



# International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

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## Committee on Enforced Disappearances

### Guidance for the submission of a request for urgent action to the Committee\*\*

#### General information

1. The Committee on Enforced Disappearances is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance by the States that have ratified the Convention.
2. Under article 30 of the Convention, the Committee receives and considers requests for urgent action, submitted by the relatives of a disappeared person or their legal representatives, their counsel or any person authorized by them, as well as by any other person having a legitimate interest, with a view to ensuring that the State party concerned takes, as a matter of urgency, all the measures necessary to search for and find a disappeared person.
3. Requests for urgent action may be submitted with regard to:
  - (a) A disappearance in a country that has ratified the Convention;<sup>1</sup>
  - (b) A disappearance of a national of a country that has ratified the Convention.
4. In either case, the disappearance must have commenced after the entry into force of the Convention for the State party concerned.

#### Requirements for a request for urgent action to be considered, in principle, by the Committee

5. Requests must be submitted in writing.
6. Requests may be submitted with regard to cases concerning any State that has ratified the Convention. It is not necessary for the State party to have made a specific declaration in that regard.
7. The identity of the persons submitting a request for urgent action (the authors) will always remain confidential; the request must not, however, be anonymous. The identity and contact details of the authors of the request are required so that the Committee may contact them throughout the procedure.
8. The facts of the case must have been reported to the competent authorities of the State party concerned, such as those authorized to undertake investigations and searches, where such a possibility exists. If such a possibility does not exist, the authors of the request must provide an explanation.

\* Second reissue for technical reasons (19 October 2023).

\*\* Adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session (12 April–7 May 2021).

<sup>1</sup> A list of the States parties to the Convention is available at  
[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CED&Lang=en](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CED&Lang=en).



9. Copies of supporting documentation relating to all the steps taken before national authorities should be attached. If such copies cannot be provided because of time constraints upon submission of the request, a detailed account of the steps taken will be sufficient. The Committee may, however, request a copy of relevant documentation at a subsequent stage of the procedure.

10. A request for urgent action with regard to the same disappearance must not have already been registered by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, a mechanism of the Human Rights Council.

#### **Interim measures of protection**

11. If the authors of the request for urgent action believe that there is a risk of irreparable damage, the Committee may request the State party to take interim measures to protect any of the following:

- (a) The relatives of the disappeared persons and their representatives or counsel;
- (b) The authors of the request for urgent action;
- (c) Witnesses to the disappearance;
- (d) All persons participating in searches or investigations;
- (e) Any elements or pieces of evidence that could aid efforts to locate the disappeared persons.

12. The authors may ask the Committee to transmit to the State party a request for interim measures:

- (a) In the initial request for urgent action;
- (b) At any time after submission of the request for urgent action, while the procedure is ongoing.

#### **Recommendations for authors of requests for urgent action**

13. The present guidelines are not compulsory. Their aim is to provide guidance to ensure that authors of requests for urgent action provide all the information relevant to the case. Even if the authors of a request are unable to reply to any of the points listed in the form below, the request will still be registered. Authors are nonetheless encouraged to complete the form as fully as possible.

14. Authors of requests are invited:

- (a) To provide the full names of any institutions referred to, such as security forces, government agencies or other bodies; abbreviations should not be used;
- (b) To complete the form using a computer, and submit the requests in Microsoft Word format; if this is not possible, the form should be completed by hand in block capitals.

15. Requests may be submitted in any of the working languages of the secretariat of the Committee (Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish). Annexes will be considered only if they are submitted in one of these languages (an unofficial translation will suffice).

16. Further information on the Convention and the Committee's rules of procedure is available on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Where to send requests for urgent action**

17. **By email:** [ohchr-ced-ua@un.org](mailto:ohchr-ced-ua@un.org)

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/ced/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/ced/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx).

18. **By post:**

Committee on Enforced Disappearances  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
United Nations Office at Geneva  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

## Committee on Enforced Disappearances

### Form for the submission of a request for urgent action

The following form provides guidance for persons wishing to submit a request for urgent action to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, in accordance with article 30 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, with the aim of requesting the State party to take immediate action to search for, find and protect a disappeared person.

To the extent possible, please provide information on each of the items listed below. Please replace the dotted lines in each section with the corresponding text.

**1. State party concerned: .....**

**2. Person(s) or organization requesting the urgent action:**

2.1 Family name(s): .....

First name(s): .....

OR Name of organization: .....

2.2 Contact information:

Address: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

2.3 Relationship to the disappeared person: .....

**3. Alleged victim(s)**

**Please provide the following information for each of the alleged victims on whose behalf the request for urgent action is being submitted:**

3.1 Family name(s): .....

3.2 First name(s): .....

3.3 For names in Arabic, Chinese or Russian, please also provide the full name of the victim(s) as spelled in the original language:

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3.4 If necessary, pseudonyms (aliases, nicknames or other names by which the person is known): .....

3.5 Nationality or nationalities: .....

3.6 Sex/gender: M ☐ F ☐ Other: .....

3.7 Date of birth: .....

3.8 Was the victim under 18 years of age at the time of disappearance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

3.9 Place and country of birth: .....

3.10 Mother's name (if known):

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3.11 Father's name (if known):

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## 3.12 Contact information of relatives (if available):

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

## 3.13 Last known contact information:

Usual address: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

## 3.14 Identity document (passport, national identity document, voter's card or other means of identification): please specify the number of the identity document and provide a copy if available:

Country and place of issue: .....

## 3.15 Marital status:

Single ☐ Married ☐ Consensual union ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐

## 3.16 Name of spouse/partner (optional): .....

3.17 Does the victim have any children? Yes ☐ No ☐

If so:

Number of children: .....

Ages of children: .....

3.18 Does the victim have any other dependents? Yes ☐ No ☐

If so:

Dependent's name and relationship to victim: .....

Reason for dependence: .....

## 3.19 Was the victim pregnant when she disappeared?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, approximately how many months pregnant was she at the time of her disappearance? .....

## 3.20 If deemed relevant, please indicate whether the victim belongs to any groups (for example, indigenous peoples, national minorities, political parties or movements, trade unions, religious groups, human rights groups, non-governmental organizations or lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex community)

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## 3.21 If deemed relevant, please indicate whether the victim has a disability:

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please give details: .....

## 3.22 Employment at the time of disappearance: .....

## 3.23 Other relevant activities at the time of disappearance: .....

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#### 4. Description of the facts of the case

4.2 Place of disappearance (please be as specific as possible, indicating the street, city and province): .....

[illegible]

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 (b) Please specify whether the alleged perpetrators of the disappearance are believed to belong to or have connections with the authorities of the State party. In particular, please specify whether the alleged perpetrators are believed to have acted with the support or approval of the State party, and if so, explain the reason for this belief: .....

**5. Reporting of the disappearance to the competent bodies of the State party concerned, such as those authorized to undertake investigations and searches, where such a possibility exists:**

5.1 Please indicate the competent authorities or institutions of the State party to which the disappearance has been reported, when it was reported, and by whom:

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5.2 Please indicate the action taken by the competent authorities or institutions of the State party following the reporting of the disappearance:

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5.3 Please attach copies of any relevant documentation, such as complaints submitted to, replies received from or decisions taken by the authorities to which the disappearance was reported. Please list below the copies of documents attached. **Do not send originals.**

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5.4 If it has not been possible to report the disappearance to authorities of the State party that are competent to undertake an investigation or to search for disappeared persons, please explain why:

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## 6. Request for interim measures of protection

6.1 Have relatives of the disappeared person(s) or their representatives, witnesses to the disappearance or any persons participating in the search or investigation been subject to threats or pressure relating to the disappearance of the person(s) on whose behalf this request for urgent action is being submitted?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6.2 If so, would you like the Committee to request the State party to take interim measures of protection to avoid irreparable harm to these persons?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6.3 If so, please provide the following information:

(a) Person(s) for whom interim measures of protection are being requested (name(s) and connection with the case in question): .....

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(b) Description of the risk of irreparable harm faced by the above person(s) (for example, pressure, acts of intimidation or reprisal): .....

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(c) Protection measures that could be taken by the State party to avoid this risk:

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6.4 Is there a risk of irreparable damage to any elements or pieces of evidence relating to the case that could aid efforts to locate the disappeared person(s)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6.5 If so, please provide the following information:

(a) Element(s) for which protection measures are being requested (description and location): .....

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(b) Description of the risk of irreparable damage (for example, destruction, manipulation or transformation): .....

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(c) Protection measures that could be taken by the State party to avoid this risk:

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## 7. Other international procedures

7.1 Has the same matter been submitted under another procedure of international investigation or settlement?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7.2 If so, please indicate:

(a) The body or bodies to which the case has been submitted: .....

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(b) The type of procedure involved: .....

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(c) Date of submission: .....

(d) Measures adopted: .....

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(e) Results: .....

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7.3 Please attach copies of any relevant documentation. Please list below the copies of documents attached.

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## 8. Place, date and signature of the person submitting the request

8.1 Place and date: .....

8.2 Signature (an electronic signature is sufficient; in the event that the person submitting the request is unable to provide a signature, please explain why):

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