International Organization*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Journal of Human Rights*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, and *Global Policy*, as well as in *The Washington Post*. She earned her PhD in political science at Yale, her MA in international relations from the University of Chicago, and a BA in history, with honors, from St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi.

