



International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

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Committee on Enforced Disappearances

Additional information submitted by Uruguay under article 29 (4) of the Convention*, **

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Information on follow-up to the concluding observations (CED/C/URY/OAI/1)

1. In accordance with article 29 (4) of the Convention, the Government of Uruguay submits the information requested regarding the adoption of a national policy on enforced disappearance that takes into account the recommendations made in paragraphs 5, 17, 19 and 21 of the concluding observations, concerning investigations, searches and reparations.

Information relating to paragraph 5

2. In terms of the adoption of legislative measures, there is indeed significant variance between the minimum and maximum penalties provided for under both the Criminal Code (from 2 to 30 years) and Act No. 18.026 (from 2 to 25 years). The maximum sentence that may be imposed in the country is 30 years. It should be noted, however, that, this range allows the judge to assess the seriousness of the conduct and, on the basis of the prosecutor's request in the case, impose the maximum penalty in the most serious cases, as reflected in the information provided below on pending and resolved cases.

3. There are no specific procedures under national legislation for the annulment of adoptions or placements connected to cases of enforced disappearance. If such cases were to arise, petitions for review could be filed, as a matter of general law, with the Supreme Court of Justice. This mechanism is provided for under article 381 and the following articles of the General Code of Procedure, which state that a final appealable judgment may be reviewed, among other grounds, when it has resulted from violence, intimidation or fraud. This wording allows for the interpretation that, while not referring to them explicitly, national legislation contains the necessary means for decisions regarding the adoption of a minor to be revoked if evidence relating to an enforced disappearance were to emerge.

Information relating to paragraph 17 (a)

4. In all of the cases of enforced disappearance but five, in which it has not yet been possible to bring charges, the persons in question have been convicted, are being prosecuted or are facing charges – in other words, a request for the institution of proceedings is pending decision.

Information relating to paragraph 17 (b)

5. In most of the cases involving investigations into enforced disappearances, the lengths of the sentences imposed were among the maximum available.

6. A list of the persons convicted of enforced disappearance is provided (although in some cases the offense is classified as highly aggravated homicide).

- Unique Case Files No. 2-43332/2005 and No. 98-247/2006, relating to the enforced disappearance in Buenos Aires of a group of political activists: nine former police and army officers were convicted of 28 counts of the offence of highly aggravated homicide and sentenced to 15 to 25 years' imprisonment.
- The persons convicted were José Nino Gavazzo, Ernesto Ramas Pereira, Luis Maurente Mata, Gilberto Vazquez Bissio, José Ricardo Arab Fernandez, Jorge Silveira Quesada, Ricardo Medina Blanco, José Felipe Sande Lima and Ernesto Soca Prado. Final judgment.
- Unique Case File No. 1-608/2003: former civilian President of the Republic Juan María Bordaberry was prosecuted for the offence of undermining the Constitution, in addition to nine counts of the serious offence of enforced disappearance and two counts of the serious offence of political murder. The defendant died during the trial.
- Unique Case File No. 2-20415/2007: General Gregorio Conrado Alvarez, former military President under the dictatorship, was convicted of 37 counts of highly

aggravated homicide and sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment. Juan Carlos Larcebeau, a former navy officer, was also sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment in the same case. Final judgment.

- Unique Case File No. 2-26768/2005, relating to the actions of the "Death Squad" (in particular, the enforced disappearance of Hector Castagnetto): two former police officers, Nelson Bardecio Marzoa and Pedro Freitas, were convicted of the offence of highly aggravated homicide and sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 15 years and 6 months. Final judgment.
- Unique Case File No. 88-97/2010, relating to the enforced disappearance of Ubagesner Chavez Sosa: two former air force officers, Enrique Ribero Ugartemendia and José Uruguay Araujo Umpierrez, were sentenced to 17 and 19 years' imprisonment for highly aggravated homicide. Final judgment.
- Unique Case File No. 90-10462/2002, relating to the enforced disappearance of María Claudia García de Gelman: four former army officers and a former police officer were convicted of highly aggravated homicide, as co-perpetrators, and sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment. The persons convicted were José Nino Gavazzo, Gilberto Vazquez Bisio, José Ricardo Arab, Jorge Silveira Quesada and Ricardo Medina Blanco. Final judgment.
- Unique Case File No. 87-289/1985, relating to the disappearance of Maestro Julio Castro: José Nino Gavazzo was convicted of the offence of highly aggravated homicide, as a co-perpetrator, and sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment. Final judgment.
- Unique Case File No. 91-250/2011: in judgment No. 33/2022 of 8 December 2022, Criminal Court No. 27 convicted Miguel Antonio Sofía Abeleira of the offence of especially aggravated criminal association, as the perpetrator, in addition to the offence of highly aggravated homicide, as co-perpetrator, and sentenced him to 25 years' imprisonment.
- In judgment No. 2/2024 of 1 February 2024, Criminal Court of Appeals No. 3 affirmed the judgment of the lower court but reduced the sentence to 17 years' imprisonment.
- Unique Case File No. 97-10149/1985: Criminal Court No. 27, in judgment No. 26/2022 of 20 September 2022, convicted Jorge Silveira Quesada and Ernesto Avelino Ramas, as criminally responsible perpetrators, of six counts of the offence of deprivation of liberty, four counts of the offence of abuse of authority against prisoners and, for the same acts, four counts of serious injury, as co-perpetrators, in addition to the offence of enforced disappearance, as perpetrators, the offence of deprivation of liberty, as perpetrators, and the offence of abuse of authority against prisoners and, for the same acts, the offence of serious injury, as co-perpetrators, and sentenced each to 25 years' imprisonment. Criminal Court of Appeals No. 2 affirmed the ruling in judgment No. 42/2023 of 9 August 2023 – solely with respect to Jorge Silveira Quesada, as Ernesto Ramas had died following the decision of the lower court – and found that that the punishment appropriately reflected the significance of the events, the concurrent incidental circumstances and the perpetrator's criminal personality and that not even a slight reduction of the sentence was warranted. The Supreme Court of Justice then, in judgment No. 768/2024 of 27 August 2024, dismissed an appeal filed in cassation.
- Unique Case File No. 547-17/2021: Criminal Court of First Instance No. 27, in judgment No. 12/2023 of 23 June 2023, convicted Eduardo Ferro Bizzozero, as criminally responsible co-perpetrator, of the offence of enforced disappearance and sentenced him to 21 years' imprisonment, reduced by the amount of time he had spent in administrative detention in connection with extradition proceedings and in pretrial detention. Criminal Court of Appeals No. 2 affirmed the ruling at first instance in judgment No. 21/2024 of 22 May 2024, and, in judgment No. 345/2025 of 20 March 2025, the Supreme Court of Justice dismissed the appeal in cassation that had been filed.

7. In addition, it should be noted that there are currently two pending cases that involve charges of the offence in question.

8. In interlocutory decision No. 953/2022 of 11 August 2022, relating to Unique Case File No. 2-36494/2021, Criminal Court of First Instance No. 31 instituted criminal proceedings against José Ricardo Arab as co-perpetrator of 12 counts of the offence of highly aggravated homicide, two counts of the offence of enforced disappearance, two counts of the offence of suppression or usurpation of civil status and multiple counts of the offences of deprivation of liberty, abuse of authority against prisoners, serious injury and robbery. In judgment No. 741/2022 of 3 November 2022, Criminal Court of Appeals No. 2 affirmed the order instituting proceedings.

9. Recently, with respect to Unique Case File No. 87-139/2015, Criminal Court of First Instance No. 23 ordered the institution of proceedings against Jorge Silveira Quesada, Rudyard Raul Scioscia Soba and Ruben Atilio Sosa Tejera as co-perpetrators of an enforced disappearance, in judgment No. 844/2025 of 30 July 2025.

Information relating to paragraph 17 (c)

10. The Supreme Court of Justice has twice concurred with the classification of an offence by the trial and criminal appellate courts as enforced disappearance.

11. Without prejudice to the foregoing, proceedings were instituted under a recent interlocutory judgment for the offence of enforced disappearance.

12. This occurred with respect to Unique Case File No. 87-139/2015, where Criminal Court No. 23, in judgment No. 844/2025 of 30 July 2025, instituted proceedings against Jorge Silveira Quesada, Rudyard Raul Scioscia Soba and Ruben Atilio Sosa Tejera as co-perpetrators of the enforced disappearance of the teacher Elena Quinteros.

13. It is to be expected that, going forward, there will be more prosecutions and convictions for the offence of enforced disappearance, since the special prosecutor's office is seeking the institution of proceedings or charging in accordance with article 21 of Act No. 18.026.

Information relating to paragraph 17 (d)

14. The special prosecutor's office, in accordance with Act No. 19.822, which entrusts the search for detained and disappeared persons to the National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsman, is obligated to collaborate with the National Human Rights Institution in the search for disappeared detainees.

15. Joint meetings are frequently held with senior officials of the Institution, the investigators under its supervision, the Forensic Anthropology Investigation Team and the organization Madres y Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos for the purpose of sharing information obtained by the special prosecutor's office and exploring joint strategies.

Information relating to paragraph 17 (e)

16. It should be noted that the special prosecutor's office (within the larger framework of the Attorney General's Office) has the necessary human resources to be able to perform its functions efficiently. It also has access to all the logistical support provided by the Attorney General's Office, enabling it to act effectively in all cases throughout the country.

Information relating to paragraph 19

17. The team of archivists of the Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past has been reinforced in order to expedite the digitization and description of documents. In addition, new state-of-the-art scanners with a high-quality optical character recognition system have been acquired to optimize the digitization and subsequent processing of documents.

18. Since the adoption of Act No. 19.822, the Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past has made eight deliveries of documentation to the National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsman, with a total of approximately 19 terabytes of information. It should be noted that the archive managed by the Secretariat is a “living archive” to which documents are constantly being added, which means that there is an ongoing process of updating and processing documents.

19. In line with the foregoing, it should be noted that, in July, the Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past returned to the historical archives of the National Directorate for Information and Intelligence (the former National Directorate for Information and Intelligence) in order to complete the digitization and full description of this repository of police intelligence.

20. Among the objectives set for the current five-year period is a renewed commitment to reducing delays in the delivery of digitized and described documents to the National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsman, as required under the laws in force.

21. It should be noted that, at joint meetings with the stakeholders involved – the National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Humanity, the organization Madres y Familiares de Uruguayos Detenidos Desaparecidos and the archiving team of the Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past – it was agreed to make partial deliveries by thematic document groups in order to streamline processes, contribute to the search for disappeared detainees and help advance the court cases that remain open.

22. Steps are being taken for the Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past to soon have access to other archives under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, as it did from 2005 to 2020, so that it can continue expanding and consolidating the repository of documents relating to the recent past. This will be possible with the signing of an agreement between the University of the Republic and the Office of the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay/Human Rights Secretariat for the Recent Past, under which the historical investigations team will be re-established and the archiving team reinforced.

23. Within the judicial branch, the Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files is responsible for the custody, organization and oversight of case files and documents from the military justice system.

24. In this context, the Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files has developed a process for digitizing case files from the military justice system and records seized in connection with cases involving crimes against humanity so as to preserve the information and properly conserve the original documents.

25. At the same time, progress was made in the digitization of criminal case files and associated files, both pending and archived, relating to cases of crimes against humanity. Such digitization is carried out following a request made by one of the various courts with jurisdiction in the matter, through the relevant applications for official digital records.

26. To date, a total of 24 cases have been digitized (some of them partially), of which five relate to investigations into enforced disappearances – although they have not necessarily been classified under that offence.

27. Once digitized, the case files are sent to the court handling the matter, together with the corresponding official digital records. The official digital records then remain with the Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files, creating a pool of resources available to the courts of first instance with jurisdiction in criminal matters for use in the cases that they handle, the courts of first instance responsible for enforcement and oversight, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes against Humanity, the National Human Rights Institution and even to researchers working on the subject.

28. Furthermore, the Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files provides information in response to potential requests from the commissions under Reparations Acts No. 18.033 and No. 18.596.

29. It should be noted that the advances in the digital processing and storage of case files, archives and documents have made it easier to comply with requests for judicial assistance

from domestic and foreign courts and have also led to improved access to and circulation of such records.

30. Specifically, with respect to the National Human Rights Institution, the judiciary helps support searches for disappeared persons by providing necessary information and documentation.

31. The Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files has provided the Institution with access to case files from the military justice system, records seized in connection with criminal cases involving crimes against humanity and official digital records from current court cases involving such crimes.

32. In line with the foregoing and in compliance with its duty to collaborate with the Institution, the Directorate General for Administrative Services for the Judiciary, in decision No. 713/2025 of 13 May 2025, authorized the Judicial Archive of Military Justice Case Files, in general terms, to request that courts of first instance throughout the country with jurisdiction in the matter submit closed case files, whenever requested by the investigation team of the Institution's section for searches for disappeared detainees, so that they may be digitized and made available.

33. The following information was thus provided to the Institution for the period 2021–2025:

- Official digital records from military justice case files: 5
- Documents from the Castiglioni file:
 - 338 digitized paper documents
 - 2,159 digital documents from 331 diskettes
- Documents from the Lezama file: 139
- Documents from the Gavazzo file: 108
- Official digital records of cases involving crimes against humanity: 5
- Access provided to case files on various matters: 11

Information relating to paragraph 21

34. Both Act No. 18.033 (on social security, private employment, dismissals and receipt of the special compensatory pension) and Act No. 18.596 (on reparation to victims of unlawful acts by the State in the period between 13 June 1968 and 28 February 1985), are important measures for the recognition of victims and are intended to remedy the harm suffered, although significant lacunae and obstacles remain, affecting victims' right to full reparation.

35. The Government's resolve to develop avenues for reparation for those who suffered under the repressive actions of the State apparatus, through so-called State terrorism, has been clear since parliamentary debate on the bills first began. This point should be noted, and it should also be emphasized that this resolve, framed within the country's international obligations, is what enabled the creation of an avenue that has led to progress on the matter at hand.

36. The Government has embarked on a process of analysis to resolve the incompatibilities encountered with a view to guaranteeing the exercise of duly acquired rights, while also addressing the reparations – not solely financial – for which the State is responsible.

37. This entails a commitment on the part of the State to making progress in, among other things, educational policies that focus on the serious human rights violations that occurred between 1968 and 1985, the establishment of new memorial sites and measures to prevent vandalism of both these sites and the ones that already exist.