

## WHAT ARE THE WGEID'S PROCEDURES?

**URGENT CASES:** The Working group transmits urgently to the country concerned, alleged cases of enforced disappearance that occurred within the three months preceding receipt of the report.

**STANDARD CASES:** The Working group transmits after each session cases that happened more than three months prior to the receipt of the report.

**GENERAL ALLEGATIONS:** The Working Group regularly transmits to States a summary of allegations received or gathered from reliable sources with regard to obstacles encountered in the implementation of the 1992 Declaration.

**PROMPT INTERVENTION FOR REPRISALS:** The Working Group transmits to the government concerned information on cases of intimidation, threats or reprisal against relatives of disappeared people, witnesses or their families or members of NGOs who are investigating cases of enforced disappearances.

**JOINT COMMUNICATIONS:** The Working Group may send a joint communication with other relevant mandate holders whenever credible allegations are received that a person has been arrested, detained, abducted or otherwise deprived of liberty and has been enforcedly disappeared or is at risk of being made to disappear.

**COUNTRY VISITS:** With prior agreement of the relevant government, the Working Group can visit a country to assess the overall situation of disappearances. It will then present a report on the visit to the Human Rights Council.

**ANNUAL REPORTS:** The Working Group reports annually to the Human Rights Council on its activities, informing also on its communications with governments and NGOs. It also presents thematic reports.

“Any act of enforced disappearance is an offence to human dignity. It is condemned as a denial of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and as a grave and flagrant violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reaffirmed and developed in international instruments in this field.”

### **DECLARATION ON THE PROTECTION OF ALL PERSONS FROM ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE (ARTICLE 1)**

Besides the concrete outcome of each case, the activities of the Working Group aspire to honour the resilience of those who in the face of extreme suffering find the strength to search for their loved ones and seek truth, justice and reparations.

**UN WORKING GROUP  
ON ENFORCED  
OR INVOLUNTARY  
DISAPPEARANCES**

# WHERE ARE

# THEY?

## WHAT IS THE UN WORKING GROUP ?

One of the primary tasks of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) is to assist families in determining the fate or whereabouts of their family members who are reportedly disappeared.

In this humanitarian capacity, the Working Group serves as a channel of communication between the relatives of the disappeared and the Governments concerned. It requests Governments to carry out investigations and be informed of the results. The cases remain open until the fate or whereabouts of the person is determined.

The WGEID, whose permanent Secretariat is based in Geneva (Switzerland), is made up of **FIVE INDEPENDENT EXPERTS**. The WGEID holds three regular sessions during the year.

**THE WGEID DOES NOT:** DIRECTLY INVESTIGATE INDIVIDUAL CASES ; ESTABLISH INDIVIDUAL OR STATE RESPONSIBILITY IN CASES OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE ; CARRY OUT EXHUMATIONS ; GRANT REPARATIONS.

## WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED TO SUBMIT A CASE ?

The WGEID accepts cases from any country in the world. It is not necessary to exhaust domestic remedies before submitting a case to the Working Group.

In order for the WGEID to consider a case, the following minimum elements are required :

- **VICTIMS**, FULL NAME (INCLUDING ANY AVAILABLE INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THEIR IDENTIFICATION)
- **DATE OF DISAPPEARANCE** (AT LEAST MONTH AND YEAR)
- **PLACE** OF ARREST OR ABDUCTION OR WHERE THE VICTIM WAS LAST SEEN
- **FORCES** (STATE OR STATE-SUPPORTED) PRESUMED TO HAVE CARRIED OUT THE ARREST OR ABDUCTION
- ANY **ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE RELATIVES AND/OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VICTIMS** TO DETERMINE THE FATE OR WHEREABOUTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THEIR OUTCOMES ; OR IF ACTION WAS NOT POSSIBLE EXPLAIN WHY
- **IDENTITY OF THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION** SUBMITTING THE REPORT, INCLUDING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MISSING PERSON
- **DIRECT CONSENT OF THE FAMILY OF THE VICTIM** IF THE CASE IS SUBMITTED BY A PERSON OTHER THAN A FAMILY MEMBER

## WHO CAN SUBMIT INFORMATION ?

Relatives of a disappeared person, or a civil society organisation acting on their behalf, can submit a case to the Working Group.

### CONSENT

The Working Group is guided by the principle of “do no harm”. For this reason, the **CONSENT** of the the victim’s legal representative (family member or legal counsel) is **REQUIRED**. When submitting a case to the WGEID confidentiality can be requested.

## HOW TO SUBMIT INFORMATION ?

ONLINE SUBMISSION TOOL AT

[spsubmission.ohchr.org](https://spsubmission.ohchr.org)

Whoever refers the case to the Group **MUST BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION WITH THE WORKING GROUP** and to answer promptly to requests for further information or clarification.

FOR MORE INFORMATION :

[www.ohchr.org/wgeid](https://www.ohchr.org/wgeid)

CONTACT US :

[wgeid@ohchr.org](mailto:wgeid@ohchr.org)