

## An Open Secret:

### The Growing Problem of Cyber Torture via Coordinated Stalking

Advocacy for Humankind (AFH) is a California, Bay Area organization founded in June of 2019.

We seek to eradicate the growing crimes of cyber torture via coordinated stalking through public awareness, education, and advocacy for victims. Working with our sister Bay Area organization, the Bay Area Support Group (BASG), we are intimately acquainted with the environments and structures that underpin this open secret in our California communities. Our support group currently has over 100 members.

[www.advocacyforhumankind.com](http://www.advocacyforhumankind.com)

[www.bayareasupport.org](http://www.bayareasupport.org)

We are encouraged and appreciative of the Special Rapporteur's efforts to raise international awareness and address these human rights violations. Our hope is that this statement will provide the rapporteur with the necessary information to assist in advancing his efforts.

#### **RELEVANT PSYCHOSOCIAL DYNAMICS CONDUCTIVE TO TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT**

Coordinated stalking victims experience psychological attacks in full view of their communities, workplaces, and families. Their victimization is an open secret in their environments, making it easy for authorities, civil servants, and communities at large to dismiss and/or misdiagnose them. Highlighted below are some of the key components:

1. Reasons differ. The reason may never be known to the victim, though many are whistleblowers, employees who reported sexual harassment, or have had a fallout with a spouse or other known associate. Example below:  
<https://fortune.com/2020/06/15/ex-ebay-executives-charged-with-stalking-campaign/>
2. Preceding the victims' awareness, a combination of surveillance and character assassination creates the foundation for a total life destruction scenario, whereby the victim is pushed out of jobs, neighborhoods, and social circles.
3. Surveillance is highly advanced and pervasive and occurs in and out of the home. Smart devices/apps are used by the cadre of abusers, allowing for coordinated timing in carrying out the various forms of abuse.
4. Multiple abusers participate who are strangers to the victim and have no personal reason to be involved. Public mobbing is prevalent, and victims are forced to endure multiple encounters with every foray into the public.
5. Recruitment of neighbors, family, and friends to participate in the persecution of the victim is executed when possible.
6. Contact is constant. Victims report a 24/7/365 pattern of various forms of stalking, intimidation, vandalism, and harassment, creating a non-stop torturous environment.
7. Workplace mobbing is reported in most cases, resulting in inability to stay employed and resulting in homelessness.

8. Traditional physical violence is not typical. Directed energy devices such as those used on the China and Cuba diplomats are heavily reported.
9. Crimes are carried out by highly organized networks of participants. Many are paid by contractors, PI firms, security firms.
10. Law enforcement regularly dismisses victims reporting these crimes. Protective orders do not work for coordinated stalking. Even if a perpetrator is identified, typically there is no way to know or prove if they have shown up more than once.
12. Investigations are seldom conducted.
13. Victims can be re-victimized by being placed on psychiatric holds when reporting crimes to authorities.
14. Even if victim moves out of state (many do), stalking will continue, crossing state lines and breaking federal laws.
15. Victims find it difficult to convince anybody of what they are experiencing and consequently find themselves isolated and lacking meaningful support.
16. Severe psychological and physical effects are routinely reported. Few resources exist to support victims.

#### **RECOMMENDED NORMATIVE, INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY MEASURES OF PREVENTION AND MITIGATION.**

The existing federal and California state laws pertaining to stalking provide some protections for victims of cyber torture via coordinated stalking. The advancement of technology and the monetization of these crimes by contracted security firms, private investigation agencies and criminal elements necessitate additional protections. The following are suggested to strengthen current laws and policy:

1. Prohibit for-profit contract and coordinated stalking and punishable by law and compensation:
  - a. By firms such as private investigators and security providers. Revoke client/attorney privilege in such instances
  - b. By individuals hired as agents of firms earning pay to conduct these illegal operations
  - c. By landowners, property managers and landlords recruited and paid to be complicit and conduct harassment in apartment buildings and rentals, while not offering redress to tenants of documented issues
2. Make liable businesses that contract to be complicit in these crimes as well as any employees acting as their agents while committing such crimes.
3. Make the use of phone/device applications for tracking victims as a part of coordinated efforts to stalk, illegally surveil and harass individuals punishable by law and compensation.
4. Create task force to educate law enforcement at all levels across the nations about these crimes and require that they provide a safe environment for victims when they seek assistance.
5. Require federal and local law enforcement to investigate reported cases of cyber torture via coordinated stalking.