



International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

Distr.: General
13 May 2025

Original: English

Committee on Enforced Disappearances

Report on requests for urgent action submitted under article 30 of the Convention*

A. Introduction

1. Pursuant to rules 57 and 58 of the Committee's rules of procedure, all requests for urgent action submitted for consideration under article 30 of the Convention are to be brought to the attention of the Committee. The present report contains a summary of the main issues that have arisen in relation to the requests for urgent action received by the Committee and in the context of the follow-up to registered urgent actions, for the period between 10 September 2024 and 28 February 2025.

B. Requests for urgent action received

2. In its previous report on requests for urgent action,¹ the Committee provided information on the trends observed in the requests concerning disappeared persons that had been registered up to 9 September 2024. Between 10 September 2024 and 28 February 2025, the Committee received 159 new requests for urgent action (compared with 170 in the previous reporting period). Of those new requests for urgent action, at the time of writing the present report, the Committee had decided to register 106 (compared with 118 in the previous reporting period); 4 were being prepared for submission to the Committee, and 3 were to be submitted to the plenary during the twenty-eighth session for a decision.

3. The remaining 46 new requests were not registered for the following reasons:

(a) Additional information was requested from the authors of 26 requests, but had not yet been provided at the time of writing of the present report;

(b) In two requests, the allegations submitted did not include the constitutive elements of a disappearance or enforced disappearance under articles 2 and 3 of the Convention (one related to Argentina and one to Japan);

(c) In seven requests, the facts referred to a disappearance that had occurred in a State that is not a party to the Convention (one related to Algeria, four to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one to Liberia and one to the Russian Federation);

(d) One request referred to disappearances that had occurred before the entry into force of the Convention (related to Spain);

(e) Eight requests referred to cases of so-called short-term enforced disappearance, where the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared persons were clarified

* Adopted by the Committee at its twenty-eighth session (17 March–4 April 2025).

¹ [CED/C/27/2](#).



before the Committee could register the request (one related to the Niger, seven to Thailand);

(f) Two requests were submitted in a language other than the six official languages of the United Nations. The Committee invited the authors to submit the requests in one of the official languages and provided information on the urgent action procedure and its request form; the Committee has not received any reply to those requests as at the date of writing the present report.

4. In compliance with the principle of complementarity of the mandates of the two mechanisms and in accordance with established practice, the requests relating to States that have not ratified the Convention and to disappearances that took place before the entry into force of the Convention were forwarded to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances for its consideration.

5. As at 28 February 2025, the Committee had registered, on the basis of the place of occurrence of the alleged disappearance, 1,988 requests. As at 4 April 2025, the Committee had registered a further 27 new requests for urgent action: 8 concerning Burkina Faso, 2 concerning Colombia, 7 concerning Ecuador, 6 concerning Mexico and 4 concerning the Sudan. The newest cases will be included in the next periodic report on requests for urgent action; that report will be adopted by the Committee at its twenty-ninth session.

6. Of the requests registered as at 28 February 2025, 57 gave rise to parallel registration where, according to the circumstances of the case, judicial assistance and cooperation mechanisms between various States Parties were deemed necessary: to investigate the alleged disappearance; strengthen the chances of gathering information relevant to the search for the disappeared person, for example information on the place of the crime, on the place where pieces of evidence have been located, on the country of nationality of the alleged perpetrators and of the disappeared person and any other victims, and on any country of transit; and to assist the victims, including with regard to accessing information and participating in search and investigation processes (see tables 1 and 2).² As at 28 February 2025, 3 of the parallel registrations had been transmitted to the other State Party (or States Parties) concerned for information (the practice until 2022), and 54 had been registered under a specific registration number to facilitate the follow-up to the actions taken by each of the States concerned.

Table 1

Urgent action requests registered, as at 28 February 2025, by State Party (place of occurrence of the disappearance) and by year

<i>State party</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025^a</i>	<i>Total</i>
Argentina	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	1	–	–	–	1	–	4
Armenia	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Brazil	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2 ^b	–	3
Burkina Faso	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1	1	–	3
Cambodia	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	2	1	–	–	–	–	–	4
Chile	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
Colombia	–	1	1	3	4	3	9	3	2	153	–	4	56 ^c	2	241
Croatia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1
Cuba	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	3	–	188	–	–	2	–	194
Ecuador	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	18	23
Gabon	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8	–	–	8
Honduras	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	–	9	2	–	7	3	–	35

² See also [CED/C/27/2](#), para. 5.

<i>State party</i>	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 ^a	<i>Total</i>
Iraq	–	–	5	42	22	43	50	226	103	41	42	10	27	1	612
Japan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1 ^d	–	–	1
Kazakhstan	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
Lithuania	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
Mali	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	11	–	–	–	–	12
Mauritania	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Mexico	5	4	43	166	58	31	42	10	57	60	52	86 ^d	100	14 ^b	728
Morocco	–	–	–	–	1	2	–	–	–	2	2 ^d	–	–	–	7
Niger	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1 ^d	–	2
Oman	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1 ^d	–	–	–	–	1
Paraguay	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Peru	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	–	–	–	1	–	15
Slovakia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Sri Lanka	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	2
Sudan	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	2	12	2	17
Togo	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	3
Tunisia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
Ukraine	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	1	–	–	4
Total	5	5	51	211	85	86	118	248	192	459	100	121	212	38	1 931

^a As at 28 February 2025.

^b Including one subject to parallel registration on the basis of the principle of international legal assistance and cooperation.

^c Including 49 subject to parallel registration on the basis of the principle of international legal assistance and cooperation.

^d Subject to parallel registration on the basis of the principle of international legal assistance and cooperation.

Table 2

Total of registered urgent action requests and parallel registrations, as at 28 February 2025, by year

<i>Request type</i>	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	<i>Total</i>
Urgent action	5	5	51	211	85	86	118	248	192	459	100	121	212	37	1 931
Parallel registration	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	54	1	57
Total	5	5	51	211	85	86	118	248	192	460	101	121	266	38	1 988

7. Between 10 September 2024 and 28 February 2025, the Committee sent 46 notes relating to registered requests for urgent action to follow up on the implementation of its recommendations and to make new recommendations to States Parties concerned on the basis of available information (compared to 71 in the previous reporting period). As at 28 February 2025, the Committee had a backlog of 670 urgent actions ready for follow-up (compared to 307 as at 9 September 2024): 413 in Spanish, 243 in English, 14 in Arabic and 1 in French. Reflecting that some of those urgent actions had been registered in groups because of the connectivity between the individual cases, a total of 232 follow-up notes (182 in Spanish, 36 in English, 14 in Arabic and 1 in French) needed to be prepared and sent to the respective States Parties and authors.

8. The Committee is particularly concerned that, according to information received, some victims who had envisaged submitting urgent action requests to the Committee have decided not to do so for fear of reprisals, in particular in the context of recent events in

Burkina Faso, Mali and the Sudan. The Committee firmly reiterates that no one who has cooperated with the Committee, has provided it with information or has been referred to in the context of one of the procedures of the Committee may be subjected to intimidation or reprisals. It recalls that States Parties have a primary responsibility to prevent such acts from being committed against individuals and groups who seek to cooperate, cooperate or have cooperated with the Committee.³

C. Requests for urgent action that have been discontinued or closed

9. With regard to the meaning of the terminology it uses as relates to the status of cases that are discontinued or closed, the Committee recalls that:

(a) An urgent action request is discontinued whenever the disappeared person is located but is still deprived of liberty. Should the individual concerned be disappeared again in the context of the same deprivation of liberty, the Committee could reactivate the urgent action under the same reference number thereby facilitating the follow-up to the case;

(b) An urgent action request is closed when the disappeared person has been found at liberty, has been found and released or has been found dead, provided that his or her family members and/or the authors do not contest those facts.

10. As at 28 February 2025, 518 disappeared persons on whose behalf an urgent action was opened have been located, including 6 between 10 September 2024 and 28 February 2025. The Committee welcomes the fact that 410 disappeared persons have been located alive since the beginning of the implementation of the procedure. Consequently, a total of 473 urgent actions have been closed, and 45 discontinued. The Committee highlights that a large majority of cases in which the disappeared person was located alive correspond to disappearances that took place in the context of protests in Colombia and Cuba, where the persons were deprived of their liberty and their relatives were denied any information as to their fate and whereabouts for days or weeks, thereby potentially falling within the category of so-called short-term enforced disappearances (see paras. 3 (e) and 84). The tables below present the number of urgent action cases discontinued or closed, by State Party (see table 3), or by year and State Party (see table 4).

Table 3

Requests for urgent action that are no longer open, by State Party, as at 28 February 2025

	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Discontinued</i>	<i>Total</i>
Argentina	2	–	2
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	1	–	1
Burkina Faso	2	–	2
Cambodia	2	–	2
Colombia	160	–	160
Cuba	168	25	193
Gabon	6	2	8
Honduras	1	–	1
Iraq	29	12	41
Kazakhstan	2	–	2
Lithuania	2	–	2
Mauritania	–	1	1
Mexico	79	1	80
Morocco	1	3	4
Peru	14	–	14

³ See Human Rights Council resolution 42/28 and [CED/C/8](#).

	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Discontinued</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sri Lanka	1	1	2
Sudan	1	–	1
Togo	2	–	2
Total	473	45	518

Table 4

Number of urgent action requests closed or discontinued by year, as at 28 February 2025

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of requests closed or discontinued, by country</i>	<i>Total number of requests closed or discontinued in the referenced year</i>
2015	Iraq: 3	3
2016	Iraq: 2	2
2017	Iraq: 3	
	Mexico: 26	
	Morocco: 2	31
2018	Argentina: 1	
	Iraq: 2	
	Mexico: 2	
	Sri Lanka: 1	6
2019	Cambodia: 1	
	Cuba: 1	
	Iraq: 5	
	Mauritania: 1	
	Mexico: 14	
	Morocco: 1	
	Togo: 1	24
2020	Bolivia (Plurinational State of): 1	
	Cambodia: 1	
	Cuba: 3	
	Iraq: 11	
	Kazakhstan: 2	
	Mexico: 4	
	Togo: 1	23
2021	Cuba: 1	
	Iraq: 4	
	Lithuania: 1	
	Peru: 13	19
2022	Colombia: 151	
	Cuba: 159	
	Iraq: 4	
	Mexico: 2	
	Sudan: 1	317
2023	Argentina: 1	
	Burkina Faso: 1	
	Colombia: 7	
	Cuba: 28	
	Honduras: 1	
	Iraq: 4	
	Lithuania: 1	
	Mexico: 25	70

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of requests closed or discontinued, by country</i>	<i>Total number of requests closed or discontinued in the referenced year</i>
2024	Morocco: 1	
	Peru: 1	
	Burkina Faso: 1	
	Colombia: 2	
	Cuba: 1	
	Gabon: 8	
	Iraq: 3	
	Mexico: 5	
2025	Sri Lanka: 1	21
	Mexico: 2	2
Total		518

D. Suspension of urgent action cases and related rules

11. In accordance with the criteria adopted at previous sessions,⁴ the Committee may suspend the follow-up to an urgent action case when the authors of the request have freely and unequivocally expressed their wish not to continue with the procedure, or where the source no longer exists or is unable to pursue the case, and steps taken by the Committee to contact other sources have not been successful.

12. The follow-up of a suspended urgent action case is to be immediately reactivated upon the receipt of new information from the authors or the State Party. To avoid the suspension of an urgent action contributing to impunity in the case concerned, the Committee sends a note verbale to the States Parties concerned on a yearly basis, with a list of all suspended urgent actions, requesting an update on the actions taken to search for the disappeared person and to investigate the disappearance. That note is sent together with the list of cases in respect of which the State has received a final reminder (see para. 26 below). The replies received are transmitted to the authors, and the Committee considers the action to take depending on the outcome of the consultation process.

13. When the same case is submitted under the individual complaint procedure of the Committee, the urgent action remains open until a final decision is adopted by the Committee. Upon the adoption of a final decision, the Committee determines whether to suspend the urgent action, on a case-by-case basis.

14. As at 28 February 2025, the Committee had suspended 284 urgent actions for lack of reply by the authors of the initial requests (as compared with 280 as at 9 September 2024) despite the reminders sent (see table 5 below). Five urgent actions were reactivated upon the receipt of new comments from the authors.

15. During the reporting period, the Committee was again particularly concerned about information received indicating that authors of various urgent action requests concerning incidents in Mexico have decided not to reply to the Committee for fear of reprisals.

Table 5
Suspended requests for urgent action, as at 28 February 2025

	<i>Suspended</i>
Colombia	11
Honduras	13
Iraq	25
Mali	1

⁴ CED/C/27/2, sect. D.

	<i>Suspended</i>
Mexico	229
Slovakia	1
Sudan	2
Ukraine	2
Total	284

Note: Suspended cases can be reactivated immediately upon the receipt of overdue information from the authors of the request for urgent action.

E. Developments since the end of the twenty-seventh session

16. The urgent action procedure depends largely on the quality of the interaction of the Committee with the author or authors of the request and with the States Parties concerned. Through its recommendations, the Committee provides guidance on the development of the search and investigation process. It also often acts as a point of contact between the authors and State authorities. The quality of the information provided is key in allowing the Committee to properly analyse the situation. Whenever doubts arise, the secretariat of the Committee contacts the source of the information.

17. The information received during the reporting period both confirms trends previously identified in the reports adopted by the Committee at its eleventh to twenty-seventh sessions⁵ and illustrates new trends. The following paragraphs are not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of all the information received under the urgent action procedure, but refer to issues that the Committee considers to be of public interest.

1. Cooperation and interaction of authors of urgent actions with the Committee

18. The Committee reiterates the central role of the authors of urgent actions in ensuring the efficiency of the procedure. All the information they share with the Committee is duly analysed and taken into account.

19. During the reporting period, most authors of urgent action requests provided very detailed information. In some cases, this interaction allowed the Committee to transmit relevance pieces of information and evidence to State authorities. Even though the follow-up to individual cases usually takes much longer than expected, authors should never hesitate to bring new elements to the Committee's attention. If such issues are urgent, for example in cases of threats, reprisals or the possible destruction of pieces of evidence, or regarding the availability of key information concerning situations where immediate action is necessary, the authors of the urgent action request should signal this in the title of their message.

2. Cooperation and interaction of States Parties with the Committee

20. In compliance with article 30 (3) of the Convention, States Parties have the obligation to inform the Committee, within a specified period of time, of measures taken to locate and protect the person on whose behalf an urgent action has been registered and, under article 26 (9), to cooperate with the Committee and assist its members in the fulfilment of their mandate. As in previous reporting periods, most States Parties replied to the requests sent by the Committee during the period under review. Nonetheless, the Committee regrets that many of its recommendations have not been implemented, and that some States seem to repeat the same answers for different follow-up notes. The Committee reiterates the importance of States Parties replying to each of the recommendations transmitted in the follow-up notes.

⁵ See previous periodic reports on urgent actions, for example those from the eleventh and twenty-seventh sessions ([CED/C/11/3](#) and [CED/C/27/2](#)).

21. The Committee reminds States Parties that whenever they are not in a position to provide a reply concerning a recommendation, they should say so, explaining the reason. Such explanations are important since they allow the Committee to analyse the challenges faced and to duly assess the situation.

22. The Committee welcomes the direct interaction requested by some States Parties to discuss the best way to proceed in order to follow up together on the implementation of the recommendations transmitted in urgent action cases. Such exchanges are highly recommended, providing opportunities for raising concerns and clarifying doubts and for the Committee and the State Party to invite each other to reconsider some of their respective practices.

23. Whenever the States Parties concerned do not provide follow-up information by the set deadlines, the Committee sends up to three reminders. Where a third and final reminder is necessary, the Committee indicates that it may decide to make the lack of cooperation of the State Party public in its subsequent report on requests for urgent action and in its subsequent annual report to the General Assembly.

24. The Committee welcomes the fact that, as at 28 February 2025, States Parties had submitted replies, including two during the reporting period, regarding 172 of the requests for which a final reminder had been sent. Nonetheless, the Committee was still awaiting responses from States Parties to final reminders in 191 requests for urgent action, compared with 194 as at 9 September 2024 (see table 6).

Table 6

Number of urgent actions for which the deadline set in the final reminder sent to the State Party concerned has expired, as at 28 February 2025

<i>State Party</i>	<i>As at 27 February 2024</i>	<i>As at 9 September 2024</i>	<i>As at 28 February 2025</i>
Cambodia	1	2	2
Iraq	198	171	167
Mexico	18	18	18
Sudan	1	3	4
Total	218	194	191

25. The Committee is particularly concerned about the cases where the State Party has never replied. This significantly affects the efficiency of the procedure and constitutes a violation of States Parties' obligations under articles 30 (3) and 26 (9) of the Convention.

26. Pursuant to rule 62 (7) of the Committee's rules of procedure, the complete list of urgent actions, including information concerning which States Parties have received a final reminder, is available on the Committee's web page (updated after each session of the Committee). States concerned receive a list of suspended cases (see paras. 12–15 above). The list of final reminders will be referred to in the next annual report the Committee submits to the General Assembly, and will be shared with the Human Rights Council.

3. Registration notes sent by the Committee to States Parties

27. During the reporting period, the Committee implemented the new structure for the notes transmitted upon the registration of urgent actions that was adopted at its twenty-seventh session. The purpose of the new structure is to facilitate the preparation of replies by States Parties and the follow-up to the actions taken. Together with the elements related to the identification of the disappeared person and the context of the alleged disappearance, the Committee now transmits its recommendations in a table and invites the State Party to describe the actions taken in the column entitled "Response of the State Party". On the basis of the response received and following the analysis of the information gathered in the context of the respective urgent action, the Committee transmits new recommendations and relevant information to support collaboration with the State Party until the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared persons have been clarified.

(a) Search and investigation

28. In all cases, the Committee starts with recommendations for, and requests for information from, the States Parties concerned on the search and investigation processes carried out in the specific case. In that connection, the Committee usually requests the State Party:

(a) To establish without delay a comprehensive strategy that includes an action plan and a timeline for the immediate search for the disappeared person and for the exhaustive and impartial investigation of the alleged disappearance. This strategy must take into account all the available information, including the context in which the disappearance took place; the strategy must be in full compliance with articles 9, 11, 12, 24 and 30 of the Convention and in line with the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons;

(b) To guarantee that the strategy complies with the requirements of due diligence at all stages of the search and investigation processes. This implies the launch of an immediate and expeditious search, including at the authorities' own initiative, and the carrying out of an exhaustive and independent investigation (principles 6, 7 and 8 of the Guiding Principles);

(c) To ensure that the strategy explores all investigative hypotheses existing in the case, including the possibility that the facts under consideration may constitute an enforced disappearance due to the possible involvement of persons linked to State authorities. On this issue, the Committee provides the specificities of the case that justify raising such a possibility;

(d) To ensure that the strategy that is adopted determines the actions to be taken to search for and locate the disappeared person, to investigate the alleged disappearance and to identify the perpetrators, in view of all existing hypotheses and in an integrated, efficient and coordinated manner, with the necessary resources and adequately trained and independent personnel. The Committee then lists the concrete actions that State authorities in charge of the search and investigation should take in view of the available information.

29. In cases where it is alleged that the disappeared persons are deprived of liberty, the Committee reminds the State that it must immediately check to determine their presence in the specified place or in any other place of deprivation of liberty where they might be.

30. In cases in which the disappeared persons are found in a place of deprivation of liberty, the Committee requests the State to immediately take the following measures, in compliance with articles 17 and 18 of the Convention:

(a) Guarantee that the families and representatives of the disappeared persons are informed about their location without delay;

(b) Specify the criminal charges and proceedings that have been brought against them, and inform the Committee about their legal situation;

(c) As a matter of urgency, review cases in which the persons concerned are being deprived of their liberty with no specific criminal charges against them, put them under the protection of the law and take action to release them;

(d) Ensure that the persons concerned can periodically communicate with and be visited by their relatives, counsel or any other person of their choice;

(e) Guarantee that the persons deprived of liberty are held solely in officially recognized and supervised places of deprivation of liberty;

31. The Committee then requests the State party to provide it with information on the measures taken to implement each of the Committee's recommendations, and on the result of those measures.

(b) Information for and participation of relatives

32. The Committee then requests the State Party to take action to promote the participation of relatives and access by them to information. The Committee has recently identified the need to further specify the obligations of States Parties regarding access to

information and the participation of victims. In that connection, the Committee usually recommends that the State Party:

(a) Establish and implement an official mechanism that allows the relatives and representatives of the disappeared persons to be informed about the actions taken to search for the disappeared persons and investigate their alleged disappearance, about the progress made and about the challenges faced;

(b) Allow the full participation of the immediate family, other relatives and representatives of the disappeared persons in the search process and the investigation of the alleged disappearances whenever they so wish. In the event that such participation is impossible for reasons beyond the control of the State Party, the Committee recommends that the State Party explain to the relatives and representatives, in advance, the reasons for the situation, and that it inform them of the results of the actions taken;

(c) Ensure that the information shared by the relatives and representatives of the disappeared persons is duly taken into account in the elaboration and implementation of the search and investigation strategies;

(d) Provide the Committee with information on the measures taken to implement each of the recommendations, and on the result of those measures.

33. When the Committee receives information that relatives or representatives of the disappeared person are at risk of irreparable harm, it can request the State Party to adopt interim measures of protection. In that context, the Committee, recalling its jurisprudence, reminds the State Party of its obligation to take such protection measures immediately, in consultation with the persons concerned, and requests the State party to review the established protection scheme periodically, in order to ensure that the individuals concerned can pursue their search and investigation activities safely, and that their basic needs in that regard are met. In cases where pieces of evidence are at risk of irreparable harm, the Committee has requested the State Party concerned to adopt immediate measures to protect the evidence.

4. Trends regarding the urgent action requests registered during the reporting period

(a) Trends observed

34. Of the disappeared persons concerned in the 106 requests registered during the reporting period:

- 83.02 per cent (88) are men or boys (compared with 90 per cent in the previous reporting period)
- 16.98 per cent (18) are women or girls (compared with 10 per cent in the previous reporting period)
- 12.27 per cent (13) are minors (compared with 7 per cent in the previous reporting period)
- 3.77 per cent (4) are older persons (compared with none in the previous reporting period)
- 5.66 per cent (6) are persons with disabilities
- 2.83 per cent (3) are LGTBIQ+ persons
- 18.87 per cent (20) belong to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (compared with 8 per cent in the previous reporting period)
- 3.77 per cent (4) are human rights defenders.

35. Whenever it was relevant, the Committee highlighted, in the registration note, the obligation of the State Party concerned to ensure a differential approach appropriate to the requirements of the victims when establishing and implementing the search and investigation strategies and when taking measures to support and protect those victims.

36. Of the new requests received during the reporting period, 44 per cent relate to Mexico (47 urgent actions); 21 per cent to Ecuador (22 urgent actions); 9 per cent to Colombia (10 urgent actions, of which 1 is a parallel registration); 8 per cent to Iraq (9 urgent actions); 8 per cent to the Sudan (9 urgent actions); 3 per cent to Costa Rica (3 parallel registrations); 1 per cent to Brazil (1 urgent action); 1 per cent to Chile (1 urgent action); 1 per cent to Cuba (1 urgent action); 1 per cent to Peru (1 urgent action); 1 per cent to the Niger (1 urgent action); and 1 per cent to Côte d'Ivoire (1 parallel registration).

(b) Specific allegations

37. The Committee considers it of utmost importance to make public the circumstances of the facts put to its consideration, and to make the name of disappeared persons visible and public. The Committee therefore includes descriptions of the facts and the names of the disappeared persons when it has obtained express approval from the authors of the request, if the number of registered urgent actions related to the State Party is not too large to do so. For other cases, the Committee includes a general description of the facts. The list of registered urgent actions is available at the Committee's web page.⁶

i. Allegations related to Brazil

38. José Vandeilson Silvina de Sousa is a member of the Quilombo community, living with psychosocial disabilities. On 9 November 2020, Mr. Silvina de Sousa, who was a teenaged minor at the time of his disappearance, was taken, by representatives of the child protective services of Alto Alegre, from his grandfather's house in Morros dos Anjicos to an unknown location. The representatives instructed his grandfather to step outside, saying that they knew what to do with "the boy". His grandfather complied, but when he re-entered the house, there was no sign of the representatives or his grandson. Since then, Mr. Silvina de Sousa's relatives have had no information as to his fate and whereabouts, despite their reiterated requests to the authorities.

39. In this case, the Committee was provided with reliable information on the alleged involvement of State agents, and underscored the necessity to clarify without delay the fate and whereabouts of Mr. Silvina de Sousa. It requested the State Party:

(a) To guarantee that the family of Mr. Silvina de Sousa was immediately informed about his location;

(b) To specify the medical and judicial actions that had been taken related to Mr. Silvina de Sousa, and the results thereof, and to inform the Committee without delay of his legal situation;

(c) To provide a copy of the medical and/or judicial authorization that legally substantiated his deprivation of liberty;

(d) To ensure that Mr. Silvina de Sousa could periodically communicate with and be visited by his family, counsel or any other person of his choice.

40. Considering that Mr. Silvina de Sousa was minor at the time of his disappearance, is a member of the Quilombo community and is a person with psychosocial disabilities, the Committee requested the State Party to ensure that the search strategy followed a differential and intersectional approach at all stages of the search and investigation procedures, in full respect of his specific requirements (principle 4 of the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons).

ii. Allegations related to Chile

41. The Committee registered one urgent action request relating to Chile, concerning Julia del Carmen Chuñil Catricura, who disappeared on 8 November 2024 after she left her home, heading to a property known as Reserva Cora Número Uno-A to look for her cattle. Her adult children searched for her throughout the area. Upon reaching an area known as a "refuge", they found tracks indicating that their mother had descended into a

⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/ced/urgent-actions>.

difficult-to-access area, where the tracks disappeared. Alongside the footprints, they found tire marks from a truck. Since then, relatives and representatives of Ms. Chuñil Catricura have received no information about her fate and whereabouts.

42. The Committee requested the State Party to take immediate action to search for Ms. Chuñil Catricura and to ensure that the adopted strategy explored all existing investigative hypotheses, including the possibility that the events constituted an enforced disappearance due to the alleged involvement of State agents by action, authorization or acquiescence. The Committee reminded the State Party of the importance of ensuring that the strategy guaranteed the investigation and consideration of all allegations made, and information gathered, in the context of the urgent action and transmitted to the State Party.

43. Taking into account that Ms. Chuñil Catricura is a member of the Mapuche Indigenous community, a human rights defender and an older person, the Committee requested the State party to ensure that the search and investigation strategy followed a differential approach, with a gender and intersectionality perspective, and that all stages of the search were conducted in full respect of her requirements.

iii. Allegations related to Colombia

44. During the reporting period, the Committee registered 10 new urgent action requests concerning Colombia: nine disappearances that occurred in Colombia and one disappearance of a national of Colombia in another country (parallel registration with Mexico).

45. Three of the above-mentioned cases are related to the requests for urgent action registered during the previous reporting period regarding nationals of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) who disappeared in 2022 and 2023 after having left San Andrés, Colombia on boats with the aim of reaching Nicaragua or the United States of America. The others relate to incidents that took place in 2021, 2022 and 2024: four in Valle del Cauca, one in Cauca and one in Arauca.

46. The first of the above urgent actions registered during the current reporting period concerns the disappearance of José Daniel García López on 12 January 2022, in Valle del Cauca. That day, he left his home on his motorcycle. Before leaving, he told his mother that he would return immediately, and did not take his belongings or identification document with him. However, he did not return, and to date his family has received no information about his fate and whereabouts.

47. The second urgent action relates to the disappearance of Yanis Sierra Flórez. On 18 December 2022, she was returning home from work in Cartago, Valle del Cauca. At 8.07 p.m., she called her mother to confirm whether she would come to wait for her at the bridge called Puente la Máquina, as she usually did. Her mother replied that she could not because she was sick, and they therefore agreed to meet at home. At 8.30 p.m., Ms. Sierra Flórez sent a message to her mother saying that two boys had been taken. Worried, her mother called her several times, but there was no answer. Since then, the relatives of Ms. Sierra Flórez have received no information about her fate and whereabouts.

48. The third case relates to the disappearance of Jhilbert Camilo Gómez Parra. On 19 May 2024, at 3.45 p.m., he left his home on his motorcycle to deliver a package to his aunt. At 4.30 p.m., he was seen talking on a telephone near the San Pablo sports complex. Witnesses reported that at 9.30 p.m., two men on a motorcycle had arrived at the sports complex. One took Mr. Gómez Parra's motorcycle, forced him to get on it, and drove him away to an unknown destination. Since then, Mr. Gómez Parra's relatives have received no information about his fate and whereabouts.

49. The fourth case concerns the disappearance of Daniel Esteban Gazo Isaza on 25 September 2021. At 7.30 p.m. that day, Mr. Gazo Isaza was at the public transportation station in Puerto Caldas, Risaralda, with two friends. They were going to attend a party in Cartago, Valle del Cauca. Before leaving, Mr. Gazo Isaza sent a photograph to his mother to let her know that he was with his two friends. Shortly afterwards, security cameras captured a video showing him in a vehicle with two men, driving through the streets of Cartago. As the hours passed and Mr. Gazo Isaza did not return, his relatives tried to

contact him by telephone, but their calls went unanswered. Since then, his relatives have received no information about his fate and whereabouts.

50. During the reporting period, the Committee registered one case of a disappearance in Cauca. On 18 March 2024, at 6 a.m., Bayron Mauricio Ramos Díaz left his home to go to work. He picked up construction material that was to be transported to the La Balsa sector in Buenos Aires, Cauca. That morning, he contacted his partner and his mother, informing them that he was on his way to work. Communication with his relatives was maintained until 12.16 p.m., when he stopped answering his telephone. That night, the employers of Mr. Ramos Díaz contacted his relatives to inform them that he had not returned. Since then, the relatives of Mr. Ramos Díaz have received no information about his fate and whereabouts.

51. The case of a disappearance in Arauca concerns a man who had relocated with his family to another region. The family had informed the man's mother that they had arrived safely and that he had found work. Since then, the family has had no information about the disappeared person's fate and whereabouts.

52. In all the above-mentioned cases, the information provided to the Committee includes references to the territorial control of non-State armed groups and organized crime over the area in which the person disappeared, and includes allegations of collusion with State agents, including in relation to disappearances. The available information also illustrates failures in the development of search and investigation processes.

iv. *Allegations related to Colombia and Costa Rica*

53. The Committee registered three new urgent actions linked to the disappearance of migrants after they left San Andrés in 2022. The information received reiterated allegations that were similar to those submitted previously, in particular allegations of a direct link between various Colombian militaries and the network of smugglers allegedly involved in the disappearances, and gave rise to parallel registration with Costa Rica after relevant pieces of evidence were found on the territory of that State Party.

54. The Committee combined the follow-up to the previously registered urgent actions with the registration of the new requests. It underlined the States' obligation to promote the implementation of all possible mechanisms of mutual legal assistance, so that the authorities in charge of the search and investigation could increase the opportunities to clarify the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared persons. In addition, the Committee invited the States Parties concerned to consider the possibility of developing judicial assistance mechanisms with the States of nationality of the disappeared individuals, namely, Nicaragua and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), even where they were not a party to the Convention.

55. Specific registration and follow-up notes have been prepared for each of the States concerned, sharing the same information, but making specific recommendations corresponding to each of the States, in line with their respective obligations under the Convention.

v. *Allegations related to Cuba*

56. Berta Soler Fernández is a human rights defender and representative of the Ladies in White. According to the information received by the Committee, on 22 September 2024, at 12.40 p.m., she was detained by State Security Department agents. According to the same information, representatives from the Aguilera police station informed her relatives that she was not in custody. Subsequently, the police call centre told the relatives that the police had no record of Ms. Soler Fernández being detained.

57. The Committee requested the State Party: to identify the place of detention where Ms. Soler Fernández was being held and to immediately inform her family of her location; to specify the criminal charges and the proceedings initiated against her, and their outcomes; and to inform the Committee about her legal status. Furthermore, if Ms. Soler Fernández was being detained without specific criminal charges against her, the Committee requested the State Party to immediately review her case and place her under the protection of the law.

It also requested the State Party to allow her to communicate with and receive visits from her relatives, legal counsel or any other person of her choice, in accordance with article 17 (2) (d) of the Convention.

58. Following the registration of the urgent action, the Committee was informed that Ms. Soler Fernández had been released. During the process of closing the urgent action, the Committee was informed that Mrs. Soler Fernández had again been detained by State agents, on 10 November 2024, and had been held incommunicado for at least 77 hours. Subsequently, the Committee was informed that Ms. Soler Fernández had again been detained by State agents, on 1 December 2024, and held incommunicado for at least 69 hours. She was reportedly held incommunicado for periods of between 12 and 24 hours on more than 30 occasions in 2024, and over 100 times in the previous three years, under conditions that would constitute the elements of enforced disappearance as defined in article 2 of the Convention. With reference to the joint statement on so-called short-term enforced disappearances issued by the Committee and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances,⁷ the Committee recalled that deprivation of liberty followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which places that person outside the protection of the law, may constitute enforced disappearance, regardless of the duration of the deprivation of liberty or the concealment. The urgent action remains open; the Committee is awaiting a reply from the State Party to the Committee's follow-up note.

vi. *Allegations related to the Niger*

59. The Committee registered one case related to the disappearance of a person upon his alleged arrival at judicial police premises.

vii. *Allegations related to Ecuador*

60. During the reporting period, the Committee registered 22 new urgent actions related to events that occurred in Ecuador between 30 January 2024 and 6 December 2024. The registered cases relate to young men and boys detained and subsequently disappeared by patrols of the Armed Forces in three coastal provinces: Los Ríos (14), Guayas (5) and Esmeraldas (3). Of the 22 victims of alleged enforced disappearance concerned in those urgent actions, 8 are minors.

61. In the majority of these cases, the Committee received sensitive compelling evidence, including photos and videos showing the direct involvement of security forces, mainly the military, in the disappearances.

62. In view thereof, the Committee requested the State Party to clarify without delay the location of the disappeared persons and, if they are not found, to search for them and investigate the disappearance on the basis of specific strategies that consider all available information, including the alleged involvement of agents of security forces. It also requested the State Party to take specific measures, such as collecting, analysing and providing information on operations carried out by the Armed Forces, public security institutions and other authorities allegedly involved.

63. The Committee also received allegations regarding the lack of information provided to the relatives of the disappeared persons, and that the relatives have not been allowed to take part in the search and investigation processes. The Committee highlighted the urgency for the State Party to establish formal and systematic mechanisms to inform the relatives and to allow their participation. It also requested the State Party to take interim measures of protection for the relatives of the disappeared persons and relevant pieces of evidence.

64. This series of cases was received after the submission and registration of the case of Josué Didier Arroyo Bustos, Ismael Eduardo Arroyo Bustos, Steven Gerald Medina Lajones and Nehemías Saúl Arboleda Portocarrero, four children of African descent, aged 11 to 15 years, who disappeared on 8 December 2024. That day, at 8.30 p.m., they were playing football with six other children. They decided to go to a mall to buy

⁷ CED/C/11.

something in a bakery. Two Air Force patrol cars reportedly stopped near them, on Avenida 25 de Julio. The officers who got out of the car allegedly fired shots in the air, chased the children and caught four of them before putting them violently in the back of a pick-up truck.

65. At 9 p.m. the same day, the parents of the children became worried and began to look for them. At 10.40 p.m., one of the mothers received a call from an unidentified person indicating that her son had been detained and beaten by members of the military, who had then abandoned him in Taura. One of the children had reportedly asked the unidentified person to call his mother. In the call, another child mentioned that the soldiers had intercepted them, beaten them and then left them naked in Taura. One of the children shouted: "Please come and rescue us, we are all here". In its reply, the State Party informed the Committee that the burned bodies of the children had been located and that the investigation was ongoing. The State Party's reply was transmitted to the authors of the urgent action request for their comments.

viii. *Allegations related to Iraq*

66. Of the nine urgent action cases registered that concern incidents in Iraq, eight relate to disappearances in Salah al-Din. Of those, seven occurred during the events of 2 June 2016 in Salah Al-Din with regard to which the Committee had registered four other urgent actions in 2024. That day, between 7 and 8 p.m., the disappeared persons, their families and several other families fled the Saqlawiyah District in Anbar Governorate owing to military confrontations between Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the official government forces supported by some armed factions allegedly affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Forces. The families headed towards Al-Hadba, 3 kilometres away, seeking protection. When they arrived at Albu Fayyad, the families were met by unidentified armed forces carrying coloured flags, who took all of the men to an unknown destination, claiming that they would check the men's names for security reasons. Women, children and older persons were then isolated in a construction area near Albu Fayyad. On 3 June 2016, the families were split up and transported in white pick-up trucks to the Abu Ghraib and Al-Amariya camps for displaced persons. Then the families were promised that the men would be released in three days, once the security checks were completed. Nevertheless, the men never reappeared, and there is no information as to their fate and whereabouts.

67. The seventh urgent action related to the disappearances in Salah al-Din registered during the reporting period concerns an alleged enforced disappearance of a man in April 2023 as he was heading to the Rashid popular market area. At about 10.10 p.m., a relative called him to ask why he was late, but his phone was turned off. The relative immediately went out to search for him. The Saraya al-Salam members present at the checkpoint stated that they had not arrested him, and that they had no information as to his location. Since then, his family has had no information about his fate and whereabouts.

68. The Committee also registered an urgent action concerning a person allegedly disappeared in November 2024 in Baghdad, when he was reportedly taken by officials from the fourth Al-Rusafa deportation prison to an unknown location. Since then, his relatives and lawyers have had no information as to his fate and whereabouts.

ix. *Allegations related to Mexico*

69. Regarding the 47 requests for urgent action concerning Mexico registered during the reporting period, the disappearances occurred between 2017 and 2024 – over half (26) in 2024. Characteristics of the cases were as follows:

- (a) Places: 23 per cent (11 urgent actions) occurred in Michoacán and 21 per cent (10 urgent actions) in Baja California;
- (b) Profiles of the disappeared persons:
 - 78.72 per cent (37) men
 - 21.28 per cent (10) women
 - 10.64 per cent (5) minors

- 4.25 per cent (2) people with disabilities
- 2.12 per cent (1) LGTBIQ+ persons
- 36.17 per cent (17) members of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities
- 4.25 per cent (2) human rights defenders.

70. As in requests concerning Mexico recorded during the previous reporting period, hardly any information is available as to the possible perpetrators and circumstances of the disappearances because the persons disappeared in the absence of any witness, or because the authorities have not made available any evidence. Authors still report that the videos from street cameras are available only for 30 days, and that the authorities usually do not give access to the videos on time. In many cases, authors know only that the person disappeared, that the context provides elements suggesting that disappearances, including enforced disappearance, are a widespread practice, and that there are allegations of links between agents of the local authorities and criminal groups, including in relation to the occurrence of disappearances. The disappearances affect persons of a wide range of ages and social origin.

71. In all of the cases, the Committee transmitted recommendations on five major issues: (a) establishment of search and investigation strategies; (b) investigation and identification of the perpetrators; (c) participation of victims; (d) assistance and support to victims; and (e) interim measures of protection, both for relatives and for relevant pieces of evidence at risk of irreparable harm.

72. The information available indicates that a search and investigation strategy was being implemented in very few of the cases. Where such a strategy was being implemented, it did not comply with the standardized investigation protocol established by the Attorney-General's Office for the crime of enforced disappearance and disappearance committed by individuals, or with international standards. The Committee recalls that such a strategy should, at minimum, include the following: (a) a summary of facts, describing the main elements for which the investigation was initiated; (b) the identification of involved actors (victims, perpetrators and witnesses); (c) related cases in other prosecutors' offices; (d) clear and concise hypotheses; (e) the definition of objectives based on the hypotheses, which must be clear, relevant and concise; (f) investigation actions and acts related to the objectives and hypotheses; (g) the list of available evidence and the elements collected and yet to be collected; (h) investigation agenda, including meetings with the victims; and (i) reports of the working meetings and commitments made, and a record of all sessions.

73. Regarding victim participation, the Committee notes again that in most of the urgent actions registered for Mexico, inter-institutional coordination meetings, to which most of the relatives and representatives of the disappeared persons have been invited, have been organized by State authorities. These spaces are positive steps in promoting participation. However, victim participation remains limited, and the decisions taken are rarely followed through. The situation generates a high level of frustration for the victims and puts into question the efficiency of the procedure.

74. The Committee considers that such coordination spaces should be encouraged and promoted for all cases. However, it is concerned about the capacity of the institutions involved to organize the meetings efficiently and to follow up on the implementation of the adopted agreements. The Committee therefore reminds the State Party that while it is a priority to hold such coordination meetings, it is also important to establish and systematize other mechanisms of information and interaction, as highlighted in all registration notes.

75. The Committee was informed that the disappeared persons in three of the urgent actions concerning events in Guanajuato registered over the last year and a half have been located. While it cannot follow up on the investigation of these cases in the context of the urgent action procedure, the Committee has been informed that in those cases, the investigation files have been reclassified as homicides, thereby excluding their investigation as alleged enforced disappearance, and that there has been total impunity in all of the Guanajuato cases. This trend is of particular concern for the Committee.

x. *Allegations related to Mexico and Colombia*

76. One case related to the disappearance of a national of Colombia in Mexico was registered.

xi. *Allegations related to Peru*

77. On 21 August 2022, Anthony Iván Camizán Guerrero left his home in the district of Canchaque, Huancabamba, informing his family that he was going to run some errands at the university. There is no record of him having arrived at the university. On the same day, he contacted his best friend through WhatsApp, informing the friend he was with a police officer, who was stationed in the Piura police region, with whom he has a romantic relationship.

78. Security cameras at a store captured Mr. Camizán Guerrero on a motorcycle driven by the police officer, who was in his police uniform. Since then, Mr. Camizán Guerrero's family has been unable to obtain any information about his fate and whereabouts despite their requests and searches.

xii. *Allegations related to the Sudan*

79. As at 28 February 2024, the Committee had registered 17 urgent action cases related to disappearances occurred in the Sudan, including 9 during the reporting period.

80. One case relates to the disappearance of Mohamed Nokola Aldhaw Jabeldo, who serves as a nurse for the army. He was allegedly disappeared in November 2023 in the context of confrontations taking place with the Sudanese army at the security checkpoint in Alrashid Turn, Alsorkab, Jabal Awlya, Khartoum State. Relatives of the disappeared person received information that he would be detained at the Soba prison. This information has not been confirmed, and the authorities did not provide any information as to his fate and whereabouts.

81. Fifteen of the urgent actions were registered on behalf of men who were disappeared between 19 November 2023 and 22 December 2024 in similar circumstances in the Sudan.⁸ In all of those cases, the Committee recalled the State Party's responsibilities under articles 2 and 3 of the Convention and required the competent authorities to take the following actions:

(a) Adopt a search and investigation strategy that explores all the existing investigative hypotheses, including the allegations that the disappeared persons were detained by members of the Rapid Defence Forces, and the possibility that the facts under consideration may constitute an enforced disappearance due to the possible involvement of State agents through their action, authorization, support or acquiescence;

(b) Ensure that the strategy that is adopted determines the actions to be taken to search for and locate the disappeared persons and investigate their alleged disappearances, and identify the perpetrators in view of all existing hypotheses in an integrated, efficient and coordinated manner, with the necessary resources and adequately trained personnel;

(c) Integrate the search for the disappeared persons into all communications, whether direct or indirect, that the State Party authorities have with the Rapid Defence Forces;

(d) Check for the possible presence of the disappeared persons in any of the places of deprivation of liberty under the authority of the State Party;

(e) Consider, in their military operations, the possible locations of disappeared persons.

82. One of the urgent actions was registered on behalf of a woman who was disappeared as she was traveling in a bus that was stopped by agents of the Sudanese Armed Forces.

⁸ See the complete list of requests for urgent actions, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/ced/urgent-actions>.

83. At the time of preparing the present report, no reply has been received from the Sudan on any of the urgent actions registered during the reporting period.

xiii. So-called short-term disappearances

84. During the reporting period, the Committee registered one so-called short-term enforced disappearance related to events in Cuba (see para. 10 above). Eight allegations of such disappearances could however not be formally registered because the information about the release of the alleged victim was confirmed before the Committee could take action (see para. 3 above). Nonetheless, the Committee has kept a register of such allegations, one of which relates to the Niger, and seven to Thailand.

5. Replies received from States Parties

(a) General trends

85. During the reporting period, the replies received from States Parties reflected the trends that have been maintained through the years,⁹ with slight evolutions. The new format of urgent action requests and follow-up is being used progressively more. The replies received in the new format have been brief but more to the point, facilitating follow-up. However, many replies remain very general and do not respond to all of the Committee's recommendations.

(b) Need for clarification about the meaning of "differential approach"

86. In all cases involving women, children, persons with disabilities, members of Indigenous Peoples or other ethnic or cultural groups, and LGBTIQ+ persons, the Committee recalls the importance of State Party authorities adopting a differential approach whenever carrying out search and investigation activities and assisting victims, in accordance with principle 4 of the Guiding Principles for the Search of Disappeared Persons.

87. In this context, the Committee has recommended that the States Parties concerned guarantee that staff members are properly trained to support victims with sensitivity and in a way that is suited to their requirements. In notes sent during the reporting period, the Committee included a recommendation to take into account the children of the disappeared person, given the transgenerational impact of enforced disappearances, requesting the States Parties concerned to ensure that the specific requirements of those children are duly met, for example through the provision of age-appropriate and truthful information, space for the expression of emotions and active participation,¹⁰ and continued psychological and emotional support, including the use of safety messages.

(c) Trends observed in the replies of Iraq

88. The Committee is particularly concerned that Iraq never provides specific information on the measures taken to implement its recommendations regarding the measures to be taken to search for disappeared persons and investigate their disappearance. It rather provides "standard replies", often reiterating consultations on issues such as the name, address and other personal details of the disappeared person that have already been provided by the Committee on previous occasions; or indicate that the person is considered to be a terrorist, without providing any information as to the person's legal status, fate or whereabouts.

89. The Committee also notes with concern that some of the replies provided by the State Party are contradictory and difficult to reconcile. For example, the State Party has reiterated on various occasions that no information on the disappeared person in one case was available in its records. However, the State Party has also indicated that the disappeared person was a member of the elements of the so-called Islamic army and was

⁹ CED/C/27/2, paras. 59–88.

¹⁰ General comment No. 14 (2013), paras. 43–45.

affiliated with the terrorist organization Al-Qaida in 2005.¹¹ The Committee has recalled that the Convention does not provide for any exception to the obligation of States to search for and investigate enforced disappearances, regardless of the profile of the disappeared person, or the suspicions that may exist against him or her, and has highlighted that such a statement does not bring any clarification as to the current situation of the disappeared person and contradicts in some ways the previous replies of the State Party.

90. The Committee further notes that during the reporting period, the State Party again requested, in various urgent action requests, the Committee to invite the family of the disappeared person to contact the forensic medicine department/missing persons section to review photographs for the purpose of identification. The Committee has been informed that, in several of the cases, the family of the disappeared person had previously visited the department's facility to review photographs, but no information regarding their loved ones had been obtained, and that the new invitations did not clarify whether new photographs of potential relevance for the case were available. In one of the cases, the Committee expressed concern that, according to information received by the Committee, the notification paper addressed to the father of the disappeared person, inviting him to go to the department, stipulated that he would face legal or judicial proceedings if he did not go. The Committee recalled that the process of identification of photographs should not be carried out in an isolated manner, but must be part of the established search and investigation strategy, together with other search and investigation measures, and that non-participation in such processes must never result in legal or judicial proceedings.

91. The Committee addressed recommendations to the State Party, as follows:

(a) The State Party should ensure that the family of the disappeared person receives an official invitation from the competent authorities so that they are indeed provided with the relevant information when they go to the designated forensic institute;

(b) Such an invitation should be made only once the competent authorities have confirmed that new photographs of potential relevance for the case of the disappeared person are available, different from those that were seen when the relatives or representatives last visited the forensic medicine department;

(c) For all the search and investigation activities, State officials should be particularly aware of and sensitive to the impact that participating in the search and identification process may have on the mental health of victims. All officials in charge should therefore be trained to receive families with respect and with a differential approach, to ensure that officials communicate compassionately and respectfully;

(d) In cases where the State Party confirms that a visit to a forensic institute could be of relevance, the family of the disappeared persons should have the possibility to be accompanied by a person of their choice.

92. Iraq has also required victims, on various occasions, to provide a copy of the complaints or reports submitted to the Iraqi authorities. On this point, the Committee has emphasized that such documents are in the hands of the State Party and should therefore be transmitted directly by the authorities concerned.

(d) Trends observed in the replies of Mexico

93. In the vast majority of cases related to disappearances in Mexico, the Committee has received information revealing failures in the process of search and investigation, sometimes with very detailed data regarding public agents involved in acts that have allegedly hindered the search and investigation.

94. Regarding cases registered during the reporting period, the Committee is concerned about the significant number of cases in which search actions, particularly field searches, are limited or absent. Furthermore, the Committee notes with concern that, in many instances, families and representatives of the disappeared persons do not have access to a search plan that includes a detailed timeline of the planned search activities and that enables

¹¹ CED/C/27/2, para. 79.

the participation of the relatives and representatives of the disappeared persons in those efforts.

95. In all of the cases, the Committee has provided the available information to the State Party and:

(a) Emphasized the need to implement a comprehensive strategy that includes an action plan and a timeline for the immediate search of the disappeared person and for the exhaustive and impartial investigation of the alleged disappearance, in full compliance with articles 9, 11, 12, 24 and 30 of the Convention, and in accordance with the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons;

(b) Recalled the State's obligation under article 12 (4) of the Convention to investigate such allegations and punish perpetrators. No reply has ever been received as to the process carried out in that regard.

6. Reprisals and interim measures

96. During the reporting period, the Committee received new allegations from authors of requests for urgent action regarding reprisals, usually involving threats and retaliation against the relatives of disappeared persons or their representatives, aimed at dissuading them from participating in or promoting search and investigation processes.

97. In 16.3 per cent of cases currently open, concerning 314 disappeared persons, the Committee has requested the States Parties concerned to take interim measures to preserve the lives and integrity of the individuals concerned and to allow them to pursue their search activities without being subjected to violence, intimidation or harassment, in accordance with article 24 of the Convention and principle 14 of the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons. The Committee has also requested the States Parties concerned to ensure that such measures are taken in consultation with the persons requiring protection and are subject to review at their request. Measures were also requested to protect pieces of evidence against irreparable harm.

98. Of the 314 disappeared persons concerned in open requests for urgent action in which the Committee has requested interim or protection measures, 240 disappeared in Mexico, 22 in Ecuador, 17 in Iraq, 13 in Honduras, 8 in Gabon, 8 in Colombia, 1 in Argentina, 1 in Brazil, 1 in Burkina Faso, 1 in Cambodia, 1 in Morocco and 1 in Paraguay.
