



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

Distr.: General

19 April 2022

Original: English

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## Committee on Enforced Disappearances

### Twenty-second session

#### Summary record (partial)\* of the 401st meeting\*\*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 8 April 2022, at 5 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Villa Quintana

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Closure of the session

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\* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

\*\* No summary record was issued for the 400th meeting.

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*The discussion covered in the summary record began at 5.20 p.m.*

### **Closure of the session**

1. **The Chair** said that the Committee's twenty-second session had taken place at a time when thousands of persons in Ukraine were fleeing the war, searching for their relatives or mourning their dead. At the opening of the session, the Committee had paid tribute to all the victims of the serious cases of enforced disappearance occurring in the country.
2. In November 2021, the Committee had travelled to Mexico for its first ever visit to a State party under article 33 of the Convention. The dialogue with State authorities, victims and civil society organizations, which had clearly shown the extent of enforced disappearance in the country, would remain etched in the delegation's memories. The Committee was counting on the State party to implement the recommendations in its report to help victims.
3. The Committee had registered 1,491 requests for urgent action to date. While it remained concerned about some ongoing trends, including a lack of coordination between search and investigation procedures and challenges to the effective participation of relatives in the search and investigation, prompt response to such requests had led to 400 persons being found alive. All stakeholders should be aware and disseminate knowledge of the life-saving potential of the procedure.
4. At its twenty-third session, the Committee would consider the reports of Czechia and Mali under article 29 (1) and the report of Uruguay under article 29 (4) of the Convention and would adopt lists of issues in respect of Morocco and Ukraine. In the second half of 2022, the Committee planned to visit Iraq to gain a better understanding of the situation there and work with other stakeholders to identify avenues for progress towards the eradication of enforced disappearance.
5. With the recent ratification of the Convention by Luxembourg, the number of States parties had increased to 68. Other States across the world were encouraged to express their commitment to combating enforced disappearance by ratifying the Convention. States parties that had not yet submitted their initial reports were invited to make use of the training guide launched at the start of the current session, which would shortly be translated into French and Spanish.
6. The Committee needed an additional annual session to be able to reduce the backlog of State party reports. The support of States parties was vital to ensure that the treaty body strengthening process delivered the changes necessary to provide the Committee with sufficient resources to uphold the Convention and save lives.
7. The Committee would never tire of repeating that enforced disappearance was a despicable practice, which must be stamped out using all measures at its disposal. Impunity for enforced disappearance must be urgently combated through effective action to be taken by States. The Committee must continue its dedicated work to support victims in their fight for truth, justice, redress and guarantees of non-repetition.
8. **Mr. Albán-Alencastro** (Rapporteur) said that the Committee's twenty-second session had been held in Geneva between 28 March and 8 April 2022. At the first meeting of the session, the Committee had paid tribute to victims of enforced disappearance, shown a video on the visit to Mexico carried out in November 2021 and launched a training guide on reporting under the Convention aimed at States parties.
9. The Committee had examined the reports submitted by Greece and the Niger under article 29 (1) of the Convention and had subsequently adopted its concluding observations. During the session, the Committee had adopted a report on its visit to Mexico under article 33 of the Convention, lists of issues relating to the reports submitted by Cambodia, the Gambia and Nigeria under article 29 (1) of the Convention, a report on follow-up to concluding observations, the Committee's annual report to the General Assembly and the draft agenda for the twenty-third session.
10. It had held meetings to identify potential avenues for future cooperation with several States parties to the Convention, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Committee on the

Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva. The Committee had also held discussions on its working methods, specifically on its powers under article 29 (4) of the Convention, the scope of article 16 (1) of the Convention on non-refoulement, strategies for increasing the number of States parties to the Convention, interaction with regional human rights mechanisms, the urgent action mechanism, possible amendments to the Committee's rules of procedure, a future visit to Iraq and the backlog of State party reports.

11. The Committee had adopted a concept note on a future general comment on enforced disappearance in the context of migration and decided to hold a related day of general discussion at its twenty-third session. Lastly, it had discussed a draft joint statement on a human rights-based approach to illegal intercountry adoptions and a draft statement on enforced disappearance and non-State actors.

12. After the customary exchange of courtesies, **the Chair** declared the twenty-second session of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances closed.

*The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.*