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Human Rights Council
Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Communications transmitted, cases examined, observations made and other activities conducted by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances*

136th session (28 April–2 May 2025)

I. Communications

1. The present report covers the activities of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances between 1 February 2025 and 2 May 2025.

2. During the reporting period, the Working Group transmitted 121 cases under its urgent procedure, to Algeria (1), El Salvador (63), Mozambique (1), Nicaragua (1), Pakistan (12), Rwanda (13), the Syrian Arab Republic (22) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (8).

3. At its 136th session, held in Bangkok from 28 April to 2 May 2025, the Working Group decided to transmit 74 newly reported cases of enforced disappearance, to Algeria (10), Argentina (1), Belarus (1), Colombia (1), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1), Egypt (5), El Salvador (3), Indonesia (1), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (7), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (1), Libya (2), Mauritania (2), Mozambique (1), Pakistan (1), the Philippines (2), Saudi Arabia (1), the Syrian Arab Republic (27), the United Arab Emirates (1) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (6).

4. The Working Group also decided to transmit three newly reported cases tantamount to enforced disappearance to the de facto authorities in the Syrian Arab Republic (2) and in Yemen (1).[1]

5. The Working Group clarified 63 cases, concerning Algeria (1), Argentina (3), Egypt (28), Nicaragua (2), Pakistan (15), the Russian Federation (10), Rwanda (1) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (3). A total of 42 cases, concerning Algeria (1), Argentina (3), Egypt (28), Pakistan (8) and the Russian Federation (2), were clarified on the basis of information provided by Governments. A total of 21 cases, concerning Nicaragua (2), Pakistan (7), the Russian Federation (8), Rwanda (1) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (3), were clarified on the basis of information provided by sources.

6. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group also clarified four cases tantamount to enforced disappearance attributed to the de facto authorities in Libya (1) and in the State of Palestine (3). The Working Group discontinued three cases that were

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[1] Cases transmitted to non-State actors do not in any way imply the expression of any opinion concerning the legal status of any territory, city or area or of its authorities by the Working Group or the United Nations.

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considered duplicates, concerning Mauritania (1), the Russian Federation (1) and Saudi Arabia (1).

7. During the reporting period, the Working Group transmitted 26 communications jointly with other special procedure mechanisms.[2] The communications consisted of five joint urgent appeals, sent to Belarus (1), El Salvador (1), the Syrian Arab Republic (1), the United Arab Emirates (1) and the United States of America (1); 17 joint allegation letters, sent to Argentina (1), Bhutan (1), China (2), Cameroon (1), Colombia (1), Egypt (1), France (1), Gabon (1), Guinea (1), Honduras (1), India (1), Mali (1), Mozambique (1), the Niger (1), Pakistan (1) and the Syrian Arab Republic (1); two joint other letters sent to Israel (1) and the United States (1); and two joint letters sent to other entities, namely Ejército de Liberación Nacional (1) and Frente 33 (1).

8. At its 136th session, the Working Group also reviewed and adopted four general allegations, concerning Bulgaria, Pakistan, the Sudan and Tunisia (see annex I).

9. The full list of press releases and statements issued by the Working Group during the reporting period is contained in annex II.

II. Other activities

10. During the session, the Working Group held discussions on internal matters, including thematic projects, country visits, academic visits and technical assistance it envisioned for States. The Working Group adopted its report on the country visit to Lithuania conducted from 20 to 26 November 2024[3] and the report on follow-up to the recommendations made in the context of its country visit to Cyprus (conducted from 5 to 12 April 2022).[4]

11. At the session, the Working Group discussed its thematic study on enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment, to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its sixtieth session. The Working Group had received 30 responses to its call for input – from two States, one national mechanism, 26 civil society organizations and one individual.[5] The Working Group also discussed its study on universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance, for which it had received a total of 40 written submissions in response to its call for input – from six States, one national human rights institution, 19 civil society organizations, including associations of relatives of disappeared persons, and 14 individuals (experts and scholars).[6]

12. During the session, the Working Group continued its discussion on future activities, including its forthcoming thematic study on enforced disappearances and memorialization processes, for which it plans to hold consultations and issue a call for inputs later in 2025.

13. The Working Group discussed its provision of technical assistance to States. The Working Group, at the request of the Directorate General for the Search for Disappeared Persons, of the Ministry of Justice of Peru, had issued an opinion with a view to assisting the Directorate General in assessing whether the draft directive regarding the search for persons who disappeared during the violence of 1980–2000 in Peru was aligned with the State's obligations pursuant to international law.[7] The Working Group also discussed its ongoing technical cooperation with Bangladesh and that country's Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance in preparation for a technical visit to Bangladesh in June 2025.

14. The Working Group held meetings with representatives of Thailand. It also met with a number of relatives of disappeared persons from several countries, lawyers, and

[2] All communications, and replies thereto, mentioned in the present report are available from https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/Tmsearch/TMDocuments.

[3] A/HRC/60/35/Add.1.

[4] A/HRC/60/35/Add.2.

[5] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-submissions-thematic-report-enforced-disappearances-context-defense-land. Confidential submissions have not been published.

[6] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-inputs-research-working-group-enforced-or-involuntary-disappearances-use. Confidential submissions have not been published.

[7] See communication PER 3/2025.

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representatives of non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions working on the issue of enforced disappearance in various countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The Working Group expressed its solidarity with and deep respect for the relatives of disappeared persons in the region and the organizations, human rights defenders and lawyers who supported those victims. It acknowledged the difficulties they faced and the increasingly hostile and dangerous environments in which they undertook their work towards truth, justice, reparation, memory and non-repetition.

15. As a side event to the session, the Working Group held a panel discussion, organized jointly with the International Federation for Human Rights and entitled "Responses to enforced disappearance in South-East Asia", at Thammasat University. The Working Group also conducted a guided visit of memorials at Thammasat University and of the Black May 1992 memorial.

16. A list of additional activities conducted by the Working Group during the reporting period is contained in annex III.

17. The Working Group will hold its 137th session in Geneva from 15 to 24 September 2025.

III. Information concerning enforced disappearances in States reviewed by the Working Group during the session[8]

Algeria

Urgent procedure

18. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Malik Riahi, who was reportedly abducted on 22 February 2025 from his home by members of the Directorate General of National Security.

Standard procedure

19. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted 10 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Belhocine Kebbal, who was abducted on 15 May 1993 from his home in Algiers by police officers;

(b) Ahmed Chatla, who was detained on 13 December 1993 in Sis Baraki town, Algiers, by State agents, and disappeared in 1994 from Serkadji prison in Algiers;

(c) H'mida Gouasima, who was abducted on 18 March 1994 from his home in Algiers by military officers;

(d) Azzedine Kennouche, who was abducted on 30 June 1994 from his home in Algiers by agents of the People's National Army;

(e) Mohamed Ghebbar, who was abducted on 3 March 1996 from his home in El Ramdania, Douera by State agents;

(f) Mohamed Doumi, who was abducted on 5 April 1995 from his workplace in Tipaza by police officers;

(g) Redha Korichi, who was abducted on 9 July 1995 in Algiers by State agents;

(h) An individual who was abducted in 1997 in Oran by State agents;

(i) Smain Diabi, who was abducted on 17 February 1997 in Algiers by State agents;

[8] All of the cases under the humanitarian mandate mentioned in the present report were reviewed by the Working Group in accordance with its methods of work (see A/HRC/WGEID/1).

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(j) Baya Guenoune, who was abducted on 15 December 1997 from her home in Algiers by State agents.

Clarification

20. On the basis of information previously provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to clarify one case, following the expiry of the period prescribed by the six-month rule. The case concerns Abdel Abdelmalek, who is reportedly in detention.[9]

Argentina

Standard procedure

21. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Jorge Cazorla Rech, who was allegedly arrested on 10 June 1976 at his home in Córdoba by agents of the third special operations section of the Intelligence Detachment of the Army of Argentina.

Clarification

22. On the basis of information previously provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to clarify three cases, following the expiry of the period prescribed by the six-month rule.[10] The cases concern:

(a) Rubén Benjamín Araujo, whose remains were exhumed and identified in the municipal cemetery of San Martín, in Buenos Aires;

(b) Daniel Esquivel Antero, whose remains were exhumed and identified in the municipal cemetery of Lomas de Zamora, in Buenos Aires;

(c) Virginia Beatriz Tempone, whose remains were exhumed and identified in the municipal cemetery of Avellaneda, in Buenos Aires.

Joint allegation letter and reply

23. On 5 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning regressive measures that could undermine processes of truth, justice, memory and guarantees of non-repetition, such as the planned purge of the Navy's General Archive, staff cuts in institutions responsible for implementing transitional justice measures, and the sale of memory sites that may hold evidentiary value in cases of serious human rights violations.[11]

24. On 27 May 2025, the Government replied to the above-mentioned joint allegation letter.[12]

Azerbaijan

Information from sources

25. The source provided updated information on one outstanding case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

[9] A/HRC/WGEID/131/1 and A/HRC/WGEID/131/1/Corr.1, para. 22.
[10] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 23.
[11] Communication ARG 1/2025.
[12] See reply to communication ARG 1/2025.

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Belarus

Standard procedure

26. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Alena Hnauk, who allegedly disappeared in June 2024 from correctional colony No. 24, in Zarechye, Homiel.

Information from sources

27. Sources provided updated information on two outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Joint urgent appeal

28. On 19 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an urgent appeal concerning the ill-treatment of women detainees, as well as inmates suffering from health issues and life-threatening conditions, in correctional colonies No. 4, in Homiel, and No. 24, in Zarechye.[13]

Bhutan

Joint allegation letter

29. On 22 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the reported deprivation of liberty and enforced disappearance since 2014 of human rights defender Lok Nath Acharya, following his alleged detention in India and extradition to Bhutan, after he travelled to Malbazar, West Bengal State, India in October 2014 to attend a human rights meeting (see also para. 61 below).[14]

Bulgaria

General allegation

30. The Working Group received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in Bulgaria. The allegations refer to events occurring at Bulgarian borders, practices leading to the disappearance of migrants, and a lack of an effective search mechanism for those who are missing (see annex I).

China

Information from sources

31. Sources provided updated information concerning five outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Information from the Government

32. On 13 January and 28 January 2025, the Government transmitted information concerning five outstanding cases, but the information was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

[13] Communication BLR 2/2025.
[14] Communication BTN 1/2025.

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Application of the six-month rule

33. On the basis of information provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule concerning one case.

Joint allegation letters and replies

34. On 18 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the arbitrary arrest, in 2016, and detention, enforced disappearance and sentencing of Ekpar Asat. There has been no information regarding his trial, a situation further aggravated by the alleged lack of independence of judges and lawyers in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region.[15]

35. On 28 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the ongoing imprisonment of 10 human rights defenders serving prison sentences of 10 years or longer and the conditions of their detention. In the letter, the Working Group also expressed concern about the enforced disappearance of human rights defender Gao Zhisheng, whose fate and whereabouts had been unknown since 2017.[16]

36. On 17 April 2025 and 29 April 2025, the Government replied to the above-mentioned joint allegation letters.[17]

Cameroon

Joint allegation letter

37. On 7 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the arrest, extradition, enforced disappearance, conviction and detention of Steve Akam, alias Ramon Cotta, in direct relation to his TikTok videos in which he criticized the Government (see also para. 55 below).[18]

Colombia

Standard procedure

38. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Vanessa Pedregal Quintero, who was abducted on 21 April 1997 in Medellin.

Information from sources

39. Sources provided updated information on one outstanding case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Joint allegation letter and reply

40. On 11 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning mass forced displacement, exposure to widespread violence, and widespread violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, including acts tantamount to enforced disappearances, in the context of the conflict between non-State armed groups in the region of Norte de Santander.[19]

[15] Communication CHN 3/2025.
[16] Communication CHN 5/2025.
[17] See replies to communications CHN 3/2025 and CHN 5/2025.
[18] Communication CMR 1/2025.
[19] Communication COL 1/2025.

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41. On 11 March 2025, two related communications were sent, to Ejército de Liberación Nacional[20] and to Frente 33.[21]

42. On 13 May 2025, the Government replied to the above-mentioned joint allegation letter.[22]

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Standard procedure

43. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning an individual who had been detained in Ryanggang Province in or around 2010 by State agents and transferred to a camp for political prisoners.

Egypt

Standard procedure

44. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted five cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Mahmoud Ahmed Majed Abdo Ali, who was abducted on 14 July 2016 in the border area between Egypt and the Sudan by military police;

(b) Abdul Rahman Mohammed Mohammed Abdul Latif, who was arrested on 14 December 2017 in the border area between Egypt and the Sudan by border guard forces and military police;

(c) Omar Mohamed Sayed Ahmed Shousha, who was arrested on 7 June 2019 near his home in 6th of October City, Giza Governorate, by police officers;

(d) Mohamed Abdellatif Abdelrahman Omar, who was arrested on 27 January 2020 at Cairo International Airport by police officers;

(e) Ahmed Mohamed Hamza Mohamed Hamza, who was arrested on 24 September 2024 at his home by police officers.

Clarification

45. On the basis of information previously provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to clarify 28 cases, following the expiry of the period prescribed by the six-month rule.[23] The cases concern:

(a) Islam Mohamed Abdelhamid Oraby, Ahmed Mohamed Abdelwahed Ragab, Muslim Gomaa Khedr Soliman, Khalid Hamdy Hassan Samak, Taki El Din Hassan Ali Ahmed El Ezabi, Ramadan Mohamed Fathelbab Ibrahim Ali, El Sayed Abdelazim El Sayed Selim, Reda El Sayed El Sayed El Bedewi, Ahmad Abdel Rahman Abdel Samee Mohammad Alesheiri, Ahmed Subhi Hijazi Faraj Dawood, Taher Monir Ahmed Abul Ela, Nasr Mohamed Abdelhalim Mahmoud, Abdel Rahman Mohamed Ragab Ali, Mahmoud Mohamed El Bedeni Ali, Mohamed Salih Mohamed Salih Nada, and Mohamed Maher Ahmed Al-Hendwi Fayed, who are reportedly at liberty;

(b) El-Said Mohamed Niazi El Sayed El Araby, Manar Adel Abul Naga, Taqwa Abdulnasser Abdullah Abdulaziz Abul Nasr, Ahmed Muhammed Al-Said Al-Said Ibrahim, Mohamed Mahmoud Marghani Mahmoud, Badr-El dine Farouq Mohamed Abu Hita, Omar Hatem Gamal Mohamed Mostafa, Muhammed Salah Muhammed Ahmed Bayoumi, Karim Sayed Mahrous Attya, Wael Abdul Ghani Mohamed Salim, Azmi Elsayed Mohamed Ibrahim and one other individual, who are reportedly in detention.

[20] Communication OTH 19/2025.
[21] Communication OTH 20/2025.
[22] See reply to communication COL 1/2025.
[23] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 63.

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Joint allegation letter and reply

46. On 26 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the arrest without a warrant in September 2024 and the subsequent enforced disappearance of human rights defender Ahmed Mohamed Hamza Mohamed Hamza.[24]

47. On 26 May 2025, the Government replied to the above-mentioned joint allegation letter.[25]

El Salvador

Urgent procedure

48. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted 63 cases to the Government concerning the following nationals of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, who were allegedly deported from the United States to El Salvador as part of the mass deportations that began on 15 March 2025: Miguel Gregorio Vaamonde Barrios, Jhonervi Josué Marín Zambrano, Carlos Alexis Uzcategui Vielma, Wilvenson Guevara Muñoz, Jose Alfredo Bastidas Venegas, Johendry Daniel Lugo Zavala, Nixon José Azuaje Pérez, Franco José Caraballo Tiapa, Andry Jose Hernandez Romero, Jerce Reyes Barrios, Mervin José Yamarte Fernández, Luis Gustavo Rodríguez Lugo, Jesus Gabriel Roos Ortega, Luis Jean Pier Gualdrón Gualdrón, Ysqueibel Yonaiquer Penaloza Chirinos, Arturo Alejandro Suarez Trejo, Ringo Enrique Rincón Rincón, Maikel Enrique Moreno Ramírez, Jean Claude Mendoza Piña, Carlos Alejandro Cañizalez Arteaga, Joen Manuel Suárez Fuentes, Wild Yahare Chirinos Romero, Gustavo Adolfo Aguilera Agüero, Brayant Francisco Silva Rauseo, Andry Omar Blanco Bonilla, Jordán Jesús Hung Mendoza, Wilmer José Vega Sandia, Josue Abrahán Basto Lizcano, Frizgeralth de Jesús Cornejo Pulgar, Luis Alfredo Núñez Falcón, Robinson Josué Saavedra Carucci, Keider Alexander Flores Navas, Jesús Alberto Ríos Andrade, Anyelo José Sarabia González, Yornel Santiago Benavides Rivas, Andry Javier Perozo Palencia, Yeison Seven Hernandez Carache, Darwin Gerardo Hernandez Carache, Hostman Ricardo Mathie Zavala, Edwuar José Hernández Herrera, Bruce Embelgert Cedeno Contreras, Wilken Rafael Flores Jiménez, Angelo Escalona Sevilla, Richard Daniel Girón Maurera, Yoswaldo José Mata Ribeiro, Ángel Alberto Blanco Marín, Rafael Antonio Martinez Vegas, Jhon William Chacín Gómez, Yuber Alexander Morón Cabrera, Maikel Antonio Olivera Rojas, Ensoni Antonio Villa Montano, Marco Jesús Basulto Salinas, Jesús Antonio Hueck Escobar, Lainerke Daniel Manzo Lovera, Ronald Josué Marea Medina, Tito Alejandro Martínez Borrego, Alexis Enrique Medina Martínez, Christian Bill Peterson Torres, Ildemar Jesús Romero Chirinos, Yonel Alejandro Toro Noguera, Leandro José Hurtado Zambrano, Jonathan Alexander Torrealba Torrealba and Edwin Jesús Meléndez Rojas.

49. In relation to the above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files to the Governments of the United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Standard procedure

50. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted three cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Elmer Daniel Avalos Gómez, who was arrested on 9 June 2022 by police officers in the Santa Lucía neighbourhood in San José Villanueva, Department of La Libertad;

(b) Edwin Jesús Meléndez Rojas, who was arrested on 10 May 2025 by a police officer in Guaymango, Department of Ahuachapán;

(c) Jimmy Alexander Abrego, who was arrested on 10 May 2025 by police officers in Colonia Escalón, San Salvador.

[24] Communication EGY 2/2025.

[25] See reply to communication EGY 2/2025.

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Application of the six-month rule

51. On the basis of information provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule concerning three cases.

Information from the Government

52. On 12 September 2024, the Government transmitted information concerning 455 outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Joint urgent appeal and reply

53. On 17 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an urgent appeal concerning recent deportations of foreign nationals to El Salvador from the United States, and concerns related to their detention in El Salvador being inconsistent with international human rights law and the principle of non-refoulement.[26]

France

Joint allegation letter

54. On 17 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the alleged lack of effective remedy and reparation for victims of serious human rights violations committed during the "Central Africa Mission".[27]

Gabon

Joint allegation letter

55. On 7 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the arrest, detention and extradition to the Cameroonian authorities of Steve Akam, alias Ramon Cotta, by the Gabonese authorities, in direct relation to his TikTok videos in which he criticized the Government of Cameroon (see also para. 37 above). Mr. Akam was allegedly subjected to torture and other ill-treatment and enforced disappearance after his extradition to Cameroon.[28]

Guatemala

Information from the Government

56. On 28 March 2025, the Government transmitted information concerning 2,897 outstanding cases, but it was considered too general and therefore insufficient to clarify the cases.

Guinea

Joint allegation letter

57. On 27 October 2023, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the abduction, enforced disappearance and torture of human rights defender Abdoul Sacko, and the prolonged enforced disappearance of human rights defenders Oumar Sylla and Mamadou Billo Bah.[29]

[26] Communication SLV 1/2025.
[27] Communication FRA 5/2025.
[28] Communication GAB 1/2025.
[29] Communication GIN 1/2025.

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Honduras

Information from the Government

58. On 22 August 2024, the Government transmitted information concerning 124 outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Joint allegation letter and reply

59. On 19 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the national DNA database system law (Decree No. 57-2023), which allegedly limits the effective participation of families disappeared persons; in the letter, the mechanisms also expressed related concerns about the possible transition of the country's forensic database on missing migrants to the new national database system.[30]

60. On 24 April 2025, the Government replied to the above-mentioned joint allegation letter.[31]

India

Joint allegation letter

61. On 22 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the deprivation of liberty and enforced disappearance since 2014 of human rights defender Lok Nath Acharya, following his alleged detention in India and extradition to Bhutan, after he travelled to Malbazar in West Bengal State, India, in October 2014 to attend a human rights meeting (see also para. 29 above).[32]

Indonesia

Standard procedure

62. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Alex Songerau, who was arrested on 9 October 2024 at a military post by members of the 509th infantry battalion/Balawara Yudah.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Standard procedure

63. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted seven cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Jammal Salem Abdulmajeed Sa'eed, a national of Iraq who was captured on 19 April 1981 in Al-Shosh, in the context of the war between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 1980s, by Iranian military forces;

(b) Muhammad Taqi Ali Abdel Wahed Al-Dahmarji, a national of Iraq who was captured on 2 September 1982, in the context of the war in the 1980s, by the Iranian military forces;

(c) Qasim Daneshfar, who was arrested on 21 April 1984 in Inder Qash by officers of the intelligence service of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps;

(d) Munir al-Farttoosi, a national of Iraq who was captured on 28 April 1986, in the context of the war in the 1980s, by the Iranian military forces;

[30] Communication HND 2/2025.
[31] See reply to communication HND 2/2025.
[32] Communication IND 3/2025.

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(e) Thamer al-Gharibawi, a national of Iraq who was captured on 16 March 1987, in the context of the war in the 1980s, by the Iranian military forces;

(f) Abbas Awda Barghouth Salman, a national of Iraq, who was captured on 14 April 1987 by Iranian forces in a battle in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate;

(g) Ebrahim Babaei, who was arrested on 21 December 2021 in Maku, Azarbayjan-e Gharbi Province, by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

64. In relation to the above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files to the Government of Iraq.

Information from sources

65. Sources provided information on one outstanding case, but the information was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Information from the Government

66. On 22 April 2025, the Government provided information on two outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Israel

Joint other letter

67. On 19 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, a letter with comments and suggestions regarding the law on the cessation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) activities, and the law on the cessation of UNRWA activities in the territory of Israel, both adopted on 28 October 2024.[33]

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Standard procedure

68. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Surachai Danwattananusorn, a national of Thailand who was allegedly detained on 12 December 2018 in Vientiane by the Thai police.

69. In relation to the above-mentioned case, the Working Group transmitted a copy of the case files to the Government of Thailand.

Libya

Standard procedure

70. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted two cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Abdulrahman Khalid Abdulrahman Sulayman, who was arrested on 10 November 2022 in Tripoli by officers of the stabilization support service;

(b) Mare Salih Mohammed al-Arifi, who was arrested on 8 September 2024 in Tripoli by an officer of the stabilization support service.

[33] Communication ISR 3/2025.

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Mali

Joint allegation letter

71. On 14 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, a joint allegation letter concerning the abduction and enforced disappearance of Alou Badara Sacko, a member of several civil society associations and movements in Mali, including the Forum des organisations de la société civile du Mali and the "Touche pas à mon argent" movement, of which he is one of the spokespersons.[34]

Mauritania

Standard procedure

72. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted two cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Abdoulaye Tambadou, who was abducted on 22 November 1990 in Nouadhibou by agents of the Mauritanian Army;

(b) Wele Ousmane Abdallah, who was abducted on 27 November 1990 in Nouadhibou by Mauritanian military agents.

Duplication

73. The Working Group decided to consider one case, concerning Amadou Mamadou Sow, as a duplicate previously transmitted in the context of both the 116th and 133rd sessions.[35] The duplicate case was consequently deleted from the records of the Working Group.

Mexico

Information from sources

74. Sources provided updated information on one outstanding case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Morocco

Information from sources

75. Sources provided updated information on four outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Mozambique

Urgent procedure

76. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted to the Government one case, concerning Arlindo César Severiano Chissale, a journalist who was allegedly abducted on 7 January 2025 by armed men, including two in police uniforms, on the road while travelling from Pemba city, Cabo Delgado Province, to Nacala city, Nampula Province.

Standard procedure

77. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Achimo Saide Combo, who was allegedly arrested in June 2020 in

[34] Communication MLI 3/2025.
[35] A/HRC/WGEID/116/1, para. 107; and A/HRC/WGEID/133/1, para. 54 (a).

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the Palma District by police officers of the Mozambique Republic Police and military officers of the defence and security forces of Mozambique.

Joint allegation letter

78. On 18 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, a joint allegation letter concerning the enforced disappearance of Mr. Chissale (see para. 76 above).[36]

Nepal

Information from the Government

79. On 10 April 2025, the Government transmitted information concerning one outstanding case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Nicaragua

Urgent procedure

80. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning José Alejandro Hurtado Díaz, who was allegedly arrested at his home in Masaya on 27 January 2025 by police officers.

Clarification of cases based on information from sources

81. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify two cases, concerning Germson Antonio Zeledón Motta and Luis Rodolfo Ibarra González, who are reportedly at liberty.

Niger

Joint allegation letter

82. On 17 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, a joint allegation letter regarding the alleged lack of effective remedy and reparations for victims of serious human rights violations committed during the "Central Africa Mission".[37]

Pakistan

Urgent procedure

83. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted 12 cases of enforced disappearance to the Government, concerning:

(a) Kamil Sharif Sharif Zakir, who was abducted near the Park Hotel, in Turbat, Kech, Pakistan, on 4 February 2025 by members of an intelligence agency;

(b) Ehsan Sarwar Ghulam Sarwar, who was abducted near the Park Hotel, in Turbat, Kech, Pakistan, on 4 February 2025 by members of an intelligence agency;

(c) Noman Rafiq Rafiq Ahmed, who was abducted from his home on 5 February 2025 by members of the Frontier Corps;

(d) Muhammad Anwar Khan Tareen, who was abducted from his home on 20 February 2025 by members of the Sindh Rangers.

[36] Communication MOZ 2/2025.
[37] Communication NER 1/2025.

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(e) Muhammad Aftab Uddin Baqai, who was abducted from his home on 20 February 2025 by men in plain clothes and members of the Sindh Rangers;

(f) Salahuddin Chiraghuddin, who was abducted from his home on 20 February 2025 by men in plain clothes and members of the Sindh Rangers;

(g) Muhammad Bilal Muhammad Yaseen, who was abducted from his home on 20 February 2025 by members of the Sindh Rangers;

(h) Inayat Khan Dawood Inayat, who was abducted from his home on 8 March 2025 by agents of a Pakistani intelligence agency;

(i) Abdul Nasir Baloch, who was abducted from his home on 17 March 2025 by agents of a Pakistani intelligence agency;

(j) Muhammad Ali, who was abducted from his home on 19 March 2025 by persons believed to be agents of the State intelligence services of Pakistan;

(k) Muhammad Saif ur Rehman Haider, who was abducted from his home on 19 March 2025 by persons believed to be agents of the State intelligence services of Pakistan;

(l) Kohli Om Parkash, who was abducted at the Wagha border in Lahore on 21 February 2025 by immigration authorities.

Standard procedure

84. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning a 7-year-old girl, who allegedly disappeared on 19 August 2021 from outside her home, in Sangrar town, Sukkur District.

Clarification of cases based on information from sources

85. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify seven cases. The cases concern Sameer Ahmed Naimatullah, Imran Nazeer Ahmed, Ehsan Sarwar, Muhammad Ali, Mouhammad Saif ur Rehman Haider and two other individuals, who are reportedly at liberty.

Information from the Government

86. On 22 October 2024, the Government transmitted information concerning 145 outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Information from sources

87. Source provided updated information on two outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Application of the six-month rule

88. On 22 October 2024, the Government provided information on 30 outstanding cases, on the basis of which the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule.

Clarifications

89. On the basis of information previously provided by the Government, the Working Group decided to clarify eight cases following the expiry of the period prescribed by the six-month rule, concerning Mansoor Ahmed, Sabir Ali Abdul Hameed and six other individuals, who are reportedly at liberty.[38]

Joint allegation letter

90. On 18 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning a series of human rights violations

[38] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 97.

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and measures undertaken within the context of counter-terrorism operations in the Province of Balochistan.[39]

General allegation

91. The Working Group received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in Pakistan. The allegation focuses on reported shortcomings in the functioning of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, and on the lack of criminalization of enforced disappearance as an autonomous offence under domestic legislation (see annex I).

Philippines

Standard procedure

92. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted two alleged cases to the Government, concerning James Jazmines, who was last seen on 23 August 2024 in San Roque, City of Tabaco, and Feliz Salaveria Jr., who was abducted on 28 August 2024 in the City of Tabaco by persons believed to be intelligence officers.

Russian Federation

Clarification based on information from sources

93. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify eight cases, concerning:

(a) Fedir Matvieenko, Yurii Kolmyk, Borys Podopryhora and Oleksandr Rudnychok, who are reportedly at liberty;

(b) Andrii Shykolenko, Olha Cherniavska and Larysa Malovichko, who are reportedly in detention;

(c) Liudmyla Shevchenko, who is reportedly deceased.

Information from sources

94. Sources provided updated information on five outstanding cases, but the information was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Information from other States concerned

95. On 18 January 2025, the Government of Ukraine provided information concerning 277 outstanding cases registered under the statistics of the Russian Federation, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Application of the six-month rule

96. The Government of Ukraine provided information on 20 outstanding cases registered under the statistics of the Russian Federation, on the basis of which the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule.

Clarification based on information from the Government

97. On the basis of information previously provided by the Government of Ukraine, the Working Group decided to clarify two cases following the expiry of the period prescribed by the six-month rule.[40] The cases concern Vasyl Kovalskyi and Oleksii Tyrpak, who are reportedly deceased.

[39] Communication PAK 1/2025.
[40] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 104.

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Duplication

98. The Working Group decided to consider one case, concerning Stepan Yasnyskyi, as a duplicate previously transmitted during both its 131st and 134th sessions.[41] The duplicate case was consequently deleted from the records of the Working Group.

Rwanda

Urgent procedure

99. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted 13 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Claudine Mukamana and her eight children, who were allegedly abducted on 9 March 2025 in Goma, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, by rebels of the Alliance Fleuve Congo and the Mouvement du 23 mars and officers of the Rwandan army;

(b) Gloire Longolongo and Blaise Marora Karhim, who were abducted on 10 March 2025 in Goma by military rebels from the Alliance Fleuve Congo and the Mouvement du 23 mars;

(c) Mwinja Irenge Marius, who was abducted on 14 March 2025 in Goma by rebels from the Alliance Fleuve Congo and the Mouvement du 23 mars and soldiers of the Rwanda Defence Force;

(d) Muleta Gaston, who was abducted on 14 March 2025 in Goma by military rebels and the intelligence service of the Mouvement du 23 mars;

100. In relation to the above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Clarification based on information from sources

101. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify one case, concerning Kakule Kighihere, who is reportedly at liberty.

Information from sources

102. Sources provided information concerning two outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Saudi Arabia

Standard procedure

103. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case, concerning an individual allegedly abducted on 23 May 2023 from Melbourne, Australia, and forcibly transferred to Saudi Arabia by persons believed to be State agents.

104. In relation to the above-mentioned case, the Working Group transmitted a copy to the Government of Australia.

Information from sources

105. Sources provided information on four outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

[41] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 100 (f); and A/HRC/WGEID/131/1 and A/HRC/WGEID/131/1/Corr.1, para. 101 (i).

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Duplication

106. The Working Group decided to consider one case, concerning Amr Alaaeldin Mohamed Attia,[42] as a duplicate due to a clerical error. The duplicate case was consequently deleted from the records of the Working Group.

Sri Lanka

Information from sources

107. Sources provided information on one outstanding case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Sudan

General allegation

108. The Working Group received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in the Sudan. The allegations concern violations –enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to enforced disappearance – committed since the outbreak of conflict on 15 April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (see annex I).

Syrian Arab Republic

Urgent procedure

109. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted 22 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) An individual abducted on 1 January 2025 in Damascus by armed men believed to belong to the General Security Administration;

(b) Two individuals (brothers), arrested together on 1 January 2025 in Jubb al-Jandali, Homs, by a military uniformed officer;

(c) An individual abducted in early January 2025 in Homs by uniformed military officers;

(d) An individual abducted on 2 January 2025 in Homs by State agents;

(e) An individual abducted on 12 January 2025 in Al-Qabo, Homs by armed men believed to be State agents;

(f) An individual abducted on 13 January 2025 in Homs by State agents;

(g) An individual arrested on 13 January 2025 in Homs by State agents;

(h) An individual abducted on 6 February 2025 in Homs by a group of armed individuals believed to be State agents;

(i) An individual abducted on 22 February 2025 in Nafsa village, Homs, by State agents;

(j) An individual abducted on 7 March 2025 from the Turkestan checkpoint by armed men believed to be State agents;

(k) An individual abducted on 7 March 2025 from Shir village by armed men believed to be State agents;

[42] A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 112.

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(l) Two individuals, related to each other, abducted on 7 March 2025 in Damascus reportedly by State agents;

(m) An individual abducted on 8 March 2025 in Baniyas city, Tartus Governorate, by men believed to be State agents;

(n) An individual abducted on 8 March 2025 in Damascus by masked armed men believed to be State agents;

(o) An individual abducted on 8 March 2025 in Jiblah city by armed uniformed military men;

(p) An individual abducted on 11 March 2025 from Farabi Street, Eastern Villas, Mezzeh, Damascus, by armed State agents;

(q) An individual abducted on 18 March 2025 in Damascus by persons believed to be State security officers;

(r) An individual who was last seen on 23 March 2025 in Jibleh city;

(s) An individual arrested on 27 March 2025 at the Al-Aboudiyya border crossing checkpoint between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic by State agents;

(t) An individual last seen on 28 March 2025 in east Ansar, Aleppo and believed to have been abducted by State agents.

Standard procedure

110. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted 27 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) An individual arrested on 3 January 2013 in the Marjah neighbourhood in Damascus by officers believed to be State agents;

(b) An individual abducted on 7 March 2013 from Damascus Hospital (also known as Al-Mujtahid Hospital) by officers believed to be State agents;

(c) An individual arrested on 8 March 2013 from the Kafr Susah neighbourhood in Damascus by officers belonging to the military intelligence forces;

(d) Fourteen individuals, including four women and nine children, abducted on 1 March 2014 from the Qadam neighbourhood in Damascus by military officers;

(e) An individual abducted on 12 June 2017 from the village of Salama, Aleppo, by persons believed to be State agents;

(f) An individual arrested on 7 August 2024 in Aleppo by officers of the military security branch;

(g) An individual abducted on 5 December 2024 in Hama by military officers;

(h) An individual abducted on 8 December 2024 in Homs city by officers believed to be State agents;

(i) An individual abducted on 8 December 2024 in Tadmur, Homs, by officers believed to be State agents;

(j) An individual abducted on 10 December 2024 in Hama by officers believed to be State agents;

(k) An individual abducted on 21 December 2024 at a checkpoint in Damascus by officers believed to be State agents;

(l) An individual abducted on 2 January 2025 from the al-Waleed suburb in Homs by persons believed to be State agents;

(m) An individual abducted on 16 January 2025 from Hajar al-Abyad by persons believed to be State agents;

(n) An individual arrested on 23 January 2025 in Damascus by persons believed to be State agents.

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Joint urgent appeal and reply

111. On 27 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an urgent appeal concerning violations of human rights against individuals belonging to religion or belief minorities, particularly Alawis, in the coastal region of the Syrian Arab Republic since 6 March 2025.[43]

112. On 15 April 2025, the authorities replied to the above-mentioned joint urgent appeal.[44]

Joint allegation letter

113. On 26 March 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an allegation letter concerning the efforts made to develop and implement a transitional justice road map aimed at ensuring truth, justice, reparation, memorialization and guarantees of non-recurrence.[45]

Thailand

Information from sources

114. Sources provided information on six outstanding cases, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

Tunisia

General allegation

115. The Working Group received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in Tunisia. The allegations concern the situation of migrants and related reported acts tantamount to enforced disappearance, allegedly perpetrated by non-State actors, that were facilitated by actions or omissions by the competent authorities in Tunisia in the context of combating irregular migration (see annex I).

Türkiye

Application of the six-month rule

116. On 14 April 2025, the Government provided information on four outstanding cases, on the basis of which the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule.

United Arab Emirates

Standard procedure

117. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case to the Government, concerning Ahmed Majed Ahmed al-Atoum, a national of Jordan who was last seen in custody at Al-Wathba prison in January 2025.

118. In relation to the above-mentioned case, the Working Group transmitted a copy of the case files to the Government of Jordan.

Information from sources

119. Sources provided information on one outstanding case, but the information was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

[43] Communication SYR 2/2025.
[44] See reply to communication SYR 2/2025.
[45] Communication SYR 1/2025.

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Information from other States concerned

120. On 12 February 2025, the Government of Türkiye transmitted information concerning one outstanding case registered under the statistics of the United Arab Emirates, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

Joint urgent appeal

121. On 20 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an urgent appeal concerning the alleged enforced disappearance of Egyptian-Turkish poet and writer, Abdulrahman Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, who was extradited to the United Arab Emirates on 8 January 2025, following his detention in Lebanon.[46]

United States of America

Joint other letter

122. On 20 February 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, a letter concerning the 90-day freeze of all federal grants and loans, including foreign aid, and stop-work orders, related to executive orders that imposed, and then rescinded, a temporary pause of agency grant, loan and other financial assistance programme; in the letter, the mechanisms also transmitted other specific notes and guidance related to the implementation of those and other recent executive orders.[47]

Joint urgent appeal

123. On 23 April 2025, the Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedure mechanisms, an urgent appeal concerning deportations and related detentions that were not consistent with international human rights law, including with regard to: the prohibitions on unlawful or arbitrary expulsion; freedom from arbitrary detention; the right to due process in the expulsion of migrants and asylum-seekers; the right to family life and the rights of children; the obligation of non-refoulement; the prohibition on enforced disappearance; and the requirement of humane conditions of detention.[48]

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Urgent procedure

124. Under its urgent procedure, the Working Group transmitted eight cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Ray Noorhassan, a national of Guyana, who was detained in San Cristobal on 17 November 2024 by members of the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence;

(b) An individual, a national of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who was detained on 24 December 2024 by police officers at Maiquetía Simón Bolívar International Airport;

(c) Lucas Jonas Benjamin Hunter, a dual national of France and the United States, who was detained on 7 January 2025 in La Guajira, Colombia by agents of the Venezuelan Identification, Migration and Foreign Nationals Service;

(d) Ángel Rafael Godoy Zapata, who was detained on 8 January 2025 in Los Teques, Miranda State, by officials from the Bolivarian Intelligence Service;

(e) Julio César Balza Maldonado, who was detained on 9 January 2025 in Caracas by officials of the Bolivarian Intelligence Service;

[46] Communication ARE 1/2025.
[47] Communication USA 5/2025.
[48] Communication USA 14/2025.

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(f) Gilbert Johannis Araña Jérez, who was detained on 22 January 2025 in a public area by individuals wearing balaclavas and by agents of the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence;

(g) Daniela Alexandra Araña Gutiérrez, who was detained on 24 January 2025 at her residence in in Maracay, Aragua State, by agents of the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence;

(h) Génesis Grysbelis Rodríguez Araña, who was detained on 24 January 2025 in front of her workplace in Barinas, Barinas State, by agents of the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence.

125. In relation to three above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files, as appropriate, to the Governments of France, Guyana, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United States.

Standard procedure

126. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted six alleged cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Brayan Sair Navarro Cáceres, a national of Colombia, who was arrested on 6 January 2024, upon arriving at Puerto Cabello, Carabobo State, by the Bolivarian National Guard;

(b) Rafael Arturo Ramírez Colina, who was detained on 1 October 2024 in Maracaibo by agents of the Bolivarian Intelligence Service;

(c) Yevhenii Petrovich Trush, a national of Ukraine, who was detained on 20 October 2024 at the Atanasio Girardot (Las Tienditas) migration office, located at the Atanasio Girardot binational bridge, Táchira State.

(d) Jonathan Guillermo Torres Duque, who was detained on 27 October 2024 in San Antonio, Táchira State, by agents of the Bolivarian National Guard at the Peracal border checkpoint;

(e) Kevin José Saavedra Basallo, a national of Colombia, who was arrested on 29 October 2024 at a checkpoint in Los Dos Caminos, Caracas, by agents of the General Directorate of Military Counter-Intelligence;

(f) Danner Gonzalo Barajas Luque, a national of Colombia, who was arrested on 7 November 2024 while crossing the border between Colombia and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) by agents of the Bolivarian National Guard;

127. In relation to four of the above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files to the Governments of Colombia and Ukraine, as appropriate.

Clarification based on information from sources

128. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify three cases, concerning:

(a) Ubencio Manuel Pacheco Gil, who was released from prison and is currently at liberty;

(b) Eduardo Emiro Labrador, who is detained at the Rodeo I detention centre in Guatire;

(c) David Estrella, a dual national of Ecuador and the United States, who was released from prison and deported to the United States on 31 January 2025.

129. In relation to the case referred to in paragraph 127 (c) above, a copy of the case files was transmitted to the Governments of Ecuador and the United States.

Information from sources

130. Sources provided updated information on nine outstanding cases, but the information was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

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Application of the six-month rule

131. On 10 April 2025, the Government of Italy provided information on one outstanding case, registered under the statistics of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on the basis of which the Working Group decided to apply the six-month rule.

Information from other States concerned

132. On 19 February 2025, the Government of Ecuador transmitted information concerning one case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

133. On 18 March 2025, the Government of Colombia transmitted information concerning one case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

134. On 15 April 2025, the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands transmitted information concerning one case, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the case.

IV. Information concerning acts tantamount to enforced disappearance attributable to non-State actors reviewed by the Working Group during the session

Libya (de facto authorities)

Clarification based on information from sources

135. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify one case, concerning Sheikh Muftah al-Amin al-Biju, who is reportedly at liberty.

State of Palestine (de facto authorities)

Clarification based on information from sources

136. On the basis of information provided by sources, the Working Group decided to clarify three cases, concerning Almog Meir Jan and Shlomi Ziv, who are reportedly at liberty, and Alon Lulu-Shamriz, who is reportedly deceased.

Syrian Arab Republic (de facto authorities in the north and east of the Syrian Arab Republic)

Standard procedure

137. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted two cases to the Syrian Democratic Council, concerning:

(a) An individual – a national of Italy – abducted between December 2016 and January 2017 by armed individuals believed to belong to the autonomous authorities in the north and east of the Syrian Arab Republic.

(b) An individual – a national of Italy – abducted on 11 June 2013, in the northern region of Aleppo, following armed ground combat with Hizbullah fighters.

138. In relation to the above-mentioned cases, the Working Group transmitted copies of the case files to the Government of Italy.

Information from other States concerned

139. On 31 March 2025, the Government of Sweden transmitted information concerning three outstanding cases registered under the statistics of the de facto authorities in the north and east of the Syrian Arab Republic, but it was considered insufficient to clarify the cases.

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Yemen (de facto authorities in Sana'a)

Standard procedure

140. Under its standard procedure, the Working Group transmitted one case, concerning an individual abducted on 6 June 2024 from Sa'wan by armed individuals in plain clothes, believed to belong to the de facto authorities in Sana'a.

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Annex I

General allegations

Bulgaria

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (hereafter, 'the Working Group') received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (hereafter, 'the Declaration') by Bulgaria.

1. This general allegation focuses on the obstacles encountered in the application of the Declaration, in particular in the context of events occurring at Bulgarian borders with regard to migrants, including asylum seekers, namely secret detention, practices leading to migrants' disappearance, as well as the lack of an effective search mechanism for those who went missing.

2. According to the information received on 1 April 2025 by the Working Group, civil society has documented an estimated 1,135 migrants held in secret detention in Bulgaria. Migrants are allegedly detained without confirmation both in formal detention sites, such as police stations and army bases, as well as in informal sites, such as large caravans. Persons kept in secret detention are denied access to the outside world, and are not provided with any effective remedy to defend their rights (such as access to the institutions, legal mechanisms, interpreters and legal advice), nor safeguards such as medical care. In one reported instance, migrants, including families and minors, have been held in overcrowded cells for a day and night without access to a toilet, food or water during the time of their detention.

3. Secret detentions are allegedly taking place during pushbacks, namely measures taken by States, "which result in migrants, including asylum seekers, being summarily forced back, without an individual assessment of their human rights protection needs, to the country or territory, (…), from where they attempted to cross or crossed an international border". According to information received from sources, as well as many published reports by credible organizations, pushbacks from Bulgaria to Türkiye have been taking place regularly for years.

4. During pushbacks, migrants report violence and beatings. Some are allegedly forced to undress. This has also been reported with regard to women and minors.

5. According to sources, all migrants who are subject to pushbacks, are not properly registered in line with international standards. As observed by the UN Subcommittee for the Prevention of Torture after its visit to Bulgaria in 2021, this "rendered it difficult to trace the history and status of detainees". Not properly registering pushbacks makes it impossible to assess on a case-by-case basis whether the persons might be at risk of enforced disappearance before expulsion, return or extradition. The lack of registration makes it also very difficult for families and lawyers to locate their loved ones.

6. Many of the pushbacks reportedly involved a deprivation of liberty. When persons are deprived of their liberty by agents of the State or by persons acting with its acquiescence, and this is followed by a refusal to disclose the fate or whereabouts of the person or a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty, this amounts to an enforced disappearance. The Working Group re-affirms that duration is not a constitutive element of enforced disappearance under international human rights law.

7. According to the information received by the Working Group, the modus operandi used shows that Bulgarian authorities aim at concealing the practice. Persons conducting pushbacks are allegedly masked, though they often wear uniforms. Migrants are frequently transported during nights. Allegedly, Bulgarian authorities are denying that the practice is taking place.

8. Reportedly, migrants' personal belongings, including mobile phones and identity documents are seized and destructed. Such a practice may contribute to the risk of enforced

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disappearances, as it leaves the migrants without means to communicate their fate or whereabouts to relatives or prove their identity.

9. When attempting to cross the border and while trying to avoid being pushed back, migrants often find themselves in a life-threatening situation, particularly during winter months. The Working Group has been informed that not only Bulgarian authorities fail to organize search and rescue missions, but they also stop and prevent civil society from conducting them. In some cases, this had led to the deaths of migrants, for example, in December 2024, three minors died in the Strandja Mountain, near the villages of Varovnik, Varshilo and Gabar, after rescue teams were prevented to provide rescue by a Bulgarian border patrol.

10. Despite many migrants going missing in the border regions, there reportedly is no comprehensive policy for searching for disappeared migrants. Accordingly, relatives searching for their loved ones, cannot rely on information from State authorities and they turn to online social media platforms in the hope to crowdsource information. The Working Group is concerned that in such cases, the desperate relatives can fall victims of online scam.

11. Furthermore, the Working Group has been informed that, in instances where the migrant person has allegedly died, some families reported being requested by Bulgarian police bribes and charge extortionate sums of money to facilitate the identification process, such as seeing the body, seeing pictures of the body or initiating the identification processes.

12. Lastly, the Working Group has been informed about reports of persons who went missing, who have been last heard from while being apprehended by Bulgarian police or border guards.

13. The Working Group would like to bring to the Government's attention articles 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 13 of the Declaration, which are directly related to the present allegation:

14. Furthermore, the Working Group wishes to recall the principles affirmed in its study on migration and enforced disappearances (in particular, paras. 25-33 on arbitrary expulsions and pushbacks; paras. 59-61 on pushbacks and non-refoulement; and paras. 62-64 on deprivation of liberty), as well as in the Committee on Enforced Disappearances' General Comment on enforced disappearances in the context of migration (particularly paras. 16-22 on the prohibition of secret detention of migrants; para. 31- on non-refoulement and the prohibition of pushbacks; and paras. 37-43 on the obligation to search and investigate) and Guiding principles for the search of disappeared persons (especially Principle 9, regarding the particular vulnerability of migrants).

15. The Working Group would be grateful for the cooperation and any information that your Excellency's Government can provide on the following questions:

(a) Please provide any information or comments that your Excellency's Government may have regarding the above allegations.

(b) Please provide information about the deprivation of liberty of migrants at Bulgaria's border with Türkiye, including:

(i) What is the applicable legal framework;

(ii) How migrants' contact with the outside world is secured;

(iii) How can families obtain information about the migrants who might be detained;

(iv) Statistical disaggregated data of disappeared migrants.

(c) Please provide information on how the rights of persons to return to Türkiye are guaranteed, and how the authorities assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether these individuals might be at risk of serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearance.

(d) Please provide information about search procedures for migrants who went missing, including how the corresponding information can be accessed by families not living in Bulgaria. Explain if you have a mechanism for families residing outside of Bulgaria to conduct search and obtain information about persons who have disappeared in Bulgaria.

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(e) Please provide information on whether there is a specific policy aimed at searching for disappeared migrants, and if not, whether the authorities plan to adopt one.

(f) Please provide information about the investigations that your Government has conducted into enforced disappearances of migrants. In case no investigation has been conducted, please explain the reasons.

16. The Working Group requests the Government of Bulgaria to provide a response to the above questions within 60 days.

17. The text of the general allegation will be published along with the Working Group's post-sessional report and on its website, where also any response received by your Excellency's Government will be uploaded.

Pakistan

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (hereafter, 'the Working Group') received information from the sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (hereafter, 'the Declaration') by Pakistan.

1. This general allegation focuses on reported shortcomings in the functioning of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (hereafter, 'COIED'), whose mandate is regulated pursuant to the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 2017, and on the lack of criminalisation of enforced disappearance as an autonomous offence under the domestic legislation.

2. The Working Group notes that, in September 2023, it submitted a general allegation to Pakistan, which, among others, already raised issues related to the functioning of the COIED. The Working Group regrets that, to date, no reply has been received to the allegations shared on that occasion and calls on the Government of Pakistan to engage in a constructive dialogue and provide a response.

3. The Working Group equally recalls that three communications concerning the lack of criminalisation of enforced disappearance and the pitfalls in the corresponding draft legislation (PAK 7/2021, PAK 11/2021, and PAK 12/2021) were sent to Pakistan respectively on 29 June 2021, 13 October 2021, and 29 November 2021. Regrettably, at the time of writing, none of these letters has received a response either.

Shortcomings of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances

4. The COIED was established in March 2011 for an initial period of six months and its mandate has been repeatedly extended since. As per the terms of reference set out by the Ministry of Interior in 2011, the COIED is mandated to determine the fate and whereabouts of disappeared persons, promote accountability, and ensure that victims obtain compensation and relief for the harm suffered. According to the information submitted to the Working Group, in the face of a constantly growing number of cases of enforced disappearance registered, the COIED would not be effectively delivering in any of the three areas mentioned, thus impairing victims' rights to truth, justice and reparation.

5. The Working Group was informed that, since January 2025, due to the sudden death of the newly appointed chairperson, the COIED has not been operational. This worsens a situation already marked by the scarce effectiveness of the COIED, which reportedly lacks adequate human and technical resources, in particular in the forensic and investigative fields.

6. The Working Group received information on existing concerns related to the alleged lack of transparency in the operations of the COIED, as well as in the process of selection and appointment of commissioners by the Federal Government, without any consultation with stakeholders, including civil society organisations and associations of relatives of forcibly disappeared persons. Overall, the fact that the COIED is structurally and functionally dependent on the Ministry of Interior, bearing in mind the alleged involvement of security agencies in the perpetration of enforced disappearance, reportedly casts doubts on, and undermines public trust in, the independence, impartiality and credibility of this body. The

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situation described is further exacerbated by the existence of serious allegations against the former chairperson of the COIED, including of sexual harassment against an individual who was in contact with him on a case of enforced disappearance.

7. With regard to the alleged lack of transparency in the operations of the COIED, the Working Group has been informed that, besides publishing monthly progress reports that track cases of enforced disappearances received and "disposed of" (sic), the COIED does not publish comprehensive data and has not published a report containing its findings and detailed recommendations. Notably, even the report of January 2011 of the judicial commission mandated to investigate enforced disappearances which preceded the COIED remains unavailable to the public to date.

8. It has been brought to the attention of the Working Group that the official website of the COIED is not functioning properly and, in particular, the information contained therein is not regularly updated. In the general allegation of September 2023, the Working Group had noted with concern that the names then published in full on the website were not those of the disappeared persons, but rather those of relatives and/or persons who reported the disappearance. The Working Group emphasised how such a choice raised security and privacy concerns, as it could expose these persons to reprisals and harassment, as well as attempts of extortion. Nevertheless, taking down the website, not ensuring its maintenance and not updating regularly information on the work of the COIED, the registered cases and the corresponding progress only exacerbates the anguish of relatives and further tarnishes the transparency of the work of the COIED.

9. The Working Group has been informed that the reported lack of transparency and publicity of the work of the COIED is additionally compounded by the existence of obstacles which undermine the effective participation of relatives of forcibly disappeared persons in search processes and investigations. First, although many relatives do not speak or understand English, all proceedings before the COIED would allegedly take place in English, and this represents an insurmountable barrier for many. Second, instances of victim-blaming remarks, intrusive questions and derogatory statements against relatives of forcibly disappeared persons have been reported. Third, the lack of measures to afford protection to witnesses reportedly discourages families and other persons from testifying due to fear of retaliation.

10. According to the information received by the Working Group, pursuant to its mandate, if the COIED is of the view that law officials have been involved in a case of enforced disappearance, it may order the issuance of a summons to appear, as well as register a criminal case against those allegedly involved. Reportedly, the COIED has not issued any notices, limiting itself to issuing 'production orders' (i.e. orders by which it requests that the relevant detaining authorities produce a person before the COIED or a court of law), whose implementation rate is less than 8%. Accordingly, the COIED would not contribute to holding perpetrators accountable: on the one hand, when the fate and whereabouts of a disappeared person are determined, the COIED loses its competence to lodge first information reports ('FIR'), irrespective of the ongoing obligation of the State to investigate, identify those responsible, prosecute and, where appropriate, sanction them. On the other hand, even in cases where the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared person remain unknown, no FIR has been registered as a consequence of the COIED's investigations.

11. It has been reported that, in the face of the lack of effectiveness of the COIED, relatives of disappeared persons attempt to turn to regular high courts, including by lodging petitions of habeas corpus. However, the Working Group was informed that often courts refuse to register or hear such cases, directing relatives to seize the COIED instead, thus leaving them without an effective remedy.

12. Finally, the Working Group was informed that relatives of disappeared persons whose cases are registered with the COIED are not granted adequate measures of psycho-social support or relief nor integral reparation for harm suffered. Reportedly, only five families have received financial assistance for three months, which has then been abruptly suspended and never resumed, without any explanation. More in general, the COIED does not acknowledge the family members of disappeared persons as victims in their own right, which is at odds with international law and practice.

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Lack of criminalisation of enforced disappearance

13. Enforced disappearance is not codified as an autonomous crime under the Pakistani legislation. In 2021, a bill proposing amendments to the criminal code and the code of criminal procedure to penalise enforced disappearance was passed by the National Assembly (i.e. the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2021). However, the said bill never reached the Senate and there seemingly is no new initiative to address the existing legislative gap.

14. With regard to the allegations contained in this document, the Working Group would like to bring to the Government's attention the following provisions of the Declaration: Articles 2, 7, 13, and 19.

15. The Working Group wishes to recall that the absolute prohibition of enforced disappearances and the corresponding obligation to investigate them and hold perpetrators accountable have attained the status of jus cogens.

16. Moreover, the Working Group wishes to also recall the obligations of the State pursuant to the 2019 Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons; the Working Group's General comment on the Right to the Truth in Relation to Enforced Disappearances (A/HRC/16/48, para. 39), which elaborates on the right to the truth as both a collective and an individual right; its report on standards and public policies for an effective investigation of enforced disappearances; as well as the Revised United Nations Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions; and the Revised version of the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In addition, the Working Group wishes to refer to the thematic section of its annual report on reparations and enforced disappearance (A/HRC/22/45, paras. 46-68).

17. The Working Group would be grateful for your Excellency's Government's cooperation and observations on the following questions:

(a) Please provide any additional information and any comment you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.

(b) Please provide information on the current status of the COIED's operations and the measures undertaken – or foreseen – to appoint a chairperson with the adequate profile, and to ensure that it receives adequate financial, technical and human resources, especially in the forensic and investigative fields.

(c) Please provide information on the process of selection and appointment of members of the COIED, with the required profile, and the existing guarantees to ensure their independence and impartiality. Please provide also information on the consultation of civil society organisations and associations of families of disappeared persons in such a process.

(d) Please provide information on the expected date of publication of a comprehensive report with the COIED's findings and recommendations, as well as the publication of the report of January 2011 of the judicial commission mandated to investigate enforced disappearances which preceded the COIED.

(e) Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that relatives of disappeared persons, their representative associations and lawyers are closely associated with, and are enabled to meaningfully participate in, the search process and investigations.

(f) Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that the COIED regularly informs relatives of disappeared persons – in a language of their comprehension – on the progress of the search process and investigations and, where appropriate, on the obstacles encountered.

(g) Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that the COIED website is restored and regularly updated in a way as to provide clear information on the cases registered and the progress of the investigation, without however disclosing any sensitive data that may expose to risks relatives of disappeared persons and their representatives.

(h) Please inform on the measures undertaken to ensure that relatives of disappeared persons or witnesses who approach the COIED are treated with full respect for

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their dignity, not subjected to stigmatization, and are adequately protected from threats, reprisals and harassment.

(i) Please provide information on the measures undertaken by the COIED to identify perpetrators of enforced disappearances and to promote their accountability through the registration of criminal cases.

(j) Please provide information on the measures undertaken to ensure that those who register a case with the COIED obtain adequate psycho-social support, including interim relief, as well as integral reparation for the harm suffered.

(k) Please provide information on the measures undertaken to codify enforced disappearance as an autonomous crime under Pakistani legislation and on whether there is any draft bill in this regard that replaced the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2021.

18. The Working Group requests your Excellency's Government to provide a response to the above questions within 60 days. The text of the general allegation will be published along with the Working Group's post-sessional report and on its website, where also any response received by your Excellency's Government will be made public.

Sudan

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (hereafter, 'the Working Group') received information from sources concerning obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (hereafter, 'the Declaration') in Sudan.

1. This general allegation focuses on allegations of ongoing enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to committed since the outbreak of conflict on 15 April 2023 between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) across the country until date.

2. The Working Group would also like to recall the concerns raised in its previous general allegation sent to your Excellency's Government in September 2022 and for which it is yet to receive a reply.[1]

3. The Working Group is alarmed by the allegations received from credible sources related to the increasing number of instances of enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to, in the context of the ongoing conflict, especially in the Darfur region. Many individuals have reportedly been subject to enforced disappearance or acts tantamount to with their families left in the dark about their fate or whereabouts. The disappeared have had no contact with family, lawyers, or representatives, and no party to the conflict has taken responsibility for their deprivation of liberty. While the Working Group notes the difficulty in establishing precise figures, according to the information received, it is estimated that the number of disappeared can be expressed in the hundreds in Khartoum, and likely in the thousands across the country.

5. According to the sources, most disappearances are attributed to the RSF, a non-State actor with de facto control over areas like Al Geneina, Zalingi, Nyala, and Al Duayin. These acts tantamount to enforced disappearance reportedly takes place in two key phases: first, immediately following RSF armed attacks, and second, after RSF establishes territorial control, its forces are reported to continue forcibly disappearing civilians during their daily movements, and subjecting captive women and girls to forced servitude. Victims are allegedly often held for ransom, subjected to sexual violence, or enslaved.

6. Credible information received indicates that the RSF has been implicated in abductions, forced conscriptions, and ransom-related detentions in Darfur, further exacerbating the situation. It has been reported that, in certain instances, individuals remain disappeared even after the payment of ransom by their families. Additional reports allege that

[1] See https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/disappearances/allegations/general-allegation-sudan-128.pdf.

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persons deprived of their liberty, including journalists and media personnel, have been subjected to acts of torture with some reportedly used as human shields.

7. It is further reported that, while the SAF regained control over key facilities such as the National Radio and Television Corporation buildings in Darfur in March 2024, the fate and whereabouts of those previously detained therein remain unknown, causing continued distress and uncertainty for their families.

8. The Working Group raises its concerns at the situation in the El Fasher region, where a coordinated RSF attack in April 2024 led to renewed hostilities with the SAF and a worsening humanitarian crisis. Reportedly, enforced disappearance was used as a tactic against civilians fleeing for safety.9. The sources further identify a worrying number of vulnerable groups that are particularly targeted by enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to, including the Masalit community and those from El Geneina, Morni and Zalingei. In this regard, the violence in El Geneina, triggered by RSF-SAF clashes, reportedly escalated into systematic attacks on an ethnic group, the Masalit communities, including those on the move to Eastern Chad. In September 2024, instances of disappearances targeting prominent activists, community leaders and journalists have been documented, which indicates the potential of enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to being used both as a tool of war and repression against dissenting voices.

10. The information that the Working Group reviewed illustrates how, since the beginning of the conflict, women and girls have been systematically targeted. Reportedly, women and girls have been subject to enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to. The targeting of women and girls through enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to is allegedly often accompanied by sexual exploitation, including forced prostitution, forced marriages, and domestic servitude. Children are also reportedly abducted for forced recruitment into armed groups or forced labor. A vast majority of the documented cases by civil society remain unaccounted for, with many more likely undocumented.

11. The Working Group noted the specific incidents in areas like Khartoum, Darfur, Sennar, and Gezira States, with a reported high number of disapperances and deaths following RSF armed attacks. In some regions, the disappearance of entire families has been reported. Some of the victims were detained in places like prisons, including in seized building like universities, previous State-owned buildings. Only after those places are reclaimed are dead bodies discovered, in some cases in decaying state. The Working Group is not aware of any efforst to preserve and idenfity the bodies in accordance with the Minisota Protocal and urges the authorities concerned to comply fully with international standards.

12. The Working Group notes with concern the impact of the reported disappearances, which comprises devastating economic, social, and psychological effects. In this regard, the Working Group notes that, because of enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to, families likely lose breadwinners. Moreover, women, often left as sole providers, might struggle to secure food, shelter, and healthcare for their children. The described circumstances and the trauma and anguish of not knowing the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones, combined with social stigma, might lead to further isolation and marginalization.

13. The Working Group further observes that the documentation of cases of enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to, are likely hindered due to fear of reprisals, stigma, and limited access to reporting mechanisms. Families may stay silent due to fear of retaliation. Moreover, social media posts about disappeared persons have reportedly been deleted, and especially rural cases go largely unreported, leaving the true scale of disappearances in the country unknown.

14. According to the information received, fight against enforced disappearances in Sudan might be hindered by legal protections afforded to security forces, which might complicate efforts to investigate and determine the involvement of State actors in conflict settings. The Working Group is also concerned that protections accorded by the Sudanese Constitution and Criminal Code may be used for political repression and impunity amidst the ongoing conflict. In particular, the Working Group notes with concern that article 45(1) of the Police Law (2008) prevents the prosecution of police officers for actions taken during duty, unless their superior waives immunity. Likewise, the Armed Forces Act (2007) grants similar protections

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to military personnel, requiring high-level approval for any investigations into military personnel.

15. The Working Group would like to bring to your Excellency's Government attention the following provisions of the Declaration, which are directly related to the present allegation, articles 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, and 19.

16. Moreover, the Working Group recalls that enforced disappearance is prohibited also pursuant to customary international humanitarian law (Rule 98). Each party to the conflict must take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing as a result of armed conflict and must provide their family members with any information it has on their fate (Rule 117). Furthermore, parties of a conflict also have obligations regarding the dead, including taking all possible measures to search for, collect and evacuate them, returning remains, respecting and maintaining graves, as well as record all available information before disposal and marking the location of graves (Rules 112-116).

17. The Working Group would also recall that the prohibition of enforced disappearances and the corresponding obligation to investigate them have attained the status of jus cogens.

18. The Working Group also recalls the Guiding principles for the search for the disappeared persons, the thematic study on reparations and enforced disappearances and study on enforced or involuntary disappearances and economic, social and cultural rights.

19. Rules 134 and 135 of customary international humanitarian law afford special protection respectively to women and children. In this regard, the Working Group recalls its general comments on women affected by enforced disappearances and children and enforced disappearances.

20. The Working Group also recalls that Sudan acceded to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on 10 August 2021, and it notes that Articles 1, 2, 3, 12, 17, 18, 24 and 25 of the International Convention are directly related to the allegations here illustrated.

21. The Working Group would like to respectfully request your Excellency's Government cooperation and observations on the following questions:

(a) Please provide any additional information and any comment on the allegations mentioned above.

(b) Please provide detailed information on the legal and institutional frameworks in place in Sudan to prevent and address enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to.

(c) Please provide information on the measures taken by the competent authorities to investigate allegations of enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to, including those reportedly perpetrated by members of the SAF and the RSF.

(d) Please provide information on the measures taken by the competent authorities to search for the disappeared persons and, in the event of their death, to locate, respect, exhume, identify and return to the family the mortal remains, respecting international standards on the subject, such as the 2016 Minnesota Protocol.

(e) Kindly indicate the steps taken to ensure that families, legal representatives, or other persons with a legitimate interest are informed of the fate and whereabouts of disappeared individuals.

(f) Please provide information on the specific measures adopted to protect women, girls and children from enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to, especially in light of allegations of abductions, sexual violence, exploitation and forced conscription. Kindly indicate the efforts made to investigate these cases and provide remedies to victims and their families.

(g) Please provide detailed information on the legal guarantees in place to prevent enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to in the context of armed conflicts.

(h) Please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, children, and members of ethnic minorities,

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are protected against enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to, particularly in conflict-affected areas.

(i) Please provide information on the steps taken to ensure that victims of enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to and their families have access to truth, justice, and reparation, including psychosocial and economic support. Kindly indicate whether any programmes or mechanisms have been established to respond to the social and psychological impact of enforced disappearance and acts tantamount to on affected communities.

(j) Please provide information on the applicable legal provisions concerning immunity for members of the security forces, police, and military in the context of criminal investigations, including alleged acts of enforced disappearance. Kindly explain how these provisions align with the State's obligations to ensure accountability for serious human rights violations.

22. The Working Group requests a response within 60 days. The text of the general allegation will be published along with the Working Group's post-sessional report and on its website, where also any response received by your Excellency's Government will be made public.

Tunisia

The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (the Working Group) received information from sources concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (the Declaration) in Tunisia.

1. The sources provided information regarding instances of forced transfers to desert areas (within Tunisia) and collective expulsions of migrants (from Tunisia); the confiscation and destruction of documents; and practices amounting to sexual violence against migrants. They also reported acts tantamount to enforced disappearance, perpetrated by non-State actors, as well as enforced disappearances, which were facilitated by actions or omissions by the competent authorities managing the international borders of Tunisia, including the Tunisian shores.

2. Special procedure mandate holders have previously transmitted joint allegation letters addressed to Tunisia (TUN 6/2024 and TUN 5/2023), concerning reported violations associated with operations to prevent immigration to Europe, the pursuit of migrants within Tunisia, and their removal to the Algerian or Libyan borders. The Working Group expresses its appreciation to Tunisia for the responses received, including the Note Verbale dated 24 July 2024, which provided extensive information in reply to the aforementioned communications. The present general allegation is submitted in addition to individual cases previously transmitted by the Working Group to Tunisia pursuant to its humanitarian mandate.

3. The Working Group received information indicating that the Tunisian Coast Guard has carried out maritime interception operations. However, precise data regarding the number, origin, gender, or age of the concerned migrants remains unavailable. The information received suggests that the individuals involved include children, women, and the elderly. The lack of accurate statistics on the number of migrants intercepted by the Tunisian Coast Guard, the absence of information on their current fate and whereabouts, the loss of their identity documents, and the denial of safeguards related to deprivation of liberty all constitute significant obstacles to accountability efforts. Furthermore, such conditions hinder the ability to search for, and establish the fate and whereabouts of, these individuals, as required by principles 6, 7, 9, 12, and 13 of the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons adopted by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED).[2]

4. Information received by the Working Group indicates that Tunisian security forces have been carrying out forced transfers to desert areas)within Tunisia) and collective expulsions to Algeria and Libya of hundreds of individuals arbitrarily arrested on rural roads

[2] https://www.ohchr.org/ar/documents/legal-standards-and-guidelines/guiding-principles-search-disappeared-persons.

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or in urban areas—including Sfax, El-Amra, Zarzis, Medenine, and Ben Guerdane – or intercepted at sea while attempting to migrate to Italy. These forced transfers and collective expulsions have reportedly taken place amidst a strong presence of the Special Unit of the National Guard and the Rapid Intervention Brigade of the police in the aforementioned regions. Migrants are reportedly forcibly transferred to desert border areas in the south or west of the country. Sources report that, since September 2023, groups ranging from 20 to 100 persons – and sometimes more than one group per week—have been deported from locations including Tunis, Sfax, and El-Amra following arbitrary arrests. Simultaneously, several groups were collectively expelled after being intercepted along Tunisia's south-western coastline. Multiple sources confirmed that Tunisian security forces utilize official vehicles and buses to transport detainees directly to the borders with Libya and Algeria, where they may become victims of enforced disappearance or acts tantamount to. Expelled migrants have also reportedly been subsequently subjected to arbitrary detention, forced labor, extortion, torture, and other forms of ill-treatment, as well as unlawful killings. The abandonment by Tunisian security forces of vulnerable and unprotected persons in vast, deserted border areas places them at great risk, including of acts tantamount to enforced disappearances, since those are areas where non-State armed groups operate. It is reported that the Tunisian authorities are aware that migrants collectively expelled and forcibly transferred to desert areas would be at risk of falling victim to enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to. Some of the migrants are believed to have died due to the surrounding dire conditions, with reports indicating that they were buried in mass graves in the desert.

5. Furthermore, it was reported that Tunisian authorities have not conducted investigations into the fate and whereabouts of migrants following their removal from Tunisia, despite information indicating that some may have been subjected to enforced disappearance or acts tantamount to.

6. Additionally, information received indicates the involvement of Tunisian security forces and the Coast Guard in theft of migrants' money, extortion of migrants and their families, and trafficking in persons through the sale of migrants to armed groups along the south-western border. Human trafficking is reportedly a widespread practice in these areas.

7. Although Tunisia is a State Party to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, it does not possess a national asylum law or system. Under Tunisian law, individuals who enter, reside in, or leave the country irregularly are subject to criminal penalties. Following maritime interceptions or arbitrary arrests on Tunisian territory, the authorities have reportedly repeatedly abandoned migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, in the Tunisian desert or in remote border areas with Libya and Algeria. If confirmed, these practices would constitute collective expulsion and demonstrate a complete disregard for the right to life of migrants, including refugees, as well as a violation of the principle of non-refoulement. The individuals expelled are reportedly exposed to serious potential human rights violations in Libya and to further expulsion from Algeria to Niger.

8. According to information received by the Working Group, Tunisian authorities have also committed violations at sea and endangered lives during the interception of boats, including through high-speed manoeuvres that risk capsizing vessels, the use of physical violence, the deployment of tear gas at close range, and deliberate ramming of boats. These actions have been reportedly followed by a failure of the authorities to conduct systematic individual assessments of protection needs upon disembarkation. Migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, have been subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment during detention, or collective expulsion.

9. Reports also indicate the continued confiscation of documents from migrants residing in Tunisian cities, either by Tunisian security forces or by individuals exhibiting increasing xenophobic hostility, particularly toward persons of African descent. This has resulted in severe difficulties for affected individuals in proving their identity, locating or being located, moving freely, or continuing their attempts to flee persecution in their countries of origin.

10. The mass transfers to border areas, the prevention of boat crossings to Europe, the collective expulsions of migrants, and their subsequent transfer to detention centres operated by armed groups and militias have reportedly contributed to the systematic commission of acts by non-State actors that may be tantamount to enforced disappearances.

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11. With regard to the allegations contained in this document, the Working Group would like to bring to the Government's attention articles 2, 8, 10, 12 and 13 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

12. The Working Group respectfully requests the Government's observations and comments on the following questions:

(a) Please provide any additional information and comments regarding the allegations mentioned above.

(b) Please provide detailed information on the safeguards in place to prevent enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to in the context of operations to manage Tunisian international borders, the interception of migrant boats at sea, and security measures accompanying the search for irregular migrants on Tunisian territory.

(c) Please provide information on steps taken by the Tunisian authorities to prevent arbitrary arrests that may amount to enforced disappearances and acts tantamount toe. This information should include information about the documentation of the detention of migrants and asylum-seekers, the transfer of migrants under your Government's jurisdiction, and the publicity of such documentation.

(d) Please provide information on the comprehensive collection and publication of statistics on migrants apprehended or removed by Tunisian forces, disaggregated by gender, race, nationality, age, marital status, and accompanying persons.

(e) Please provide information on the mechanisms in place to review the status of migrants before the Tunisian authorities, and on the availability of interpretation in the languages spoken by the migrants, as well as on the procedures followed to assess the risk of being subject to enforced disappearance or acts tantamount to upon deportation, extradition, expulsion or refoulement.

(f) Please provide information on the measures taken by the Tunisian authorities to prevent deportees from Tunisia from falling victim to the actions of non-state actors, including acts tantamount to enforced disappearances.

(g) Please provide details on the measures taken to search for individuals who have disappeared on Tunisian territory or in neighbouring countries following their transfer and about the available mechanisms for the families to have information about the fate and whereabouts of the migrants and asylum-seekers - from the country of origin - who are under the custody of Tunisia.

(h) Please provide detailed information on the measures taken to ensure the respect of the principle of non-refoulement.

13. The Working Group kindly requests a response within 60 days. The general allegation will be reflected in the Working Group's post-sessional report, and any responses received will be made available on its official website.

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Annex II

Press releases and statements

1. On 18 February 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release condemning the mistreatment of Palestinian detainees and Israeli hostages and denouncing the degrading public display by Hamas of Israeli hostages released in Gaza on 8 and 15 February 2025.[1]

2. On 24 February 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release marking the fourth year of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and demanding for accountability and warning that, without guarantees for human rights and justice, there can be no peace.[2]

3. On 28 February 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release urging the Government of Venezuela to determine the fate and whereabouts of victims of enforced disappearance in the context of the presidential elections in July 2024, and during and after the presidential inauguration in January 2025.[3]

4. On 5 March 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling for urgent, practical support for human rights defenders amid the deteriorating situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo[4].

5. On 7 March 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Belarus to disclose the fate and whereabouts of pro-democracy activist Siarhei Tsikhanouski on the second anniversary of his enforced disappearance.[5]

6. On 26 March 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release urging Belarusian authorities to address persistent allegations of ill-treatment of women held in correctional colonies.[6]

7. On 26 March 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Pakistan to immediately release detained Baloch human rights defenders and cease its crackdown on peaceful protesters.[7]

8. On 7 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release stating that the political transition in Syria is a valuable opportunity to end the arbitrary, inhumane and indefinite detention of around 52,000 people in relation to the conflict with Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).[8]

9. On 11 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release welcoming the unilateral ceasefire declared by the

[1] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-humane-treatment-and-immediate-release-israeli-hostages-and.https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-humane-treatment-and-immediate-release-israeli-hostages-and.

[2] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/russias-repression-home-and-aggression-against-ukraine-demand-justice-no.

[3] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-venezuela-comply-international-law-prevent-irreparable-harm.

[4] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/un-expert-expresses-extreme-concern-safety-human-rights-defenders-eastern.

[5] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/belarus-experts-mark-second-anniversary-enforced-disappearance-siarhei.

[6] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/belarus-alarming-ill-treatment-women-prisoners-and-life-threatening.

[7] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/pakistan-un-experts-demand-release-baloch-human-rights-defenders-and-end.

[8] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-end-isil-related-arbitrary-detention-north-east-syria-and.

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Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) on 1 March 2025, after more than 40 years of conflict with Türkiye.[9]

10. On 14 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on the occasion of the conflict in Sudan reaching the two-year mark, raising alarm that widespread starvation and a distressing surge in acute malnutrition are unfolding.[10]

11. On 24 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release raising serious concerns about an alleged practice of Belarusian criminal courts transferring accused persons to coercive psychiatric treatment in retaliation for their exercise of civil and political rights.[11]

12. On 29 March 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release expressing serious concern over the excessive and harmful impacts of Pakistan's counter-terrorism measures in Balochistan and calling for full respect for international law.[12]

13. On 30 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release expressing outrage at the alleged summary execution of several dozen people in Mali, as well as the enforced disappearance of others and warning that these unlawful killings may amount to war crimes, and that the enforced disappearances may constitute crimes against humanity if they are part of widespread or systematic attacks against civilians.[13]

14. On 30 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release expressing deep concern at the apparently unlawful deportations of over 250 Venezuelan and Salvadoran men – allegedly involved with gangs – from the United States to El Salvador.[14]

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[9] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-welcome-kurdish-workers-party-ceasefire-turkiye-and-urge-just-and.

[10] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/sudan-faces-worsening-humanitarian-catastrophe-famine-and-conflict-escalate.

[11] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/belarus-experts-alarmed-reports-coercive-psychiatric-treatment-punishment.

[12] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-pakistan-address-human-rights-violations-balochistan.

[13] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/mali-un-experts-outraged-reports-summary-executions-and-enforced.

[14] See https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-alarmed-illegal-deportations-united-states-el-salvador.

Annex III

Intersessional activities of the members

1. On 7 February 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez met with the Director and some students of the CHREN Human Rights Clinic, FAU University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany.

2. On 7 February 2025, Ms. Gabriella Citroni delivered a keynote speech in the context of presentation at the foro sobre la lucha contra la impunidad y el acceso a la justicia de las víctimas de desaparición en Coahuila, organised by the Academia Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico.

3. On 19 February 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez delivered a training to approximately 20 NGOs in the United States, together with the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

4. On 21 and 22 February 2025, Mr. Mohammed Al-Obaidi provided a training to 20 Iraqi NGOs in Erbil, Iraq, on mechanisms to submit reports, information and, communicating with special procedure mechanisms.

5. On 25 February 2025, Ms. Grażyna Baranowska took part in an expert discussion with a contribution on the Working Group's work regarding enforced disappearances related to the situation in Gaza, at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany.

6. On 26 February 2025, Ms. Gabriella Citroni delivered a lecture on "Forced Disappearance and International Law: The Experience of a Member of UN Bodies and Academic", in the context of the Ph.D. programme, "The Practice of Human Rights in National and Supranational Courts and Bodies", organized by the University of Palermo, Italy.

7. On 3 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez was interviewed by TN24 about enforced disappearances in Venezuela.

8. On 4 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez, met with Quinto Elemento Lab and discussed the thematic study on enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment.

9. On 7 March 2025, Ms. Grażyna Baranowska gave a guest lecture on the activities of the Working Group to students at the Hertie School, Berlin, Germany.

10. On 10 March 2025, Ms. Aua Baldé delivered a keynote address at a side-event on the margins of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Annual Assembly, titled "Strengthening CPLP Human Rights Institutions: Cooperation and Engagement with International Mechanisms" organised by Ombudsperson of Portugal as part of CPLP (Comunidade dos países de língua portuguesa) Human Rights Network, in Geneva, Switzerland.

11. On 12 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez met with NGOs in Chile to analyse the National Plan for the Search for victims of enforced disappearance during the dictatorship.

12. On 12 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez met with NGOs and families of Venezuela for a training on enforced disappearances.

13. On 23 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez delivered a training to approximately 65 NGOs from the Americas on enforced disappearances of migrants.

14. On 24 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez delivered a training on special procedure mechanisms and enforced disappearances to approximately 40 family committees and NGOs from Guanajuato, Mexico.

15. On 29 March 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez participated in a training in Mexico City with approximately 60 NGOs from the Red Nacional de Organismos Civiles de Derechos Humanos "Todos los Derechos para Todas y Todos" (Red TDT).

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16. On 29 March 2025, Ms. Gabriella Citroni intervened in the webinar, “Perú: riesgos de la ley 13207 y su implicación con la impunidad”, organised by National Human Rights Network.

17. On 1 April 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez participated in a training on special procedure mechanisms with the NGO Tlachinollan, from Guerrero, México.

18. On 3 April 2025, Ms. Grażyna Baranowska took part in the expert panel discussion entitled, “Pathways to reparations for missing persons in Ukraine: legal and instrumental responses” organized by the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) and Register of Damage for Ukraine (RD4U), in The Hague, Netherlands.

19. On 12 April 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez was interviewed by El Pitazo about enforced disappearances in Venezuela.

20. On 15 April 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez participated in a public lecture with the Conselho Nacional de Justiça do Brasil on enforced disappearances.

21. On 18 April 2025, Mr. Mohammed Al-Obaidi, in coordination with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Beirut participated as a speaker in an online training to 30 participants from the Arab region on documenting human rights violations and communicating with special procedures mechanisms.

22. On 22 April 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez gave a training about the so-called short-term enforced disappearances with families and committees of families of Guanajuato, México.

23. On 23 April 2025, Ms. Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez participated in the 18th anniversary of the disappearances of 10 men of the Maverik Case in Aguascalientes, México.

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