



International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

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Committee on Enforced Disappearances Twenty-first session

Summary record (partial)* of the 381st meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 24 September 2021, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Villa Quintana

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Closure of the session

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

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The discussion covered in the summary record began at 5.30 p.m.

Closure of the session

1. **The Chair** invited Mr. Albán-Alencastro to present the Committee's informal report on the activities carried out at its twenty-first session.
2. **Mr. Albán-Alencastro** (Rapporteur) said that the Committee's twenty-first session had taken place in person between 13 and 24 September 2021.
3. At the first meeting of the session, the newly elected members of the Committee, Ms. Suela Janina and himself had made their solemn declaration. The Committee had also paid tribute to victims of enforced disappearance and had heard the testimony of Ms. Amina Masood Janjua, the wife of a victim of enforced disappearance in Pakistan. The outgoing Chair, Mr. Mohammed Ayat, had announced the publication of a report entitled *The work of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances: Achievements and jurisprudence ten years after the entry into force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance*, which had been written by Ms. María Clara Galvis Patiño, a former member of the Committee. The members of the Bureau for the 2021–2023 term had also been elected.
4. Over the course of the session, the Committee had held interactive dialogues with Brazil and Panama and had proceeded to adopt concluding observations on the initial reports submitted by those States parties under article 29 (1) of the Convention. It had also held follow-up dialogues with France and Spain on the basis of additional information submitted under article 29 (4) of the Convention. Lastly, lists of issues had been adopted in respect of three States parties – Costa Rica, Mali and Mauritania – whose initial reports would be reviewed by the Committee at future sessions.
5. The Committee had held productive joint meetings with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and had met with civil society organizations and States Members of the United Nations. At its meeting with States Members, the Committee had welcomed the participation of Ethiopia, a country that was not a signatory to the Convention but that had nonetheless taken the opportunity to declare its commitment to fighting against enforced disappearance.
6. The Committee had also held internal discussions related to its working methods, on subjects such as its approach to the additional information procedure under article 29 (4) of the Convention, the procedure for carrying out visits to States parties, the urgent action procedure, the analysis of information on alleged systematic or generalized practices of enforced disappearance and the possibility of amending its rules of procedure (CED/C/1). It had discussed the assignment of different rapporteur functions within the Committee and the creation of working groups to examine the above-mentioned, and other, topics. The matter of the Committee's approach to the additional information procedure under article 29 (4) of the Convention had been singled out as a priority subject for discussion at forthcoming sessions. Lastly, the Committee had decided to initiate preparations for the future adoption of a general comment on enforced disappearance in the context of migration and a statement on non-State actors and enforced disappearance.
7. **The Chair** said that she wished to thank everyone who had participated in and contributed to the organization of the Committee's twenty-first session. The session had presented the Committee with its first opportunity to meet in person since the start of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The Committee had also welcomed the presence at its meetings of a number of State party representatives. However, most meetings had been held in a hybrid format and many participants had spoken via video link. Although the dialogues with States parties held in that format had run smoothly and been productive, direct interaction remained an essential element of the Committee's work and it looked forward to resuming face-to-face meetings at the earliest opportunity.
8. In a general sense, the discussions held during the session had underlined how important it was for the Committee to continue to work closely with States parties and civil society organizations to prevent enforced disappearance and fight impunity. In that regard,

she particularly welcomed the efforts made by victims' organizations and civil society organizations in Spain and Brazil to meet with the Committee and to provide it with background information ahead of its interactive dialogues with those States parties. The Committee had also been encouraged by the participation of representatives from no fewer than 53 organizations around the world in its meeting with civil society organizations.

9. In addition to the activities already outlined by Mr. Albán-Alencastro, the Committee had adopted its report on requests for urgent action during the session. The number of requests submitted under article 30 of the Convention currently stood at 1,413. It took a significant amount of time and effort to process each request; she wished to call on Member States to ensure that the Committee had the material and financial resources necessary to carry out that work.

10. Since its previous session, the Committee had welcomed the news that Mexico had accepted its request to visit the country. Preparatory work for the visit was already under way. Argentina and France had also launched a third campaign to promote the ratification of the Convention. The Committee had set itself a target of securing 100 ratifications by the year 2025. In that regard, the Committee welcomed the recent accession to the Convention by the Sudan and the statement by the Republic of Korea to the effect that it would soon ratify the treaty.

11. To fulfil its mandate effectively, the Committee needed to strengthen its partnerships with other bodies, both within and outside the United Nations system. In that spirit, the Committee's meetings with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions had provided valuable opportunities to exchange ideas and identify areas for future collaboration. Furthermore, at a joint meeting, the Committee and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had resumed discussions about the drafting of a road map for future cooperation between the two bodies. It was the first time that the Committee had undertaken such an initiative with one of its regional partners. Enforced disappearance was a scourge that affected hundreds of thousands of people all over the world. It was therefore vital that stakeholders at all levels worked together to prevent and eradicate it.

12. After the customary exchange of courtesies, she declared the twenty-first session of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances closed.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.