**Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances concludes its 134th session**

**Geneva, 25 September 2024**

The [United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances](https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-disappearances) concluded its 134th session, which took place from 16 to 25 September 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland.

During the session, the Working Group examined 219 reported cases of enforced disappearances it had transmitted under its urgent action procedure since 11 May 2024 concerning Bangladesh, Burundi, Chad, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Kenya, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Syria, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

It also reviewed 598 cases, including newly reported cases under its standard procedure and updated information on previously transmitted cases, concerning Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, China, Colombia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, El Salvador, Egypt, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Nicaragua, Mauritania, Philippines, Pakistan, Palestine, State of Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

In accordance with its [methods of work](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/working-methods/ahrcwgeid1-revised-methods-work-working-group-enforced-or-involuntary), the Working Group continued to document acts tantamount to enforced disappearances perpetrated by non-state actors exercising government-like functions or *de facto* control over territory and population. In this context, the Working Group decided to transmit five cases to *de facto* authorities in Libya, north-east Syria and the State of Palestine.

During the session, the Working Group also reviewed and adopted general allegations with regard to obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

The 134th session of the Working Group coincided with the presentation of its [annual report](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc5754add4-enforced-disappearances-and-elections-report-working-group) to the 57th session of the Human Rights Council, as well as a follow-up reports to the recommendations made during past visits to [Kyrgyzstan](https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/107/06/pdf/g2410706.pdf) and [Tajikistan](https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/105/65/pdf/g2410565.pdf).

On 23 September 2024, the Working Group held a public event to launch its report on [enforced disappearances and elections](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc5754add4-enforced-disappearances-and-elections-report-working-group). It also convened a side event on 25 September 2024, to present its [report on the visit](https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc5754add1-visit-african-union-judicial-and-human-rights-organs-and) to the African Union judicial and human rights organs and other subregional bodies, in line with Addis Ababa roadmap. The Working Group also hosted internal consultations in preparation of its upcoming report on enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment, and advanced in its discussions on the study on the use of universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance.

On 23 September 2024, the Working Group held its yearly joint meeting with the [Committee on Enforced Disappearances](https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/ced) (CED) to discuss respective activities and common projects.

The WGEID also adopted the Joint Statement on so-called short term enforced disappearances.

The Working Group held meetings with representatives of the Governments of Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Chile, El Salvador, Lithuania, Morocco, Pakistan, Thailand, and Ukraine. It also held in person and online meetings with relatives of disappeared persons, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders.

During the session, Ms. Gabriella Citroni (Italy) was elected as the new Chair Rapporteur of the Working Group, and Ms. Grażyna Baranowska (Poland) as the Vice-Chair.

The decisions made by the Working Group during the 134th session will be reflected in its next [post-sessional report](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Disappearances/Pages/Sessions.aspx).

The Working Group will hold its 135th session from 27-31 January 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland.

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*The* [*Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-disappearances) *is comprised of five independent experts from all regions of the world. The Chair-Rapporteur is* ***Gabriella Citroni*** *(Italy) and the Vice-Chair is* ***Grażyna Baranowska*** *(Poland); other members are* ***Aua Baldé*** *(Guinea-Bissau) and* ***Ana Lorena Delgadillo Pérez*** *(Mexico). A new member from Asia Pacific is due to be appointed by the Hunan Rights Council during its 57th session.*

*The Working Group was established by the then UN Commission on Human Rights in 1980 to assist families in determining the fate and whereabouts of disappeared relatives. It endeavours to establish a channel of communication between the families and the Governments concerned, to ensure that individual cases are investigated, with the objective of clarifying the whereabouts of persons who, having disappeared, are placed outside the protection of the law. It also provides assistance in the implementation by States of the* [*UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-protection-all-persons-enforced-disappearance)*.*

*The Working Groups are part of what is known as the* [*Special Procedures*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures-human-rights-council) *of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council’s independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms. Special Procedures mandate-holders are independent human rights experts appointed by the Human Rights Council to address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. They are not UN staff and are independent from any government or organization. They serve in their individual capacity and do not receive a salary for their work.*

*Learn* [*how to submit a case*](https://vimeo.com/359262861/6b0b6281da) *to the Working Group.*

*Learn* [*more about the work*](https://vimeo.com/showcase/6609050/video/389269013) *of the Working Group.*

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