

Committee on Enforced Disappearances

Newsletter n°27 – December 2023

New Developments

[Urgent Actions – New email address!](#)

Effective 1 October 2023, Urgent Action requests and related submissions must be directed to the new dedicated email address:

ohchr-ced-ua@un.org

Understanding Urgent Actions

Urgent Actions allow the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to intervene when informed of the disappearance of a person by requesting the State party concerned to take immediate action to search for a disappeared person, investigate his or her alleged disappearance and determine the person's fate and whereabouts. This procedure applies to all States parties to the Convention.

Requests for urgent action can be submitted by the relatives of the disappeared person or their legal representatives, their counsel or anyone authorized by them, as well as by any person with a legitimate interest.

This procedure has had a significant impact: as at 18 December 2023, 1671 requests for urgent action have been registered. Out of these cases, 475 disappeared persons have been located, 445 of whom alive.

Other advantages of this procedure include:

- Raise the issue at the international level, moving from a bilateral relationship between victims and the State to a tripartite relationship with the support of the Committee.
- Inform the State party concerned of cases of which the competent authorities are unaware, and provide information and guidance on the measures they should take to search for the disappeared person and investigate his or her disappearance and protect the victims, in compliance with the Convention.
- To make cases of enforced disappearance visible at the international level.

The Committee is competent if:

- The alleged disappearance started after the entry into force of the Convention (23/12/2010);
- It took place on the territory of a State party to the Convention; or
- It was perpetrated by agents of a State party to the Convention, or with its authorisation, support or acquiescence;
- In principle, the Committee is also competent when the disappeared person is a national of a State party.

Once an urgent action is initiated, the Committee guides the State with specific recommendations, overseeing search operations, investigations, and victim assistance until the disappeared person is located. Throughout the procedure, communication is maintained between the Committee, State authorities, and authors of the urgent action request.

[The format for the submission of Urgent Action requests](#) to the CED is available as a guide to submit a case of disappearance to the attention of the Committee.

General Comment on Enforced Disappearances in the context of Migration

The final version of CED first general comment related to “Enforced disappearances in the context of migration” is now available in [all UN languages](#) and can be accessed [here](#).

Soon to come CED 26th Session



The Committee on Enforced Disappearances will hold **its 26th session from the 19 February to 01 March 2024 in Geneva**. It will review the first report of [Cambodia](#), and the reports on additional information of [Burkina Faso](#) and [Honduras](#).

All dialogues will be held in public meetings. You can follow them online at [UN TV](#).

Reminder: Written contributions and requests for oral briefings are still open. Find out more information in the blue box below.

As indicated on the [webpage of the session](#), the agenda includes the following activities (Geneva time):

Public Meetings

1. [Opening of the Session](#)

Monday, 19th February, 10-11am

Declaration of the representative of the UN Secretary General, declaration of the Chair of the Committee, and space of tribute for victims of enforced disappearances (live testimony soon to be announced).

2. [Examination of first report \(Art. 29\(1\) of the Convention\)](#)

Dialogue with Cambodia on their [first report](#)

- Part 1: **Monday 19 February, 3 - 6 pm**
- Part 2: **Tuesday 20 February, 10 am - 1 pm**

3. Examination of the reports on Additional Information (Art. 29(4) of the Convention)

Dialogue with Burkina Faso on their [report on additional information](#)

- Part 1: **Tuesday 20 February, 3 - 6 pm**
- Part 2: **Wednesday 21 February, 10 am - 1 pm**

Dialogue with Honduras on their [report on additional information](#)

- **Monday 26 February, 3 – 6 pm**

4. Closing of the Session

Friday, 1st March, 5 – 6pm

Closed Meetings

In closed meetings, the Committee will carry out the following activities:

1. Meetings with **civil society representatives and NHRIs** of the States parties to be examined (Cambodia, Burkina Faso and Honduras).
2. Meetings with other States and civil society actors.
3. Meetings to address issues related to its **methods of work** and to its annual report to the UN General Assembly
4. Consideration or discussion of the following documents / issues:
 - **Lists of Issues:** Malawi
 - **List of Issues in absence of a report:** Belize
 - Project of Joint Statement with the WGEID on the notion of short-term enforced disappearance
 - Project on “enforced disappearances and women” (initial reflection on the format and issues to be addressed).

Contributions by Victims, CSOs, and NHRIs to the Review of State Parties at the 26th Session

The participation of victims, civil society organisations, and National Human Rights Institutions in this process is key and particularly welcome.

Contributions can be made through written or oral briefings. All contributions have the following **deadlines**:

- **List of Issues:**
Belize and Malawi: written contributions: **deadline extended until 10 January 2024**
- **Concluding Observations / Dialogues with State Parties:**
Burkina Faso, Cambodia and Honduras: submission of written contributions and requests for oral briefings: **10 January 2024**

All written contributions must be submitted within the indicated deadline at the following email address: ohchr-ced@un.org

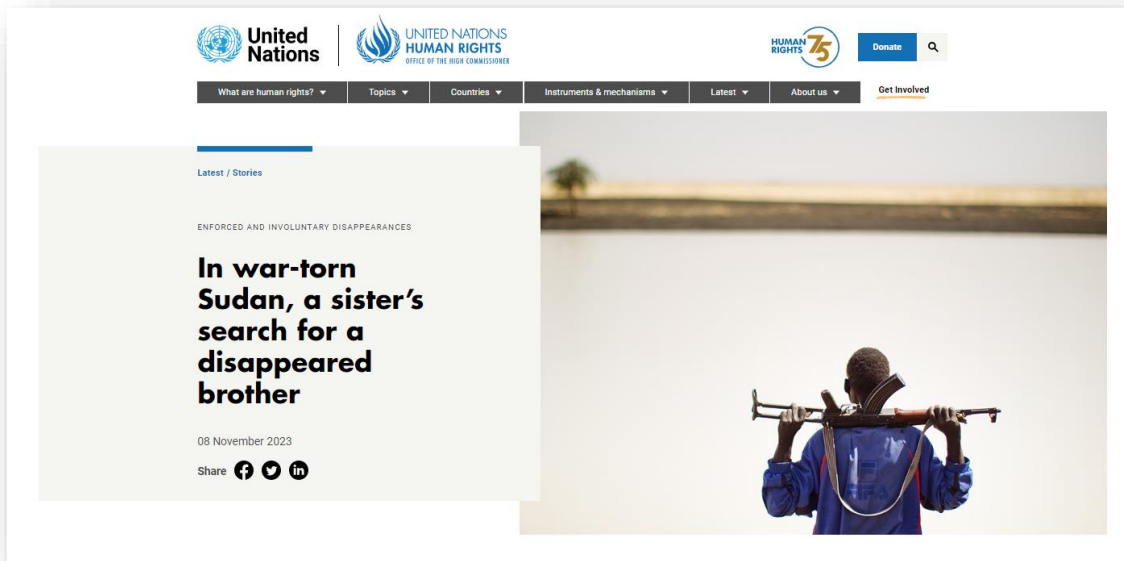
For further information on ways to contribute and how to register to attend the session, please consult the [Information note for Victims, CSOs, and NHRIs](#) which is available on the Committee’s webpage. The document is available in English, French and Spanish.

CED Annual Report to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly

On 16 October 2023, the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Juan Pablo Albán Alencastro, presented the CED annual report to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly. The Rapporteur's statement and exchange with member States can be [viewed online](#). You can read the [Press Release here](#).

Other Stories

Explore the Heart-Wrenching Tale from War-Torn Sudan: at the opening of its 25th session, the Committee had the honour to receive the testimony of Asma, whose brother was disappeared in Sudan's tumultuous landscape. This story sheds light on the challenges faced by families victims of enforced disappearances. Discover more at the following link: [In War-Torn Sudan: A Sisters' Search for a Disappeared Brother - OHCHR Story](#)



The Guide on the Ratification of the Convention is now available in Spanish and French!

[The Practical Guide on "Becoming a Party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance"](#) aims to assist States as they move towards becoming parties to the Convention for the Protection of all Persons against Enforced Disappearance by providing answers to commonly raised questions, and a toolkit to encourage and support States in joining the community of parties committed to prevent and eradicate enforced disappearances and fight against the impunity of this heinous crime. It is now available in [English, French and Spanish](#)

UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture Grant Applications

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UNVFVT) awards grants to victims of torture, civil society organizations, survivor-led associations, rehabilitation centres and public interest law firms. As of today, approximately 25% of the projects that receive a grant from the Fund are here to help and support victims of enforced disappearances. Supported services include social, psychological, medical, legal, and humanitarian aid.

The annual grant application period, running from **15 January to 01 March 2024**, offers a crucial opportunity for organizations to apply for funding to aid victims of enforced disappearance. For detailed information on the [application process](#) and [eligibility criteria](#), please visit the official [UNVFVT website](#).

