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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Enforced or involuntary disappearance

Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances*

Summary

The present report provides details of the activities of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the communications and cases it examined between 11 May 2024 and 2 May 2025, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 54/14.

During the reporting period, the Working Group transmitted a total of 1,278 cases to 38 States. Overall, since its inception in 1980, it has transmitted a total of 62,904 cases. The number of cases under active consideration that have not yet been clarified, closed or discontinued stands at 49,664 in a total of 100 States.

* The annexes to the present report are reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.



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I. Introduction

1. The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the first United Nations human rights thematic mechanism constituted with a universal mandate, was established by the Commission on Human Rights pursuant to its resolution 20 (XXXVI). The mandate was most recently extended by the Human Rights Council in its resolution 54/14.
2. The present report contains information on the Working Group's activities, including communications transmitted and cases examined between 11 May 2024 and 2 May 2025. A summary of the decisions on individual cases taken by the Working Group and of communications transmitted to the States concerned during the reporting period is presented in section III. Overall statistics concerning cases transmitted between 1980 and 2025 are contained in annex III.
3. Since its inception in 1980, the Working Group has transmitted a total of 62,904 cases to 115 States. The number of cases under active consideration that have not yet been clarified, closed or discontinued stands at 49,664 in a total of 100 States. During the reporting period, 233 cases were clarified.
4. The Working Group has transmitted a total of 163 cases to seven non-State actors, namely to the de facto authorities in Sana'a (93), Hamas (22), the Libyan National Army (14), the Restoration Council of Shan State (4), the self-proclaimed "Donetsk people's republic" (8), the Syrian Democratic Council (in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic) (18) and the Taliban in Afghanistan (4). The number of cases tantamount to enforced disappearance under active consideration that have not yet been clarified, closed or discontinued stands at 80. During the reporting period, the Working Group clarified four cases tantamount to enforced disappearance perpetrated by non-State actors based on information submitted by sources, concerning Hamas (3) and the Libyan National Army (1).¹

II. Activities of the Working Group from 11 May 2024 to 2 May 2025

A. Activities

5. The activities reported here were carried out by the Working Group amid the continued liquidity crisis faced by the United Nations, which has posed unprecedented challenges to its ability to fully discharge its mandate (see para. 25 below). The Working Group reiterates its call to Member States to meet their financial obligations in full and in a predictable and timely manner.² In this regard, the Working Group is thankful for the continuous support, including through voluntary financial and in-kind contributions it receives, provided by donor States, notably France and the Republic of Korea, and partners such as the Ford Foundation, the Human Rights Clinic at the University of California Berkley School of Law and the Ibero-American University Mexico City.
6. During the period under review, the Working Group held three sessions: the 134th session, from 16 to 25 September 2024,³ the 135th session, from 27 to 31 January 2025,⁴ and the 136th session, from 28 April to 2 May 2025.⁵ The reports on the sessions should be considered as complementary to the present report.
7. During its 134th session, the Working Group appointed, for a one-year term, Gabriella Citroni as Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group and Grażyna Baranowska as Vice-Chair.

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.

² A/HRC/57/54, para. 9.

³ A/HRC/WGEID/134/1.

⁴ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1.

⁵ A/HRC/WGEID/136/1.

8. The Working Group expresses its gratitude to the Government of Thailand for hosting the 136th session of the Working Group, in Bangkok. The Working Group also welcomes the invitation from the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to host a session in Abidjan, which is scheduled to take place from 5 to 9 May 2026.

9. The Working Group also welcomes the participation of States, victims, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the first World Congress on Enforced Disappearances, held in Geneva on 15 and 16 January 2025, and encourages all actors to ensure that they take meaningful action to fulfil their pledges.⁶

10. The Working Group is preparing its thematic study on enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment, which will be submitted as an addendum to the present report. A summary of that study is provided in part IV below. The Working Group is also preparing a conference room paper on universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance,⁷ a summary of which is provided in part V below. The Working Group is thankful to the States, victims, civil society organizations and experts who participated in consultations and made submissions in response to the respective calls for inputs.⁸

11. During its 135th session, the Working Group decided to devote its next thematic report to the topic of enforced disappearances and memorialization processes.⁹ A description of the plans for that study is provided in part VI below.

12. During the reporting period, the Working Group continued engaging and coordinating with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, aiming to enhance the complementarity of the mandates. The Working Group held its annual joint meeting with the Committee and adopted a joint statement on so-called "short-term enforced disappearances".¹⁰

13. The activities carried out by members of the Working Group during the reporting period, including participation in conferences, consultations, seminars, training events, workshops and lectures, organized by Governments, academia and civil society organizations are featured in its post-session reports.¹¹

B. Meetings

14. During the period under review, the Working Group held meetings with representatives of the Governments of Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Lithuania, Morocco, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Togo and Ukraine. It also held meetings with representatives of the Department for the Execution of the Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Death Penalty, Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions and Enforced Disappearances in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic. A number of informal meetings were also held with representatives of various States. The Working Group expresses its appreciation to those Governments and institutions for the meetings and emphasizes the importance of cooperation and dialogue.

⁶ See <https://www.cedi193.org/report>.

⁷ The conference room paper will be available on the web page of the Working Group, at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-disappearances/annual-reports>.

⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-submissions-thematic-report-enforced-disappearances-context-defense-land> and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-inputs-research-working-group-enforced-or-involuntary-disappearances-use>.

⁹ [A/HRC/WGEID/135/1](#), para 12.

¹⁰ [CED/C/11](#).

¹¹ [A/HRC/WGEID/134/1](#), annex IV; [A/HRC/WGEID/135/1](#), annex IV; and [A/HRC/WGEID/136/1](#), annex III.

C. Communications

15. During the reporting period, the Working Group transmitted 1,278 new cases of enforced disappearance to 38 States.

16. The Working Group transmitted 927 of the above-mentioned cases under the urgent action procedure to 20 States.

17. It also transmitted nine cases tantamount to enforced disappearance to de facto authorities in Libya (1), Myanmar (1), the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic (6) and Yemen (1).¹²

18. The Working Group clarified 233 cases in 20 States. Of the 233 cases, 62 were clarified on the basis of information provided by Governments and 171 on the basis of information provided by sources.

19. During the reporting period, the Working Group decided to discontinue one case concerning Egypt. It also considered eight cases as duplicates, concerning Algeria (1), Mauritania (1), Morocco (4), Saudi Arabia (1) and the Russian Federation (1). The duplicate cases were consequently deleted from the records of the Working Group.

20. During the reporting period, the Working Group transmitted, together with other special procedures, a total of 106 joint communications. Of the 106 communications, 24 were joint urgent appeals concerning persons who had been arrested, detained, abducted or otherwise deprived of their liberty or who had been forcibly disappeared or were at risk of disappearance, in Belarus (4), Cyprus (1), El Salvador (1), Guinea (1), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (1), Iraq (2), Kenya (1), Lebanon (1), Mozambique (1), Nicaragua (1), the Russian Federation (1), Rwanda (1), Saudi Arabia (1), the Syrian Arab Republic (1), Türkiye (2), the United Arab Emirates (1), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (1), the United States of America (1) and Zimbabwe (1).

21. The joint communications also included three prompt intervention letters addressing allegations of harassment and/or threats to human rights defenders and relatives of disappeared persons in Honduras (1) and Pakistan (2).

22. In addition, the joint communications included 74 joint allegation letters, concerning Argentina (3), Azerbaijan (1), Bahrain (1), Belarus (1), Bhutan (1), Burundi (1), Cameroon (1), China (6), Colombia (2), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (3), the Dominican Republic (1), Egypt (5), El Salvador (2), France (1), Gabon (1), Guinea (1), Honduras (1), India (1), Indonesia (1), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (1), Iraq (1), Italy (1), Kenya (1), Mali (1), Mauritania (1), Mexico (1), Mozambique (1), Nepal (1), the Niger (1), Pakistan (2), the Russian Federation (1), Rwanda (1), Spain (1), Sri Lanka (1), the Syrian Arab Republic (1), Thailand (3), Tunisia (1), Türkiye (1), Uganda (1), the United Kingdom (1), the United Republic of Tanzania (2), the United States (1), Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (3) and Viet Nam (2), as well as the Holy See (1) and "other actors" (7).

23. Furthermore, the joint communications included five other letters, concerning Egypt (1), El Salvador (1), Israel (1), Peru (1) and the United States (1).

24. The Working Group transmitted nine general allegations relating to obstacles in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance to the Governments of Belarus (1), Bulgaria (1), Israel (1), Kenya (1), Pakistan (1), Tunisia (1), the Sudan (1), the United Kingdom (1) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (1).¹³

¹² The Working Group stresses that the cases addressed to de facto authorities in Libya, the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic, Myanmar and Yemen 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.

¹³ See general allegations and replies at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-disappearances/sessions-working-group>.

D. Country visits

25. During the reporting period, the Working Group carried out a visit to Lithuania from 20 to 26 November 2024. The report of the visit is contained in an addendum to the present report.¹⁴

26. Owing to the liquidity crisis affecting the United Nations Secretariat and the work of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Working Group was unfortunately unable to conduct a second country visit within the reporting cycle, in line with its entitlement. The agreed country visit to the Republic of Korea, scheduled to take place in June 2025, was therefore prevented from taking place. The Working Group deeply regrets this situation.

27. During the reporting period, the Working Group received positive responses to its visit requests from the Governments of Bangladesh, Canada and Guatemala, to which it extends its appreciation.

28. During the reporting period, the Working Group requested a visit to Israel and reiterated its requests to visit Angola, Belarus, China, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe.¹⁵

E. Follow-up reports and other procedures

29. During the reporting period, the Working Group assessed the implementation of the recommendations it had made following its country visit to Cyprus in April 2022.¹⁶ The Working Group thanks the Government of Cyprus and all stakeholders who submitted information for its consideration. The follow-up report is available as an addendum to the present report.¹⁷

F. Technical cooperation

30. In February 2025, at the request of the Directorate General for the Search for Disappeared Persons of the Ministry of Justice of Peru, the Working Group provided its expert opinion on the draft directive regarding the search for persons who disappeared during the violence of 1980–2000 in Peru.¹⁸

31. In 2024, the Working Group started discussions on technical cooperation with Bangladesh and its Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance. During the reporting period, the Working Group held meetings with the members of the Commission of Inquiry and agreed with the Government to a technical visit to take place in June 2025.

32. During the reporting period, the Working Group continued to provide the Search Unit for Missing Persons in Colombia with technical cooperation. On 20 January 2025, it delivered the first training session on transnational mechanisms for the search and investigation of enforced disappearances to more than 130 civil servants who are members of the Search Unit.

33. During the reporting period, the Working Group continued to provide the Government of Chile with technical cooperation regarding the implementation of the national plan for the search for victims of enforced disappearance during the dictatorship. Through its technical cooperation, the Working Group aims to share good practices and provide recommendations

¹⁴ [A/HRC/60/35/Add.1](#).

¹⁵ See annex I below for country visit requests and invitations extended.

¹⁶ [A/HRC/51/31/Add.1](#).

¹⁷ [A/HRC/60/35/Add.2](#).

¹⁸ See PER 3/2025 and the reply thereto. All communications and replies thereto mentioned in the present report are available at <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/Tmsearch/TMDocuments>.

so that the implementation and evaluation of the national plan adhere to international standards, including the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons (2019).

III. Decisions taken by the Working Group on individual cases and communications transmitted to the States concerned during the reporting period¹⁹

	Number of outstanding cases at the beginning of the reporting period	Number of cases transmitted to the Government during the reporting period		Number of cases clarified during the reporting period by:		Number of cases of possible clarification by the Government (six-month rule)	Number of outstanding cases at the end of the reporting period	Number of communications sent during the reporting period					Number of communications received during the reporting period				
		Urgent procedures	Standard cases	Government	Sources			Prompt intervention letter	Urgent appeal	Allegation letter	General allegation	Other letter	Response to prompt intervention letter	Response to urgent appeal	Response to allegation letter	Response to general allegation	Response to other letter
Algeria	3 313	2	29	1	1		3 341 ²⁰										
Argentina	3 061	1		3			3 059			3					3		
Azerbaijan	31		6				37			1					1		
Bahrain	0	2			2		0			1					1	1	
Bangladesh	73		1		3		71										
Belarus	5		5				10 ²¹		4	1	1			2	1		
Bhutan	1						1			1							
Bulgaria	0						0				1						
Burundi	252	1	2				255			1							
Cameroon	18		1				19			1							
Chile	787			3			784										

¹⁹ Urgent procedures relate to cases of enforced disappearance that have occurred within three months prior to the receipt of a report by the Working Group; or cases of enforced disappearance that have occurred prior to the three-month limit, but within one year prior to the receipt of a report by the Working Group, provided that there is a link with a case that occurred within the three-month period. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of its methods of work, the Working Group may decide to use the urgent procedure in situations other than those here described. Standard cases are cases of enforced disappearance that have occurred prior to the three-month limit. Prompt intervention letters concern cases of intimidation, persecution or reprisal against families of disappeared persons, witnesses, lawyers, human rights defenders or other individuals concerned with disappearances. Urgent appeals concern allegations of enforced disappearance, or allegations regarding persons deprived of liberty who are at risk of being disappeared. Allegation letters and general allegations concern alleged obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration. Other letters concern bills, laws, policies and practices that do not comply with international human rights law and standards.

²⁰ During its 135th session, the Working Group decided to consider one outstanding case as a duplicate and one case was reopened. The duplicate case was consequently corrected in the Working Group's records.

²¹ At its 132nd session, the Working Group decided to reopen one case, which had been closed based on information provided by the Government (A/HRC/WGEID/132/1, para. 27).

	Number of outstanding cases at the beginning of the reporting period	Number of cases transmitted to the Government during the reporting period		Number of cases clarified during the reporting period by:		Number of cases of possible clarification by the Government (six-month rule)	Number of outstanding cases at the end of the reporting period	Number of communications sent during the reporting period					Number of communications received during the reporting period				
		Urgent procedures	Standard cases	Government	Sources			Prompt intervention letter	Urgent appeal	Allegation letter	General allegation	Other letter	Response to prompt intervention letter	Response to urgent appeal	Response to allegation letter	Response to general allegation	Response to other letter
China	144	4	3			2	151			6					6		
Colombia	944		2				946			2					2		
Cyprus	77						77		1						1		
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	450		27				477			3							
Democratic Republic of the Congo	50	4			2		52										
Dominican Republic										1							
Egypt	279		9	28	10	47	250			5	1				3		
El Salvador	2283	63	22	1		3	2 367		1	2	1			1	1		1
Equatorial Guinea	11		1				12										
France	1						1			1							
Gabon	0						0			1							
Guinea									1	1							
Honduras	130						130	1		1			1	1	1		
India	444						444			1							
Indonesia	188		1				189			1							
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	572	1	8	1			580		1	1				1			
Iraq	16 428		1				16 429		2	1				1			
Israel	11	101	57				169				1	1					
Italy	0						0			1							
Kenya	91		8				99		1	1	1						

	Number of outstanding cases at the beginning of the reporting period	Number of cases transmitted to the Government during the reporting period		Number of cases clarified during the reporting period by:		Number of cases of possible clarification by the Government (six-month rule)	Number of outstanding cases at the end of the reporting period	Number of communications sent during the reporting period					Number of communications received during the reporting period				
		Urgent procedures	Standard cases	Government	Sources			Prompt intervention letter	Urgent appeal	Allegation letter	General allegation	Other letter	Response to prompt intervention letter	Response to urgent appeal	Response to allegation letter	Response to general allegation	Response to other letter
Lao People's Democratic Republic	8		1				9										
Lebanon	314		1		1		314		1								
Libya ^a	56		4		2		58										
Mali	0						0			1							
Mauritania	9		2				10 ²²			1							
Mexico	355			1			354			1					1		
Morocco	155						151 ²³										
Mozambique	5	1	1				7		1	1				1			
Myanmar ^b	20						20										
Nepal	480						480			1							
Nicaragua	106	8	2		4		112		1								
Niger	0						0			1							
Pakistan	934	33	37	8	14	30	982	2		2	1						
Peru	2 361						2 361					1					1
Philippines	592		3				595										
Russian Federation	2 149	597	1	16 ²⁴	98	20	2 633		1	1							

²² During its 136th session, the Working Group decided to consider one outstanding case as a duplicate. The duplicate case was consequently deleted from the Working Group's records.

²³ During its 135th session, the Working Group decided to consider four outstanding cases as duplicates. The duplicate cases were consequently corrected in the Working Group's records.

²⁴ Clarifications by the Government during the reporting period refer to cases clarified based on information received from the Government of Ukraine.

	Number of outstanding cases at the beginning of the reporting period	Number of cases transmitted to the Government during the reporting period		Number of cases clarified during the reporting period by:		Number of cases of possible clarification by the Government (six-month rule)	Number of outstanding cases at the end of the reporting period	Number of communications sent during the reporting period					Number of communications received during the reporting period				
		Urgent procedures	Standard cases	Government	Sources			Prompt intervention letter	Urgent appeal	Allegation letter	General allegation	Other letter	Response to prompt intervention letter	Response to urgent appeal	Response to allegation letter	Response to general allegation	Response to other letter
Rwanda	28	19			2		45		1	1							
Saudi Arabia	29	1	2		3	2	29 ²⁵		1					1			
Spain	6	4					10			1					1		
Sri Lanka	6 282		24				6 306			1					1		
Sudan ^c	177						177				1						
Syrian Arab Republic ^d	697	24	78				799		1	1				1			
Thailand	77						77			3					2		
Tunisia	13						13			1	1				1		
Türkiye	83	5			1	4	87		2	1				1	1		
Uganda	22						22			1							
United Arab Emirates	25	3	2		2		28		1								
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	0						0		1	1	1			1	1		
United States of America	4						4		1	1		1					
United Republic of Tanzania	2		2				4			2							
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	39	53	8		26	1	74			3	1						

²⁵ During its 136th session, the Working Group decided to consider one outstanding case as a duplicate. The duplicate case was consequently deleted from the Working Group's records.

	Number of outstanding cases at the beginning of the reporting period	Number of cases transmitted to the Government during the reporting period		Number of cases clarified during the reporting period by:		Number of cases of possible clarification by the Government (six-month rule)	Number of outstanding cases at the end of the reporting period	Number of communications sent during the reporting period					Number of communications received during the reporting period				
		Urgent procedures	Standard cases	Government	Sources			Prompt intervention letter	Urgent appeal	Allegation letter	General allegation	Other letter	Response to prompt intervention letter	Response to urgent appeal	Response to allegation letter	Response to general allegation	Response to other letter
Viet Nam	2						2			2					1		
Yemen ^e	29						29										
Zimbabwe	5						5		1						1		
Holy See	0						0			1					1		
State of Palestine ^f	4						4										

^a One case was transmitted to the Libyan National Army and one case was clarified. These cases are not counted in the statistics of Libya. The Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedures, one joint allegation letter.

^b One case was transmitted by the Working Group to the State Administration Council in Myanmar. These cases are not counted in the statistics of Myanmar. The Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedures, one joint allegation letter.

^c The Working Group transmitted, jointly with other special procedures, one joint allegation letter to the Rapid Support Forces. These cases are not counted in the statistics of the Sudan.

^d Six cases were transmitted to the de facto authorities in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. These cases are not counted in the statistics of the Syrian Arab Republic.

^e One case was transmitted by the Working Group to the de facto authorities in Sana'a. The case is not counted in the statistics of Yemen.

^f Three cases were clarified on the basis of information provided by sources. These cases are not counted in the statistics of the State of Palestine.

IV. Enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment

34. In its thematic study submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 54/14, the Working Group examines the contextual factors in which enforced disappearances have occurred in relation to the defence of land, natural resources and the environment. It highlights how enforced disappearances are used as a tool to target human rights defenders, communities, Indigenous Peoples and other actors who advocate for the preservation of their land and natural resources or resist or protest against environmentally harmful projects, and the impact that has on individuals, families, communities and countries. The study also examines the role of various actors, including non-State actors, particularly enterprises, in enforced disappearances.

35. Violence, including enforced disappearances, against defenders of land, natural resources and the environment is often rooted in legal and political frameworks that privilege corporate and economic development objectives over human rights obligations. These systemic issues are exacerbated by insufficient legal protections, permissive or underimplemented regulations, and limited institutional access for defenders in remote or marginalized areas. Impunity and corruption, along with collusion among State and non-State actors, including enterprises, contribute to an environment where such violations occur with limited accountability. Criminalization, stigmatization and false charges are frequently used to discredit and suppress defenders of land, natural resources and the environment, particularly in the context of foreign investment and large-scale development projects. Most of these defenders, such as women, Indigenous Peoples, elders and community leaders, among others, face specific and intersectional threats.

36. Frail national legal frameworks and excessive reliance on voluntary due diligence mechanisms – where companies clearly have greater resources to defend themselves – hinder effective corporate accountability, while ongoing territorial disputes and the expansion of resource-based markets further intensify risks. Enforced disappearances thus often occur in the context of systemic discrimination and structural violence, with limited documentation or redress, particularly in cases involving short-term detentions. Notably, the shrinking of civic space through restrictive legislation further limits defenders' ability to operate safely and effectively. These overlapping factors create a high-risk environment for these defenders and contribute to sustained patterns of rights violations and impunity.

37. In the study, the Working Group emphasizes that both State-owned and private enterprises bear responsibilities in human rights protection, particularly concerning enforced disappearances. State-owned enterprises are directly accountable under international law, States exercise control over them. Similarly, private companies must respect human rights, even beyond domestic law.

38. In the study, the Working Group highlights the challenges, best practices and measures adopted by States to prevent and address enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and environment, to search for the disappeared, to investigate, identify, prosecute and sanction those responsible and to provide adequate measures of reparation. It concludes by making recommendations to States, the private sector and financial institutions.

39. To gather relevant information for the study, the Working Group held several consultations, including regional consultations in the Americas, Asia and Africa, as well as a technical consultation with human rights officers of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It also conducted approximately 50 interviews in all regions, including with special procedure mandate holders. The Working Group received a total of 31 submissions in response to its call for written inputs, comprising two from Member States, one from OHCHR, one from a national institution, one individual

contribution and 25 joint submissions representing 264 civil society organizations and academia.²⁶

V. Universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance

40. During its 131st session, the Working Group decided to study the use of universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance, considering the crucial importance such jurisdiction plays in combating impunity.

41. To gather relevant information for the study, the Working Group conducted desk research and an academic visit to Bern and St. Gallen, Switzerland, interviewed experts and issued a call for input.²⁷ Forty written submissions were received, including from States (6), national human rights institutions (1), civil society organizations, including associations of relatives of disappeared persons (19) and experts or scholars (14).

42. In the study, the Working Group examines the application of universal jurisdiction to enforced disappearances and highlights its crucial importance, both to promote accountability for crimes under international law and to provide a victim-centred response. The experiences of Argentina, France, Germany and Switzerland are analysed in depth, with both ongoing and concluded investigations and proceedings cited as examples.

43. The study debunks the assumption that only States that are parties to certain treaties might be required to apply universal jurisdiction. In the study, the Working Group recalls that the *jus cogens* nature of the prohibition of enforced disappearance gives rise to obligations for States to adopt all necessary measures to ensure that such violations do not remain unpunished, either by exercising their jurisdiction to apply their domestic law and international law to prosecute and, when applicable, punish those responsible, or by collaborating with other States that do so or attempt to do so. In this regard, the Working Group notes that a growing number of States have adopted domestic legislation incorporating universal jurisdiction to prosecute crimes under international law. The study examines the challenges in the implementation of universal jurisdiction, including claims concerning its allegedly selective nature, the perpetuation of neo-colonial dynamics, politicization and its use as a lawfare tool.

44. The Working Group found that universal jurisdiction prosecutions and trials still rarely proceed in cases of enforced disappearance, due to multiple reasons, including the failure of many States to codify enforced disappearance as a separate crime under their domestic legislation. Where States do codify it separately, they retain restrictive formulations that imply that many acts of enforced disappearance remain outside the scope of domestic criminal law and the jurisdiction of national courts. Where the crime has been codified, overly restrictive interpretations have prevented the exercise of universal jurisdiction. The Working Group also found that often, enforced disappearances are charged as ancillary crimes. In many instances, the principle of immunity (personal or functional) acts as an obstacle to commencing proceedings under universal jurisdiction.

45. The Working Group notes how the establishment of specialized institutions mandated to deal with crimes under international law, including enforced disappearance, has been instrumental in ensuring effective investigations and prosecutions pursuant to the principle of universal jurisdiction. Bearing in mind that the relevant crimes are committed abroad, it highlights the benefits of structural investigations, the collection of contextual evidence, and of international cooperation, including through mutual legal assistance and regional coordination. The Working Group also identifies significant obstacles to the safe, dignified, effective and regular participation of victims, witnesses, their representatives and civil

²⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-submissions-thematic-report-enforced-disappearances-context-defense-land>.

²⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-inputs-research-working-group-enforced-or-involuntary-disappearances-use>.

society organizations in investigations and proceedings conducted pursuant to universal jurisdiction.

46. In the study, the Working Group makes several recommendations to States. These include: (a) codifying enforced disappearance as an autonomous offence; (b) adopting domestic criminal legislation to allow all modes of criminal liability; (c) enshrining the principle *aut dedere aut judicare* in cases of enforced disappearance; (d) investigating prosecuting enforced disappearances; and (e) removing procedural obstacles to such prosecution, including statutes of limitations, amnesty laws and personal and functional immunities of State officials.

47. The Working Group also makes recommendations concerning the establishment of regularly trained and adequately funded specialized multidisciplinary units for the investigation and criminal prosecution of crimes under international law, with a specific mandate for universal jurisdiction cases.

48. As regards extraterritorial investigations, the Working Group makes recommendations related to: (a) enabling joint structural investigations; (b) strengthening mutual legal cooperation, inter-State cooperation and full, frank and fair evidence sharing, both during the search for disappeared persons and during criminal investigations; (c) creating and deploying joint investigation teams; and (d) pursuing complementarity with international courts and mechanisms.

49. Lastly, the Working Group refers to: (a) measures needed to ensure the effective protection of witnesses, relatives of disappeared persons and their defence counsel; (b) the creation of networks among competent authorities, including prosecutors, judges and law enforcement authorities, with other stakeholders, such as civil society organizations and victims' and families' associations; (c) the safe, effective and dignified participation of victims of enforced disappearance in investigations and trials, including in all hearings conducted pursuant to universal jurisdiction; and (d) the activity of associations and civil society organizations concerned in assisting victims through the use of universal jurisdiction.

VI. Memorialization and enforced disappearances

50. For its 2026 thematic study, to be submitted at the sixty-third session of the Human Rights Council, the Working Group will examine the interplay between memorialization and enforced disappearances. The study will focus on: (a) the legal obligations of States; (b) good practices regarding commemorative efforts, led by the State, victims and civil society; (c) measures to create, protect and preserve sites of memory; and (d) measures of protection of those who engage in commemorative practices, in particular relatives of disappeared persons. The Working Group will examine the existing mechanisms to ensure the inclusive participation of victims in memorization processes, with special emphasis on marginalized groups and persons facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and will highlight examples of successful collaboration between Governments and civil society in memory initiatives.

51. Consultations for the study will be conducted throughout 2025 and at the beginning of 2026.

VII. Observations

52. The Working Group continues to be inspired by the resilience and dedication of hundreds of families and civil society organizations with whom it interacted during the reporting period, including in the context of the World Congress on Enforced Disappearances. The Congress was a historic gathering and provided a platform for sharing experiences, coordinating efforts, developing recommendations and making pledges towards collective action to eradicate enforced disappearances (see para. 9 above).

53. The Working Group continues to encourage States that have not yet done so to become parties to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and to recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced

Disappearances to receive and examine individual and inter-State complaints. The Working Group welcomes the fact that Bangladesh and Poland became States Parties to the Convention on 20 August 2024 and 30 December 2024, respectively.

54. In addition to the observations in this section and those formulated in its post-session documents (see para. 6 above), the Working Group makes the following country-specific observations in relation to situations that are of particular concern.

Algeria

55. The Working Group expresses its serious concern at the continued failure of the Government to adequately address the numerous allegations of enforced disappearances that occurred during the conflict in the 1990s. It also regrets that the significant number of outstanding cases transmitted to the Government in recent years remain unanswered. That is compounded by reports of measures at the national level that hinder the search and memorialization activities of organizations supporting families of the disappeared, thereby obstructing efforts towards truth, justice and reparation.

Argentina

56. The Working Group continued to convey its concerns to the Government regarding allegations of regressive measures on processes of truth, justice, reparation and memory, including governmental policies which negatively impact the prosecution, punishment and memorialization of crimes against humanity during the dictatorship.²⁸ The Working Group takes note of the Government's responses, yet remains concerned.

Armenia

57. Disappearances dating back to the early 1990s during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remain officially unresolved. Numerous civilians and combatants went missing during the hostilities and hundreds of families are still seeking answers decades later. The Working Group has received hundreds of reports of the disappearance of local residents and Azerbaijani soldiers. Due to the limited information available, most of the reports cannot be registered under the humanitarian mandate. Nonetheless, they underscore the gravity and persistence of the problem.

58. The insufficient engagement of Armenia in searching for, registering, identifying and burying the dead has had a direct impact on Azerbaijani families, denying them closure and perpetuating trauma.

Azerbaijan

59. In Azerbaijan, the majority of the reported enforced disappearances stem from the second Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 2020. Despite compelling evidence, such as videos documenting the capture, ill-treatment and even execution of Armenian soldiers, which offer crucial leads to perpetrators and locations, the Azerbaijani authorities have failed to investigate these incidents meaningfully. That failure not only prolongs the suffering of families seeking answers, but also signals a troubling culture of impunity where correct identification and justice remain unfulfilled.

60. The Working Group recalls that international human rights and humanitarian law require States to clarify the fate of missing persons. State inaction hinders truth, reconciliation and healing, making enforced disappearance not merely a relic of the past, but an ongoing humanitarian challenge.

²⁸ See ARG 9/2024 and ARG 10/2024 and the responses thereto.

Belarus

61. Although the number of outstanding cases registered with the Working Group – both those stemming from 1999 and 2000 and more recent ones – seems limited, the situation in Belarus remains of concern. The authorities have reportedly used enforced disappearance as a tool primarily against political opponents, activists and journalists who were serving their sentences on charges related to the organization or other forms of participation in the mass protests following the 2020 presidential election.²⁹ These cases spread fear among the broader population and stifle dissent and civic engagement.

62. One particularly troubling aspect is the lack of any acknowledgement, investigation or prosecution of those cases, as well as widespread short-term enforced disappearances that occurred in 2020. During that period, dozens of individuals temporarily “vanished” after being seized by security forces, with many later reappearing with signs of abuse. Despite credible reports and international concern, the Government has not taken steps to ensure accountability for those disappearances. Such impunity not only violates international human rights obligations, but also entrenches a culture of fear and lawlessness. By failing to address those abuses, Belarus sends a message that State power is unrestrained and unaccountable, making enforced disappearance a tool not just of repression, but of sustained social control.

China

63. The Working Group welcomes the high response rate of the Government to cases transmitted under its humanitarian and monitoring mandates. However, it expresses concern that, due to the fear of reprisals, most cases are submitted by relatives and organizations based outside the country.

64. The Working Group expresses its deep and ongoing concern regarding the continued reports of repression of artistic, cultural, political and religious expression, particularly expression associated with minority communities or persons who are critical of the Government. It also deplores the persistent reports of a pattern of transnational repression, whereby the Government – through coordination, acquiescence or cooperation with other Member States – seeks to suppress dissenting voices and minority expressions beyond its borders.

Egypt

65. The Working Group remains concerned about the continuing practice of enforced disappearance in Egypt. While it acknowledges the cooperation of the Government in providing updates on outstanding cases, it regrets that in most cases, the information provided is insufficient to clarify them.³⁰ The Working Group reiterates that clarification occurs when the fate and whereabouts of disappeared persons are clearly established and detailed information is transmitted as a result of an investigation by the State. It also emphasizes the right of the victims and persons with a legitimate interest to submit complaints to competent authorities, to have those complaints promptly, thoroughly, independently and impartially investigated by that authority, and to receive adequate redress.

El Salvador

66. The Working Group is concerned at the apparently unlawful mass deportations from the United States to El Salvador, and related reports of deaths, torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances in prisons in El Salvador. Information received indicates that prison conditions there are inhumane, with detainees held in overcrowded, boxed cages, that their bare necessities are unmet and they receive no medical care. The Working Group is also concerned that the families of the victims are unable to carry out the search from their home

²⁹ A/HRC/57/54, para. 57.

³⁰ A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 60.

countries, and no answers have been provided regarding the fate and whereabouts of the individuals who have allegedly been deported, many of whom are migrants and asylum-seekers from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.³¹

67. The Working Group has also transmitted its concerns regarding legislative decrees No. 803 and No. 804 of 26 July 2023, which could lead to serious violations of human rights, and regarding instances of enforced disappearances followed by death in custody.³²

68. The Working Group initially submitted a request to conduct a country visit in 2017, followed by periodic reminders, the most recent of which was sent in February 2025. The Working Group reiterates its readiness to offer technical cooperation and assistance to the Government and expresses its hope for a favourable response.

Israel

69. The Working Group remains concerned by the increasing number of reports received concerning enforced disappearance perpetrated by the Israel Defense Forces since the escalation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip in October 2023.³³ It detailed its concerns in the general allegation transmitted to the Israeli authorities on 6 March 2025; it regrets that no reply has been received.³⁴ The Working Group also issued statements in which it expressed its serious concern at the flagrant violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and the human cost of the conflict on the Palestinian population in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and called for the cessation of hostilities and to establish the fate and whereabouts of victims of enforced disappearances.³⁵

70. The Working Group is aware that for many family members, it has been impossible to submit cases of their missing relatives to the Working Group because they are themselves fleeing violence and trying to survive. The Working Group wishes to express its support to these families in their efforts to report to it cases of disappearance.

Kenya

71. The Working Group continued receiving reports of enforced disappearances and detention of protestors who participated in the demonstrations concerning the Finance Bill between June and September 2024, including through systematic profiling and the use by law enforcement of new technologies to identify and target those individuals.³⁶ The Working Group regrets that, one year on, there have been no investigations of enforced disappearance cases during or after the 2024 protests. It reiterates the call contained in the general allegation transmitted to the Government of Kenya on 6 March 2025 to ensure justice and accountability.³⁷

72. The Working Group is also concerned at the reports of abductions of foreign nationals residing in Kenya and their forcible transfer to their countries of origin, in violation of article 8 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the principle of non-refoulement.³⁸

³¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-alarmed-illegal-deportations-united-states-el-salvador>.

³² See SLV 1/2024.

³³ A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, paras. 79 and 80, and A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, para. 81.

³⁴ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, annex II.

³⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/05/un-experts-outraged-israeli-strikes-civilians-sheltering-rafah-camps>; <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/7-october-un-experts-call-end-violence-and-accountability-after-year-human>; and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-humane-treatment-and-immediate-release-israeli-hostages-and>.

³⁶ See KEN 4/2024.

³⁷ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, annex II.

³⁸ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, para. 149, KEN 2/2024 and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/kenya-and-rwanda-must-provide-information-about-disappeared-human-rights>.

73. The Working Group submitted a request to conduct a country visit to Kenya in February 2013 and received an invitation in August 2020. The Working Group regrets that the visit scheduled to take place in March 2022 was postponed at the request of the Government and that no new dates have since been agreed upon, despite the active engagement by the Working Group in meeting with authorities and its provision of technical assistance in the form of capacity-building to the multi-agency committee on legislation, policy and international framework for the protection of persons from extra-judicial killing and enforced disappearances.³⁹

Libya

74. The Working Group continues to be concerned at the allegations of enforced disappearances and acts tantamount to enforced disappearances of migrants, including minors, in particular given their vulnerability and heightened risk of being trafficked and sold into forced labour, and the protection gaps faced by migrants placed outside the protection of the law.⁴⁰

Mexico

75. The Working Group is concerned about a constitutional reform which placed the National Guard under the control of the Ministry of Defence.⁴¹ Given the allegations of abuses perpetrated by the armed forces in the past, this development heightens the risk of crimes being committed, including torture, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance and extrajudicial executions. The Working Group also received information pertaining to patterns of widespread violence against women, journalists and human rights defenders, particularly during the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and of assembly.⁴² The Working Group remains concerned at the ongoing attacks against relatives of disappeared persons who are searching for their loved ones and the lack of effective protection measures.⁴³

Mozambique

76. The Working Group is gravely concerned at the reported enforced disappearance of journalists, human rights defenders, lawyers and political opponents following the general elections held on 9 October 2024.⁴⁴ The Working Group is alarmed at the electoral violence, which has been characterized by instilling fear, silencing opposition and eliminating political dissent. It reiterates that no circumstances whatsoever, whether a threat of war, a state of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked to justify enforced disappearances.

Nicaragua

77. The Working Group continued to express its concern regarding the reported use of enforced disappearance to suppress dissent, particularly following a wave of arrests in the wake of demonstrations in 2018, many of the victims of which are still forcibly disappeared.⁴⁵ This could be evidence of a continued pattern of silencing persons who are exercising their freedom of expression and criticizing the alleged deteriorating human rights situation in the country. The Working Group transmitted to the Government information concerning

³⁹ A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, annex IV, para. 11, and A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, para. 9.

⁴⁰ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, para. 90, and OTH 114/2024.

⁴¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/mexico-un-experts-concerned-over-upcoming-constitutional-reform-proposal>.

⁴² MEX 14/2024.

⁴³ A/HRC/57/54, para. 75.

⁴⁴ MOZ 2/2024, MOZ 2/2025 and A/HRC/WGEID/136/1, paras. 77 and 78.

⁴⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/nicaragua-enforced-disappearances-and-arbitrary-detentions-still-used>.

extended detentions and inadequate prison conditions which could endanger the life of detained individuals.⁴⁶ The Working Group regrets that no response has been received.

Pakistan

78. The Working Group remains concerned at the continued reports received through its humanitarian procedure of abductions and enforced disappearances of civilians, particularly in Balochistan. Together with other special procedures, the Working Group has raised concerns over alleged human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, in Balochistan, as well as the use of force against peaceful demonstrators and the misuse of certain administrative and legal counter-terrorism measures against Baloch activists and organizations.⁴⁷ The Working Group has also transmitted communications concerning the reported targeting of woman human rights defenders representing families of disappeared persons in Balochistan.⁴⁸

79. While the Working Group continues to appreciate the cooperation of the Government in providing updates on outstanding cases, it regrets that the information received, which is conveyed by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, is often insufficient to clarify the cases. The Working Group has expressed concerns about the reported shortcomings in the functioning of the Commission of Inquiry through a general allegation transmitted to the Government on 6 June 2025.⁴⁹ The Working Group hopes that the Government will reply to that and the other general allegations transmitted previously,⁵⁰ and reiterates its readiness to continue its positive engagement with the State.

Peru

80. The Working Group continued to receive reports of regressive measures relating to truth, justice, reparation and memory processes. It is particularly concerned at the passing of a bill which establishes a statute of limitations on atrocity crimes committed in the State. The Working Group continues to collaborate with the Government in response to its request for technical assistance received on 20 December 2024, including through a technical opinion on the draft directive regarding the search for persons who disappeared during the violence of 1980–2000, stressing, *inter alia*, the need to amend the draft and properly recognize the continuing nature of enforced disappearance and the State's corresponding obligations.⁵¹

Russian Federation

81. There is a concerning and growing pattern of enforced disappearances involving the Russian Federation, primarily driven by the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine. In addition to soldiers, reported disappearances are of civilians perceived as opponents, including local officials, journalists and activists, and the disappearances are allegedly accompanied by detention without legal safeguards, with torture and with transfers to undisclosed locations.

82. The figures presented in the present report do not fully capture the gravity of the situation. Due to the Working Group's limited resources, it now faces a backlog of over 8,000 unreviewed cases under its humanitarian mandate. By the time a case is examined, the

⁴⁶ NIC 4/2024.

⁴⁷ See PAK 1/2025 and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-pakistan-address-human-rights-violations-balochistan>.

⁴⁸ See PAK 4/2024, PAK 6/2024 and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/pakistan-un-experts-demand-release-baloch-human-rights-defenders-and-end>.

⁴⁹ A/HRC/WGEID/136/1, annex I.

⁵⁰ Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/disappearances/allegations/Pakistan-WGEID-131-GA.pdf>.

⁵¹ PER 3/2025.

disappearance may have already ceased – often due to release or confirmation of death. That in no way diminishes the fact that the victim was subjected to enforced disappearance.

83. The severity of this practice has been confirmed by OHCHR⁵² and by the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which concluded that the Russian authorities committed enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity, reflecting a widespread or systematic attack against civilians.⁵³ In this context, the Working Group expresses deep regret that the Russian Federation has ceased all communication with the mechanism and strongly urges the authorities to re-engage. Constructive cooperation is essential to establish the truth and pursue accountability.

Rwanda

84. The Working Group has received persistent and credible allegations of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, torture and arbitrary detention affecting teenage boys, young adults, women and children, perpetrated by the Rwandan-backed Mouvement du 23 mars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These violations reportedly escalated in January 2025 amid the ongoing military offensive launched by that armed group in North Kivu Province.⁵⁴ Members of the local population have been specifically targeted for abduction and arbitrary detention based on perceived affiliation with ethnic or Indigenous communities, or due to their engagement in humanitarian or human rights-related activities. The Working Group is gravely concerned at the continued failure of the Rwandan authorities to addressing those allegations. It recalls that deliberate attacks against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity.

Sri Lanka

85. The Working Group has continued to receive allegations of acts of reprisal against and intimidation of relatives and individuals working to ascertain the fate and whereabouts of persons who have been forcibly disappeared. It has conveyed its concerns to the Government, including with regard to the chilling consequences for other human rights defenders working on the issue of enforced disappearances in the country.⁵⁵

Sudan

86. The Working Group reiterates its serious concern at the increased reports of violations of enforced disappearances 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, as expressed in its general allegation transmitted on 17 June 2025.⁵⁶ Two years since the outbreak of the conflict, the Working Group is still receiving allegations of broader human rights violations amid reports of a worsening humanitarian situation, famine, sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, denial of sexual and reproductive health services, denial of assistance and protection for survivors of violence, trafficking, abduction and extrajudicial killings, especially in the Darfur region.⁵⁷

⁵² See OHCHR, “Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 1 March 2024–31 May 2024”, paras. 66–71; OHCHR, “Treatment of prisoners of war and update on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 1 June 2024–31 August 2024”, para. 95. Both reports are based on the work of the human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine.

⁵³ A/HRC/58/67, paras. 6–14, 18, 22, 28 and 30–35.

⁵⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/un-expert-expresses-extreme-concern-safety-human-rights-defenders-eastern>.

⁵⁵ LKA 4/2024.

⁵⁶ A/HRC/WGEID/136/1, annex I.

⁵⁷ OTH 116/2024 and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/sudan-faces-worsening-humanitarian-catastrophe-famine-and-conflict-escalate>.

Syrian Arab Republic

87. The Working Group remains concerned at the reported cases of enforced disappearance perpetrated at the height of the conflict between 2012 and 2014. It is alarmed by new reports of enforced disappearance of persons belonging to religious or belief minorities, particularly Alawites, which have taken place since December 2024. It calls on the authorities to promptly investigate those allegations.⁵⁸

88. The Working Group welcomes the political transition in the Syrian Arab Republic, which may be a valuable opportunity to end the prolonged human rights violations, including in the north-east under the control of the Syrian Democratic Forces.⁵⁹ It is encouraged by the steps taken to establish a national commission on transitional justice and a national commission on missing persons.⁶⁰ The Working Group stands ready to provide any technical assistance necessary to support those mechanisms, as well as the Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

United Republic of Tanzania

89. The Working Group is alarmed at the reported ongoing and escalating crackdown on opposition political parties, civil society organizations, journalists and human rights defenders in the United Republic of Tanzania, characterized by grave human rights violations, including enforced disappearances. It was reported in 2024 following local elections and in the run-up to the presidential elections scheduled to take place in October 2025.⁶¹ The Working Group calls on the authorities to immediately stop those violations. It is concerned about the chilling effect that this pattern of repression will have on the democratic and national electoral processes.

Türkiye

90. The Working Group documented a few recent cases of enforced disappearances linked to transnational renditions of individuals accused of alleged links to terrorism. However, most outstanding cases date back to the 1990s and are marred by persistent allegations of lack of thorough investigations, ineffective remedies and intimidation of families seeking the truth. Notably, Türkiye reportedly continues to obstruct the peaceful activism of groups such as the “Saturday Mothers”, who call for accountability and remembrance of the disappeared. The Working Group emphasized the need for Türkiye to adopt robust legislative and judicial reforms and reiterated its invitation to engage in dialogue and cooperation.

United States of America

91. The Working Group is extremely concerned at the recent large-scale deportations of individuals to El Salvador, on unclear legal grounds. Many detainees are unaware of their destination, their families not informed of their detention or transfer, and neither the United States nor the Salvadoran authorities have published the name or legal status of detainees, thus submitting them to enforced disappearance and placing them outside the protection of the law. The Working Group and other special procedures have urged the Government to stop using the Alien Enemies Act or any other law to summarily deport individuals. They have stated that the deportations must stop until international legal

⁵⁸ A/HRC/WGEID/135/1, paras. 138 and 139, A/HRC/WGEID/136/1, paras. 109 and 110, SYR 1/2025 and SYR 2/2025.

⁵⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-end-isil-related-arbitrary-detention-north-east-syria-and>.

⁶⁰ See reply to SYR 2/2025.

⁶¹ TZA 3/2024, TZA 4/2024 and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tanzania-experts-call-urgent-action-amid-crackdown-civil-society-ahead>.

guarantees can be provided.⁶² The deportations seem to contravene the internationally recognized principle of non-refoulement and involve the disappearance of those who are deported. The Working Group has repeatedly expressed serious concerns regarding the detention conditions in El Salvador.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

92. The Working Group continued to transmit cases of enforced disappearance to the Government. It reiterates its urgent call to respond to its requests in accordance with the State's humanitarian mandate. The Working Group also conveyed its concerns regarding disappearances associated with elections, including through a general allegation transmitted on 12 November 2024, concerning so-called short-term disappearances committed during and around the July 2024 presidential election.⁶³ The Working Group also transmitted communications regarding disappearances, alleged instances of excessive use of force against demonstrators by State agents and unlawful killings, among other violations.⁶⁴ It urges the Government to comply with international law to prevent irreparable harm to victims, particularly in cases of enforced disappearance.⁶⁵

Yemen

93. The Working Group remains concerned at the outstanding cases of acts tantamount to enforced disappearances reportedly carried out by the de facto authorities in Sana'a. It is especially concerned about the fate and whereabouts of victims, including United Nations staff and humanitarian workers which remain unknown.⁶⁶ The Working Group calls on the Government of Yemen and the de facto authorities in Sana'a to disclose information on the fate and whereabouts of those deprived of liberty and to conduct thorough, impartial, independent and effective investigations into the allegations.

VIII. Conclusions and recommendations

94. The Working Group expresses its solidarity and deep respect for the relatives of disappeared persons, as well as for the organizations, the human rights defenders and the lawyers who support these victims. It acknowledges the difficulties and the increasingly hostile and dangerous environments in which they conduct their work towards truth, justice, reparations, memory and non-repetition, which is further compounded by increasing cuts to humanitarian aid and funding, as well as the emergence of restrictive legislation often curtailing their work. The Working Group calls on all States concerned to provide redress to all victims, which encompasses the relatives of those forcibly disappeared, by guaranteeing their safety and providing them with adequate psychological, legal, administrative and financial support.

95. As reflected in the figures contained in the present report, the Working Group continued to receive large numbers of allegations concerning enforced disappearances, including in the context of armed conflict. In certain countries, the number of reports received suggests the existence of a systematic practice of enforced disappearance, which may amount to a crime against humanity. At the same time, the Working Group stresses that the low number of cases registered in certain regions should not be interpreted as the non-existence of enforced disappearances, but rather a result of

⁶² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-alarmed-illegal-deportations-united-states-el-salvador>.

⁶³ A/HRC/WGEID/134/1, para. 138.

⁶⁴ Ibid., para. 136.

⁶⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-venezuela-comply-international-law-prevent-irreparable-harm>.

⁶⁶ A/HRC/54/22, paras. 107 and 108, and A/HRC/WGEID/136/1, para. 139.

underreporting, often due to fear of reprisals, and of the overall invisibility of this crime under international law.

96. The reports received confirm that enforced disappearance remains a global phenomenon, which requires the adoption of effective measures to address and overcome its root causes, the creation of the conditions for victims to pursue truth, justice and reparation, and the prevention of further cases.

97. The Working Group continued to observe worrying trends, such as: (a) the use of transnational repression and its linkages to instances of enforced disappearance; (b) disappearances committed in the context of migration, including as a result of pushbacks and mass deportations; (c) enforced disappearances committed under the guise of counter-terrorism activities; and (d) enforced disappearances committed in the run-up to and during electoral processes. It recalls that no circumstances whatsoever, whether a threat of war, a state of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked to justify enforced disappearances, in accordance with article 7 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

98. The Working Group continues to observe with concern a rise in the use of the so-called short-term enforced disappearances across all regions. It recalls that the constituent elements of enforced disappearances do not include a temporal element. Therefore, once those elements are present, the obligations incumbent on States under the relevant international human rights instruments are the same as in the case of any other enforced disappearance.

99. Country visits are an integral part of the mandate of the Working Group. The Working Group recognizes the cooperation extended during its visit to Lithuania in November 2024, and in the preparation of its report in follow-up to the visit to Cyprus in April 2022. It extends its gratitude to the Governments of Bangladesh, Canada and Guatemala for their invitations to conduct country visits.

100. The Working Group thanks all the States and stakeholders that responded to its calls for input to its thematic reports, country visits and follow-up reports. It particularly welcomes their active participation in the World Congress on Enforced Disappearances and encourages all actors to ensure meaningful actions to fulfil the pledges made as a result of the Congress.

101. The Working Group calls on States and other stakeholders to review, disseminate and implement the recommendations enshrined in its thematic studies on enforced disappearances in the context of the defence of land, natural resources and the environment and on elections, as well as in its thematic study on universal criminal jurisdiction in cases of enforced disappearance.

102. The Working Group remains deeply concerned at its inability to fully implement the mandate it was entrusted by the Human Rights Council, due to the ongoing liquidity crisis at the United Nations. The Working Group has endeavoured to maximize its limited resources and to creatively find solutions to ensure its sustained engagement with Member States and all relevant stakeholders. In this context, the Working Group is particularly thankful for the support, including through voluntary financial and in-kind contributions received from some Member States and donors. Despite these efforts, however, the activities of the Working Group have been seriously impacted. It resolutely calls on Member States to meet their financial obligations, with a view to finding a lasting solution to the dire financial situation.

103. The Working Group would like to emphasize the importance of effective cooperation with United Nations human rights mechanisms, as it is only through full and effective collaboration that the fate and whereabouts of disappeared persons can be determined. The Working Group wishes to reiterate its readiness to provide technical assistance and cooperation to Member States with a view to clarifying cases of enforced disappearance and preventing their occurrence in the future.

104. Lastly, the Working Group reiterates its call to all States to ratify or accede to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced

Disappearance without delay and to accept the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances under articles 31 and 32 of the Convention to receive and consider individual and inter-State communications.

Annex I

Invitations extended and country visit requests

Invitations extended to WGEID

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date</i>
Algeria	To be decided (TBD)
Bangladesh	Accepted on 6 January 2025, visit dates TBD
Burkina Faso	Last quarter of 2019 (did not take place)
Canada	Accepted on 24 October 2024, visit dates TBD
Ghana	Last quarter of 2021
Guatemala	Accepted on 17 December 2024, visit dates TBD
Kenya	Postponed, TBD
Libya	TBD, postponed
Maldives	Accepted on 9 May 2024, visit dates TBD
Mali	26 August – 3 September 2019 (did not take place)
Republic of Korea	June 2025, postponed
South Sudan	Last quarter of 2016 (did not take place)
Sudan	20 to 29 November 2017 (did not take place)

Visits requested by WGEID

<i>Country</i>	<i>Request sent</i>	<i>Last reminder sent</i>
Afghanistan	17 April 2019	24 April 2020
Algeria	25 August 2000	24 November 2023
Angola	23 May 2023	25 February 2025
Bangladesh	12 March 2013	24 April 2020
Belarus	30 June 2011	29 April 2025
Brazil	8 April 2020	24 May 2023
Cameroon	12 April 2019	28 February 2024
Canada	20 February 2024	-
China	19 February 2013	26 February 2025
Colombia	22 October 2020	-
Cuba	24 November 2023	26 February 2025
Democratic Republic of the Congo	17 May 2017	25 February 2025
Ecuador	24 November 2023	-
El Salvador	6 October 2017	25 February 2025
India	16 August 2010	26 February 2020

Visits requested by WGEID

<i>Country</i>	<i>Request sent</i>	<i>Last reminder sent</i>
Indonesia	12 December 2006	26 February 2025
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	18 January 2019	26 February 2025
Israel	29 April 2025	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	6 May 2020	25 May 2023
Lebanon	27 November 2015	7 January 2022
Malaysia	24 November 2023	-
Nepal	12 May 2006	27 July 2020
Nicaragua	23 May 2006	26 February 2025
Nigeria	23 January 2019	28 January 2024
Pakistan	14 November 2019	26 February 2025
Philippines	3 April 2013	25 May 2023
Russian Federation	2 November 2006	22 August 2024
Rwanda	27 October 2014	8 April 2020
Saudi Arabia	24 November 2023	-
South Africa	28 October 2014	24 November 2023
Sudan	20 December 2005	8 April 2020
Thailand	30 June 2011	24 November 2023
United Arab Emirates	13 September 2013	7 January 2022
United States of America	24 November 2023	-
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	28 November 2019	26 February 2025
Zimbabwe	20 July 2009	26 February 2025

Annex II

Statistical summary: cases of enforced disappearance reported to the Working Group between 1980 and 2 May 2025, and general allegations transmitted

States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification			General Allegation			
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead	Discontinued cases	Closed cases	GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
Afghanistan	20	0	21	0	1	0	0	0	1				
Albania	1	0	1	0	0								
Algeria	3 341	21	3 376	24	10	22	12	11	9		2013/2018/2020/2023	Yes (2013); No (2018, 2023)	
Angola	0		12	1	9	0			9	3			
Armenia	38	2	38	2	0	0							
Argentina	3 059	727	3 445	775	308	78	39	5	342				
Azerbaijan	37	0	40	0	2	1	1	1	1				
Bahrain	0		22	2	7	15	4	18			2014/2018	Yes (2014, 2018)	
Bangladesh	71	1	91	2	11	9	12	8			2011/2017/2019	No (2011, 2017, 2019)	
Belarus	10	2	10	2	1	0		1			2024	No (2024)	
Bhutan	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	26	3	48	3	21	1	21		1				
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0	1	0	0	0					2009/2011/2014	Yes (2009, 2011, 2014)	
Brazil	16	3	66	7	46	4	1		49		2019/2022/2024	No (2019, 2022); Yes (2024)	
Bulgaria	0	0	3	0	3	0			3		2025	No (2025)	
Burkina Faso	0	0	3	0	3	0			3				
Burundi	255	10	256	10	0	1	1				2018	No (2018)	
Cambodia	1	0	3	0	0	0				2			

States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification			Discontinued cases	Closed cases	General Allegation	
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead			GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
Cameroon	19	1	26	1	5	2	6	1				2016	No (2016)
Central African Republic	3	0	3	0	0	0						2013	No (2013)
Chad	24	0	35	0	3	8	9	1	1				
Chile	784	63	910	64	104	22	2		124				
China	151	33	319	46	132	36	126	38	4			2010/2011/2018/2019/2024	No (2010, 2011, 2018, 2019, 2024)
Colombia	946	97	1 289	126	275	68	160	24	159			2012/2013/2015/2016/2017/2020/2021	No (2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2020) Yes (2021)
Comoros	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Congo	89	3	91	3	0	0				2			
Cuba	0	0	4	1	3	1		2	2				
Cyprus	77	11	77	11	0	0							
Czechia	0	0	0	0	0	0						2009	Yes (2009)
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	477	81	477	81	0	0							
Democratic Republic of the Congo	52	11	62	11	6	4	10					2015/2019	Yes (2015); No (2019)
Denmark	0	0	1	0	0	1		1				2009	No (2009)
Djibouti	0	0	1	0	0	1	1						
Dominican Republic	2	0	5	0	2	0	2			1			
Ecuador	5	0	27	2	18	4	12	4	6			2024	Yes (2024)
Egypt	250	6	909	40	438	193	157	453	21	28		2011/2016/2017/2023	No (2011, 2016, 2017, 2023)
El Salvador	2 367	295	2760	333	319	74	198	175	20			Mar and May 2015/2022	No (2015, 2022)

States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification			General Allegation			
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead	Discontinued cases	Closed cases	GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
Equatorial Guinea	12	0	12	0	0	0							
Eritrea	63	4	63	4	0	0						2012/2017	No (2012, 2017)
Ethiopia	113	2	120	3	3	4	2	5					
France	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Gambia	14	2	22	2	0	8	8						
Georgia	0	0	1	0	1	0			1				
Greece	1	0	3	0	0	0				2			
Guatemala	2 897	372	3 154	390	177	80	187	6	64			2011/2013/2022	Yes (2011, 2013, 2022)
Guinea	37	2	44	2	0	7			7				
Guyana	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Haiti	38	1	48	1	9	1	1	4	5				
Honduras	130	21	210	34	37	43	54	8	18			2021/2022	Yes (2021), No (2022)
India	444	10	530	13	70	16	51	9	23			2009/2011/2013/2019	No (2009, 2011, 2013, 2019)
Indonesia	189	5	193	5	3	1	3	1				2011/2013/2017	No (2011, 2013, 2017)
Iran (Islamic Republic of Iran)	580	110	612	111	22	10	13	9	10			2017	No (2017)
Iraq	16 429	2 300	16 577	2 317	117	31	122	17	9			2020/2024	No (2020, 2024)
Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0						2009	No (2009)
Israel	169	5	170	0	0	1			1			2025	No (2025)
Jordan	0	0	9	0	2	5	4	3		2			
Kazakhstan	1	0	3	0	0	2		2					
Kenya	99	1	99	1	0	0						2011/2014/2016/2017/2025	No (2011, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2025)
Kuwait	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	1		1			
Lao People's Democratic Republic	9	4	19	5	0	9	1	7	1		1		

States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification			Discontinued cases	Closed cases	General Allegation	
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead			GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
Latvia	2	0	2	0	0	0							
Lebanon	314	19	326	19	2	10	10	2					
Libya	58	1	80	1	5	15	7	12	1	2	2014/2018/2024	No (2014, 2018, 2024)	
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0					2012	Yes (2012)	
Malaysia	8	2	11	2	1	1	1	1		1			
Maldives	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Mauritania	10	1	11	0	1	0		1					
Mexico	354	26	563	45	137	41	83	18	77	31	2013/2014/Apr, Jun and Sept 2017/ 2022/2023	Yes (2022, 2023); No (2013, 2014, 2017)	
Montenegro	0	0	15	1	1	0		1			14		
Morocco	151	9	411	31	170	53	141	16	66	37	2013/2020/2023	No (2013, 2020); Yes (2023)	
Mozambique	7	0	7	0	0	0							
Myanmar	20	4	27	9	7	0	5	2			2017	No (2017)	
Namibia	2	0	3	0	0	1	1						
Nepal	480	60	694	76	135	79	153	60	1		2021	No (2021)	
Nicaragua	112	2	250	7	112	26	47	16	75		2022/2024	No (2022, 2024)	
Nigeria	7	1	17	3	6	4	10				2020	No (2020)	
North Macedonia	0	0	0	0	0	0					2009	No (2009)	
Oman	1	0	2	0	0	1	1						
Pakistan	982	6	1705	12	623	191	510	240	38		2015/2017/2019/2023/2025	No (2015, 2017, 2023, 2025); Yes (2019)	
Panama	1	0	1	0	0	0							
Paraguay	0	0	23	0	20	0	19		1	3	2014	Yes (2014)	
Peru	2 361	224	3 003	284	254	388	450	85	107				
Philippines	595	67	784	94	142	47	133	19	37		2009/2012	No (2009, 2012)	
Qatar	1	0	2	0	1	0	1						
Romania	0	0	1	0	1	0	1						

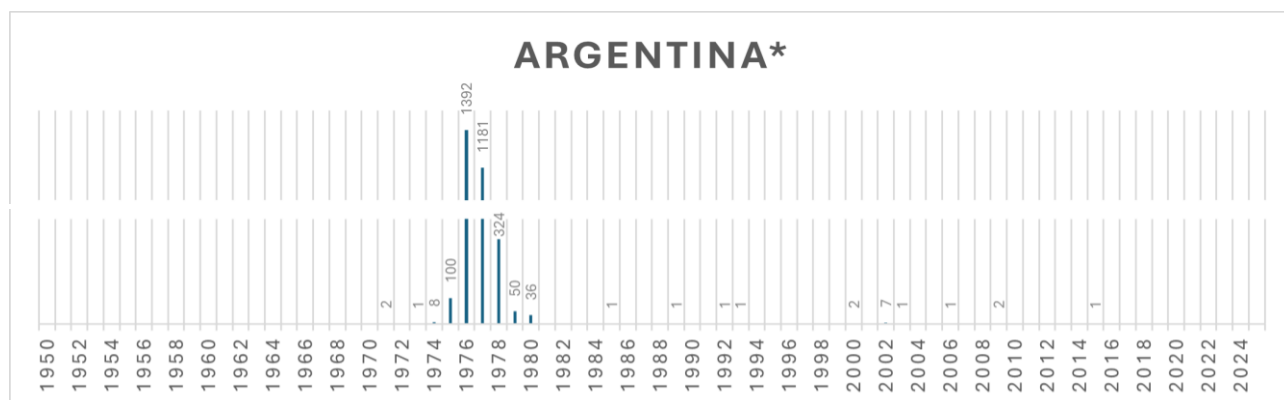
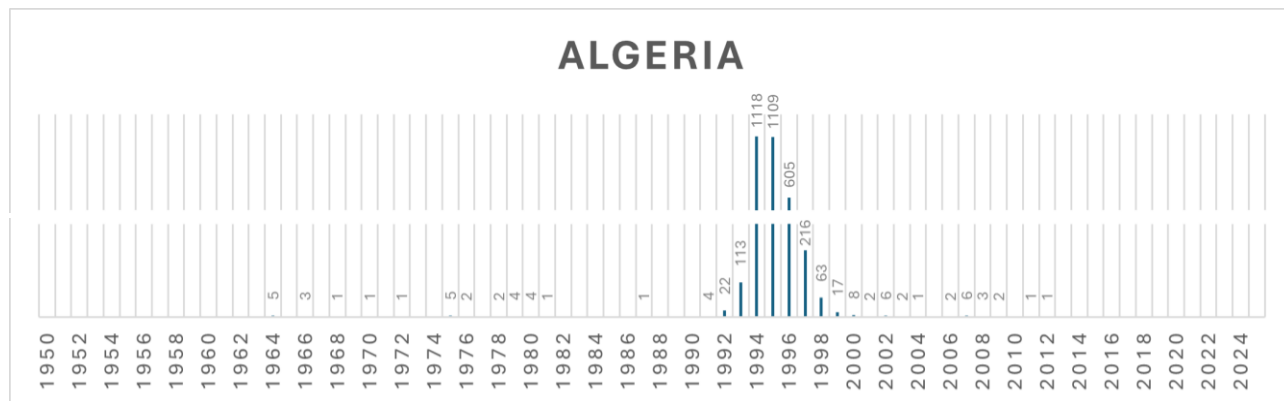
States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification			General Allegation			
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead	Discontinued cases	Closed cases	GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
Republic of Korea	4	0	4	0	0	0							
Russian Federation	2 633	65	2 891	71	70	188	219	21	18		2 ¹	2016/2018/2022/2024	Yes (2016); No (2018, 2022 and 2024)
Rwanda	45	8	50	8	0	4	3	1		1			
Saudi Arabia	29	5	83	12	20	32	15	35	4	2		2020	No (2020)
Serbia	1	0	2	0	1	0	1						
Seychelles	3	0	3	0	0	0							
Somalia	1	0	1	0	0	0							
South Africa	2	1	13	2	3	2	1	1	3	6			
South Sudan	3	0	3	0	0	0							
Spain	10	0	14	0	3	0			3	1		2014/ 2023	No (2014); Yes (2023)
Sri Lanka	6 306	200	12 897	269	6 551	40	118	27	6 446			2011/2014/2022	Yes (2011, 2014, 2022)
Sudan	177	5	394	39	206	11	214	3				2022/2025	No (2022, 2025)
Switzerland	0	0	1	0	1	0		1					
Syrian Arab Republic	799	63	862	68	17	46	33	23	7			Mar and Jul 2011/2019/2021/2023	Yes (2011); No (2019, 2021, 2023)
Tajikistan	3	0	12	0	5	2	1		6	2			
Thailand	77	6	94	9	7	2	5	1	3	8		2008/2018	No (2008, 2018)
Timor-Leste	428	29	504	33	58	18	51	23	2				
Togo	10	2	11	2	0	1	1						
Tunisia	13	0	30	1	12	5	2	15				2025	No (2025)
Türkiye	87	3	245	15	94	63	75	42	39		1	2022	No (2022)
Turkmenistan	4	0	9	0	5	0		4	1			2018	No (2018)
Uganda	22	2	29	4	2	5	2	5					
Ukraine	6	0	13	0	3	1	2		2	3			

¹ During its 136th session, the Working Group considered a case duplicated.

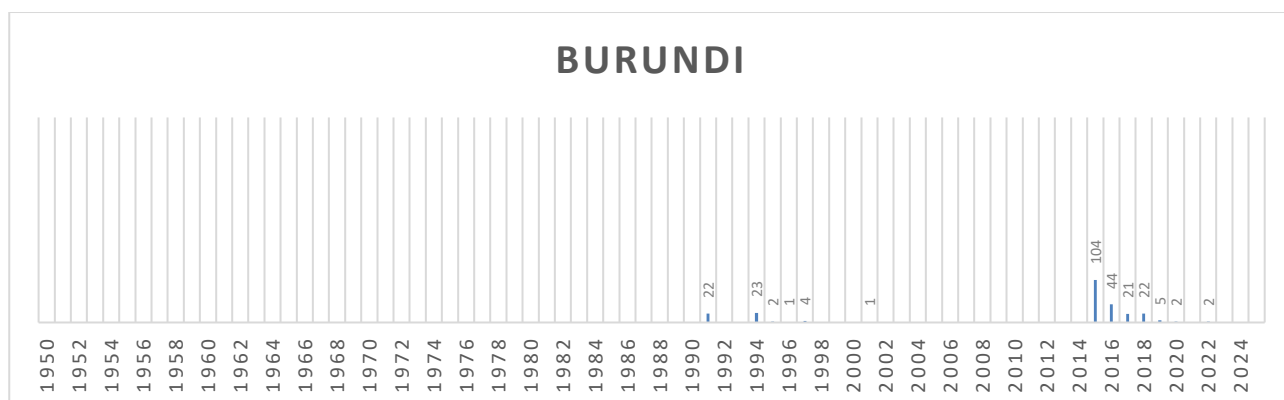
States/entities	Cases transmitted to the Government				Cases clarified by:		Status of person at date of clarification				General Allegation		
	Outstanding cases		Total		Government	Sources	At liberty	In detention	Dead	Discontinued cases	Closed cases	GA sent	Response
	Cases	Female	Cases	Female									
United Arab Emirates	28	1	70	7	9	33	13	29				2022	No (2022)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0						2025	No (2025)
United Republic of Tanzania	4	0	6	0	2	0		2					
United States of America	4	0	5	0	1	0	1					2019/2024	Yes (2019, 2024)
Uruguay	19	3	34	8	14	1	5	4	6			2013/2015/2018	Yes (2013); No (2015, 2018)
Uzbekistan	7	0	26	0	18	1	2	17					
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	74	5	91	4	8	9	8	6	3			2019/2024	No (2019, 2024)
Viet Nam	2	1	6	1	3	1	2	2					
Yemen	29	0	187	0	135	9	66	5	73	14		2023	No (2023)
Zambia	0	0	1	1	0	1		1					
Zimbabwe	5	1	7	2	1	1	1		1			2009	No (2009)
State of Palestine	4	1	5	1	0	1	1						

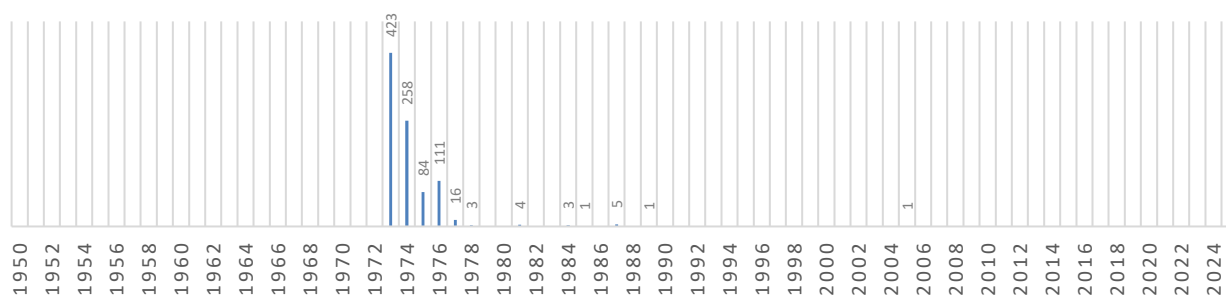
Annex III

Graphs showing the number of cases of enforced disappearance by country and by year according to the cases transmitted by the Working Group between 1980 and 2 May 2025 (only for countries with more than 100 cases transmitted)

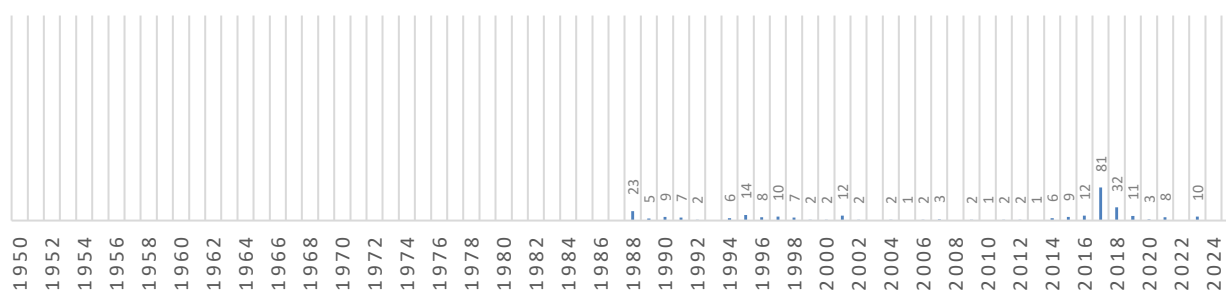
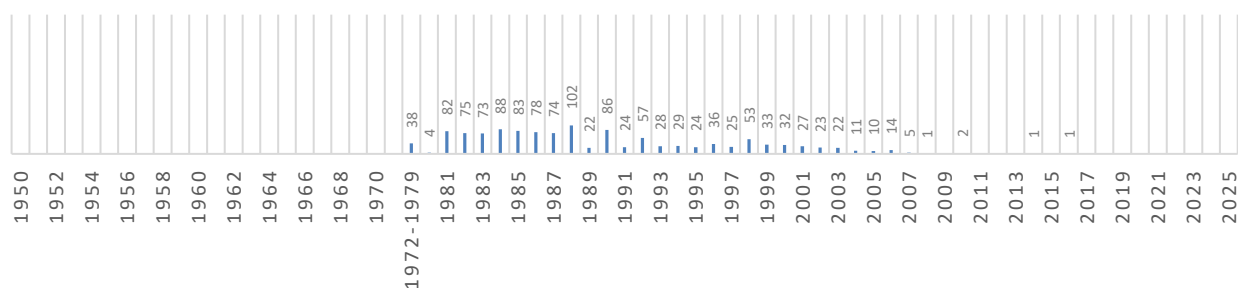


* Argentina ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2007.

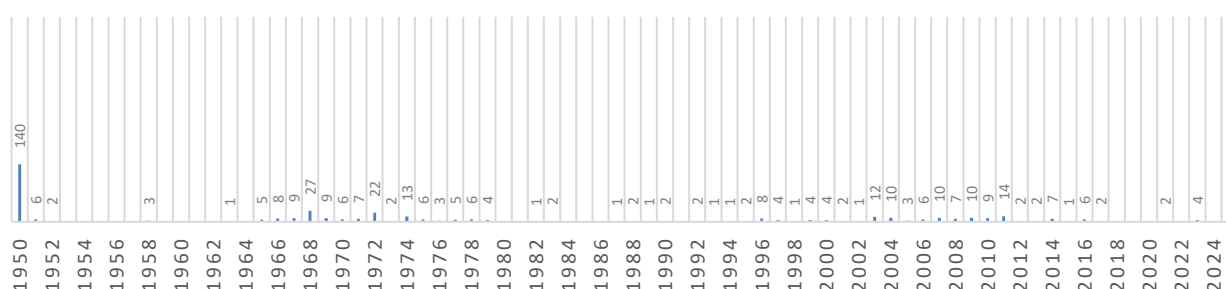


CHILE*

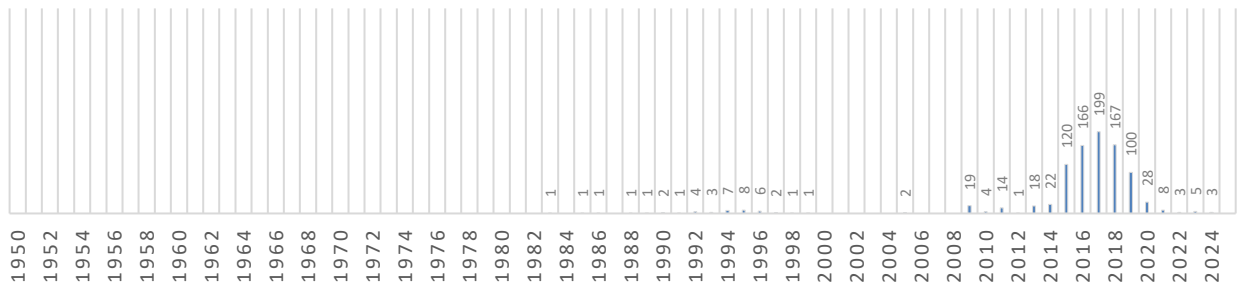
* Chile ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2009.

CHINA**COLOMBIA***

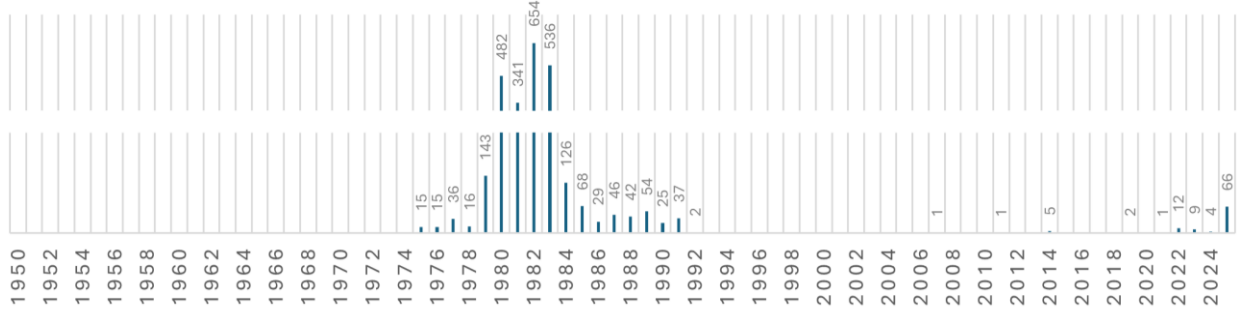
* Colombia ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2012.

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

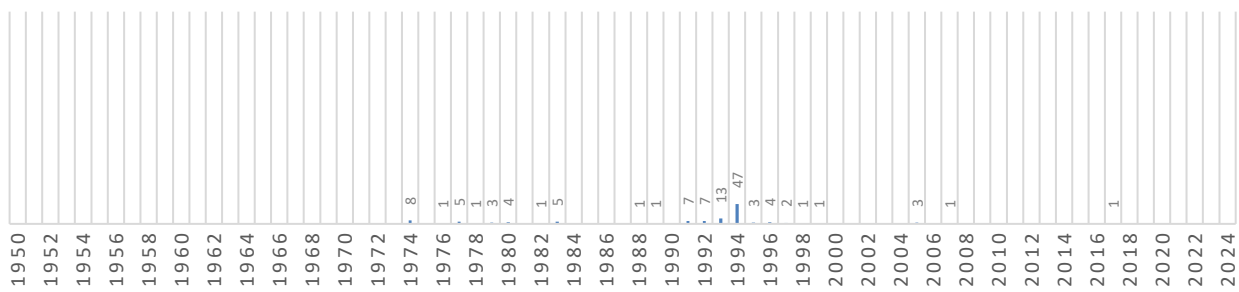
EGYPT



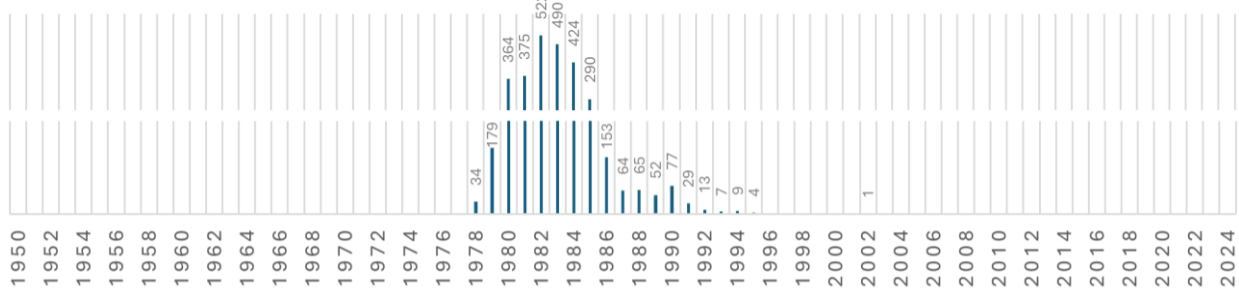
EL SALVADOR



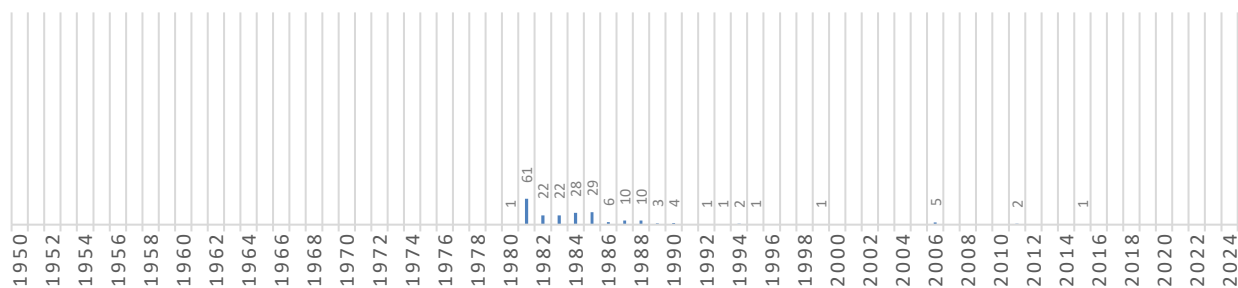
ETHIOPIA



GUATEMALA

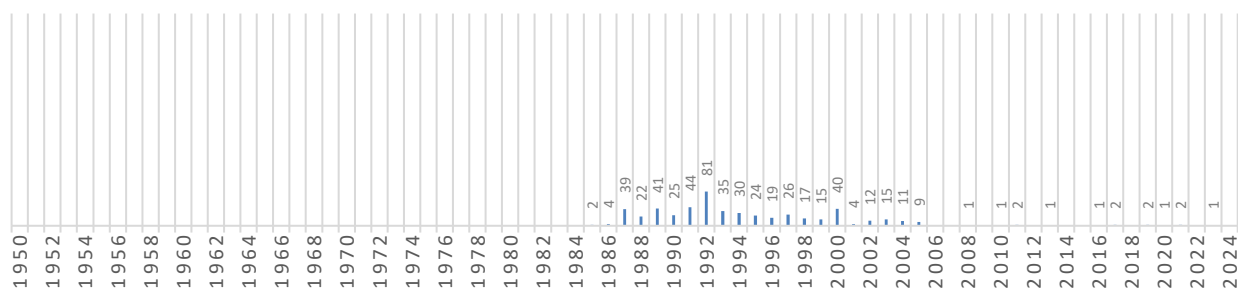


HONDURAS*

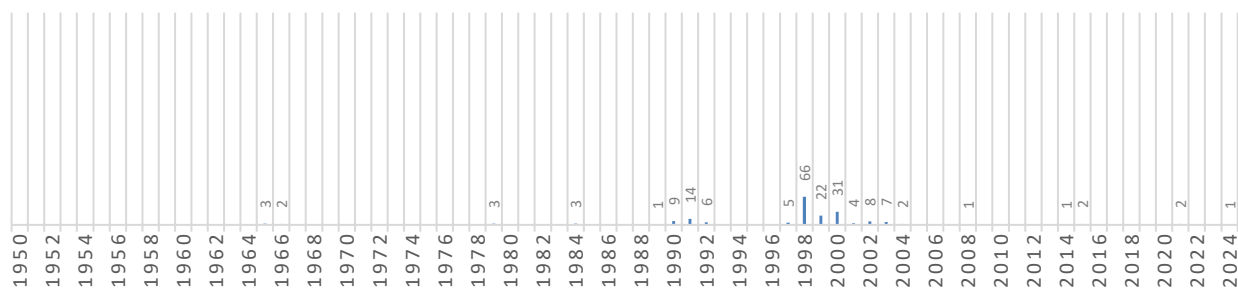


* Honduras ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2008.

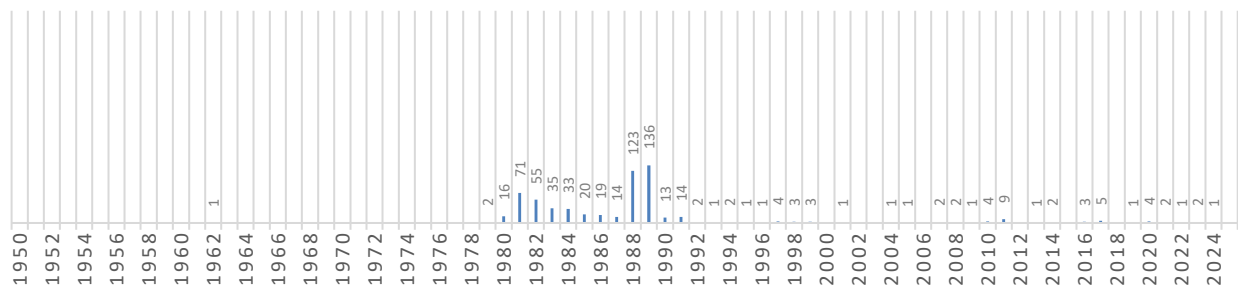
INDIA

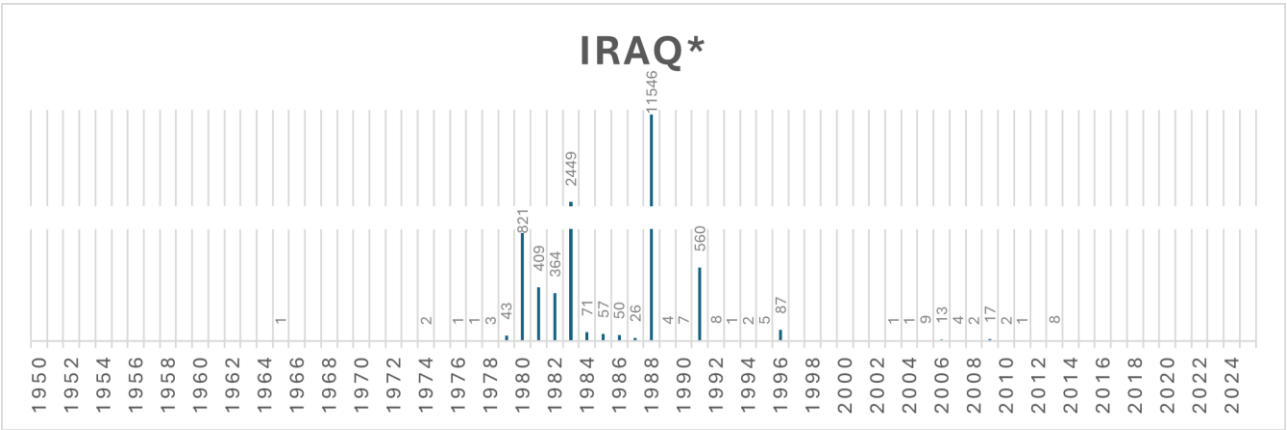


INDONESIA

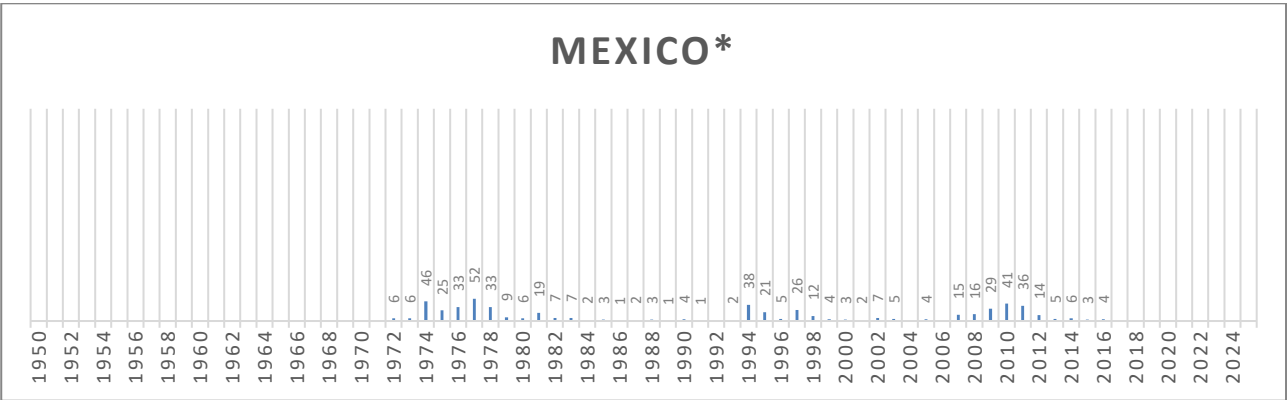
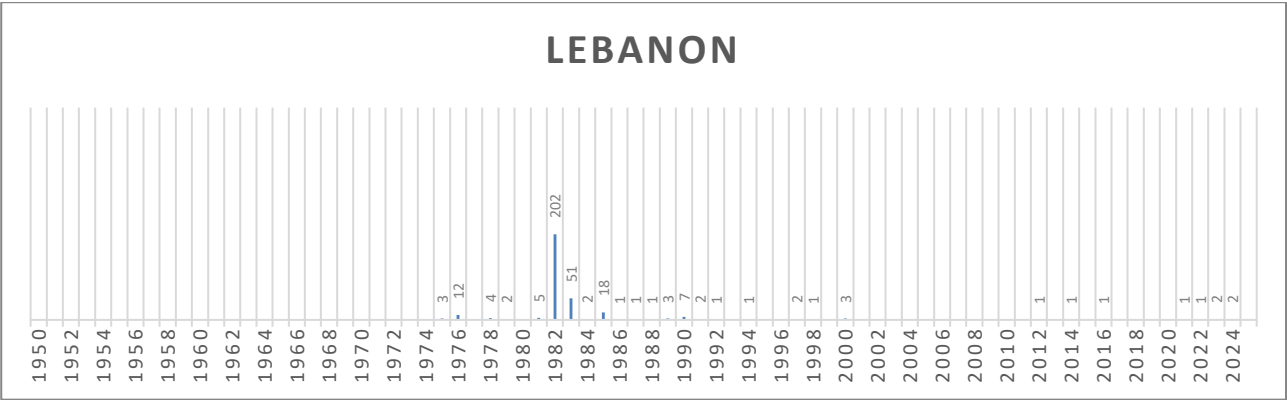
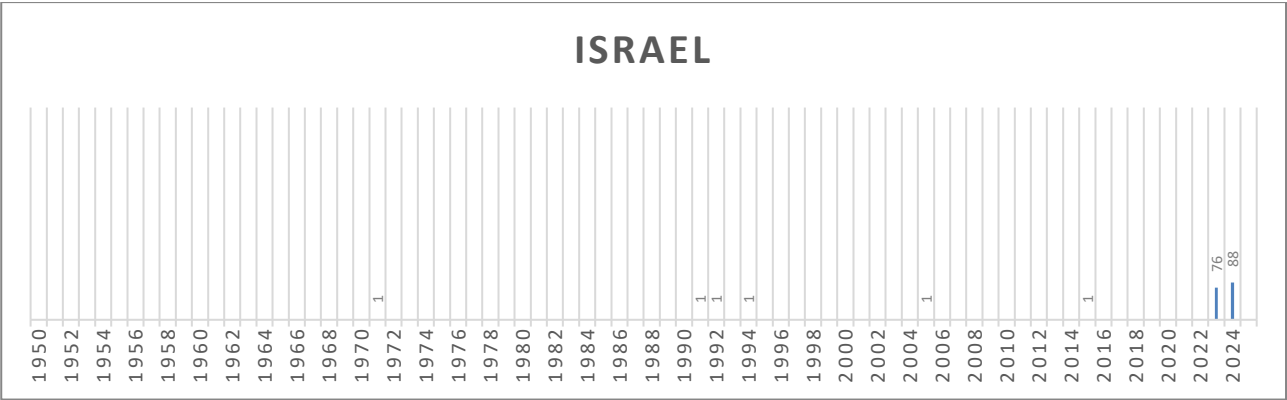


ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



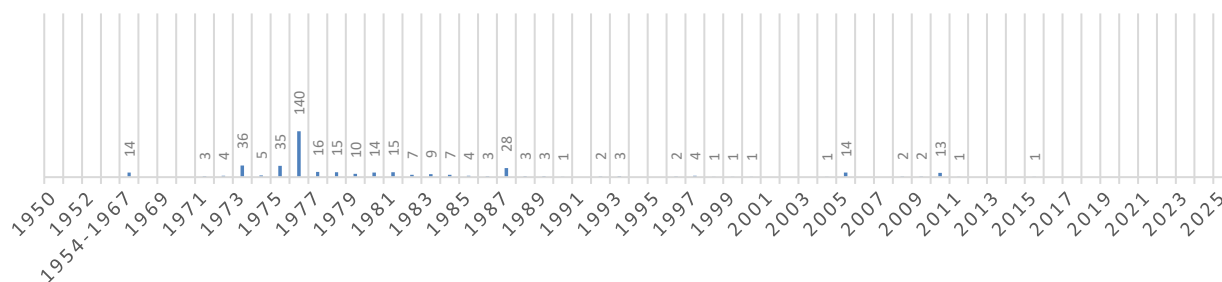


* Iraq ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2010.



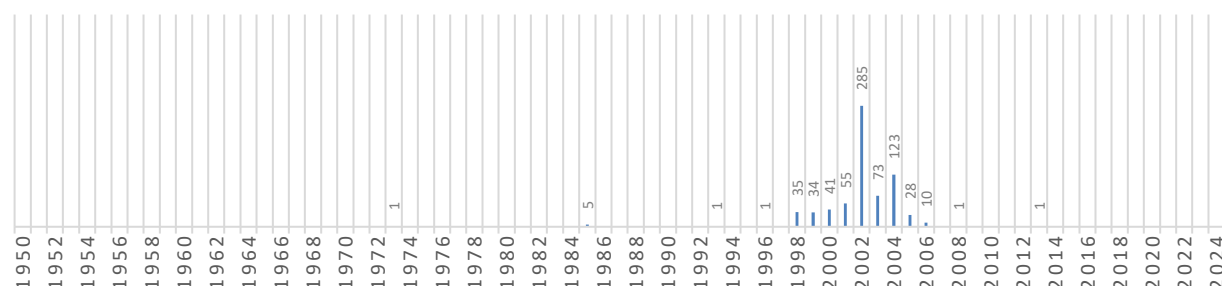
* Mexico ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2008.

MOROCCO*

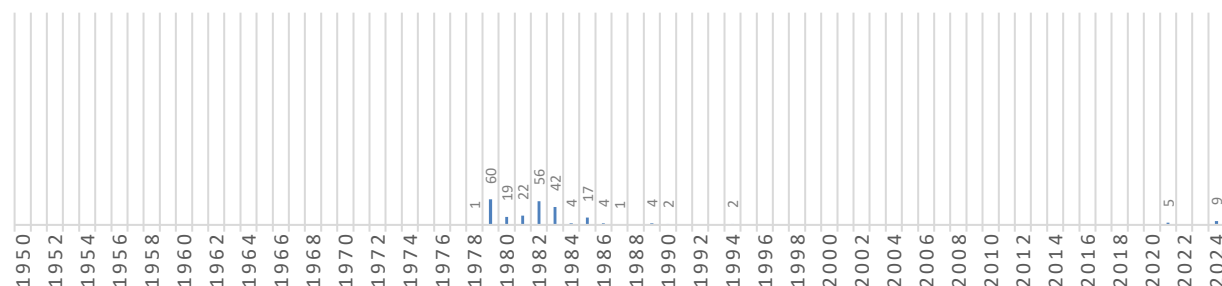


* Morocco ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2013.

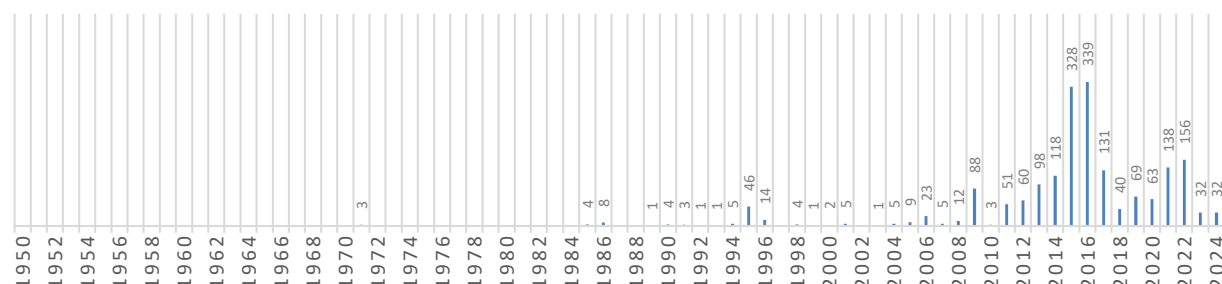
NEPAL

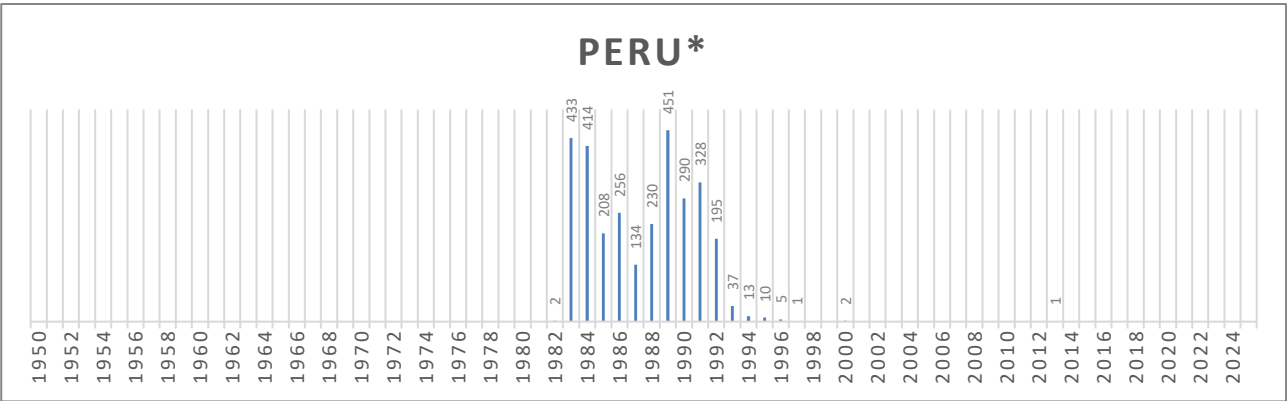


NICARAGUA

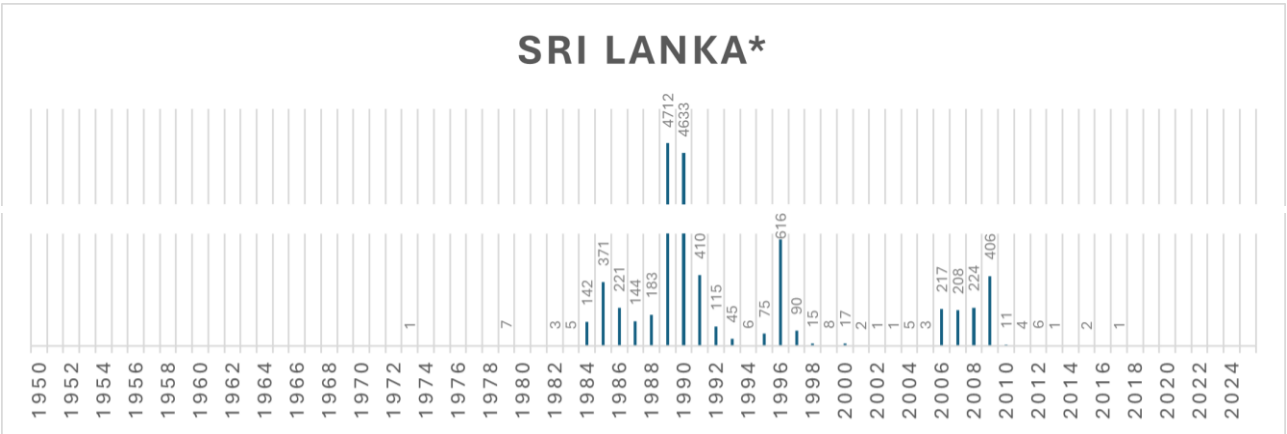
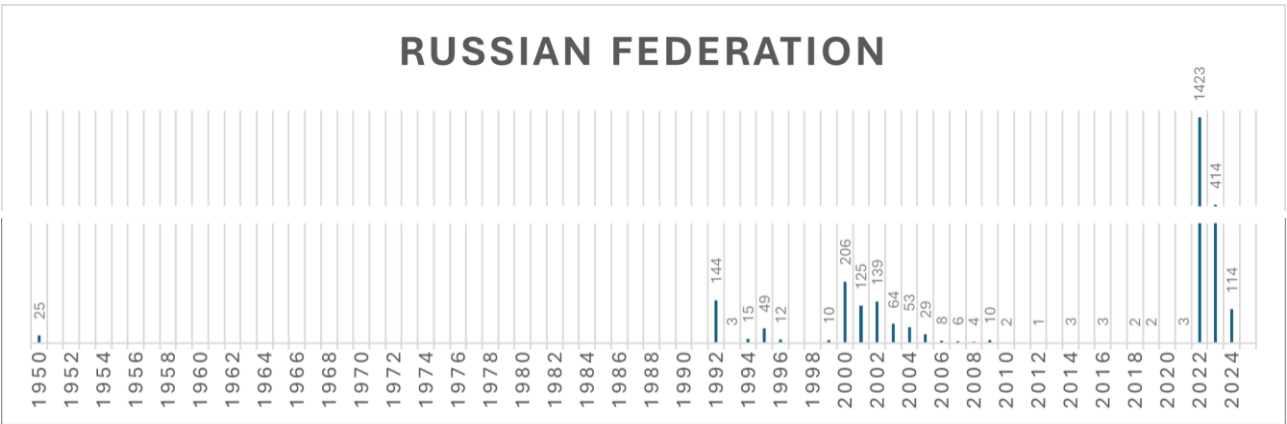
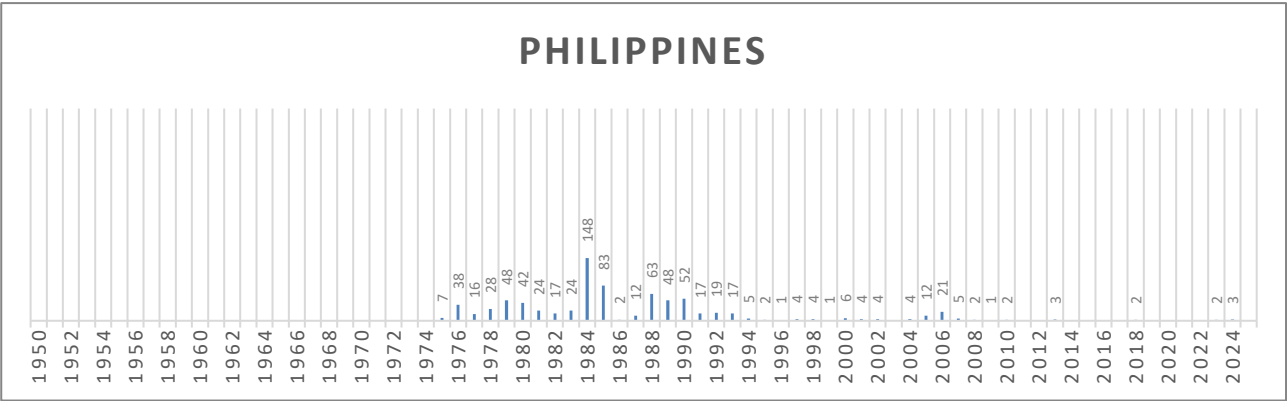


PAKISTAN



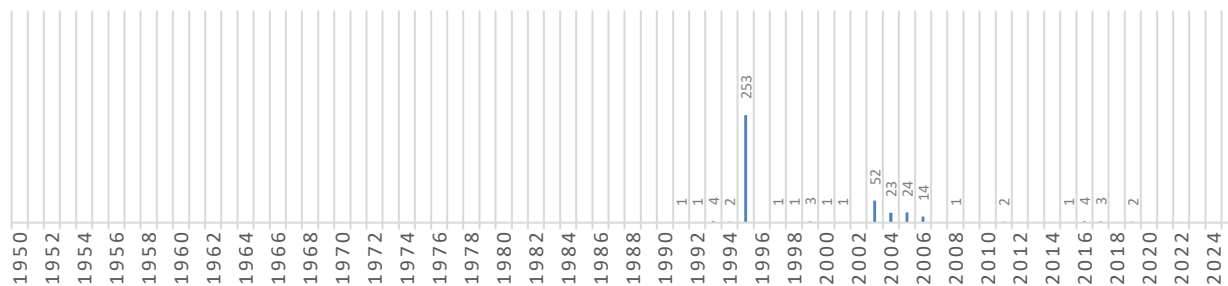


* Peru ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2012.



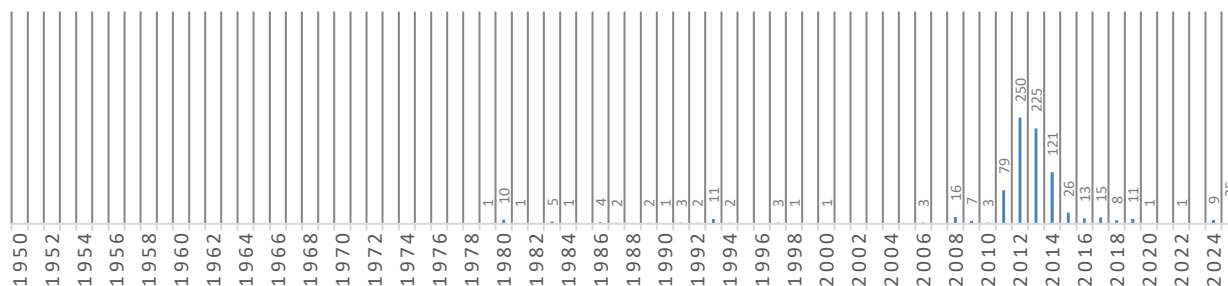
* Sri Lanka ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2016.

SUDAN*

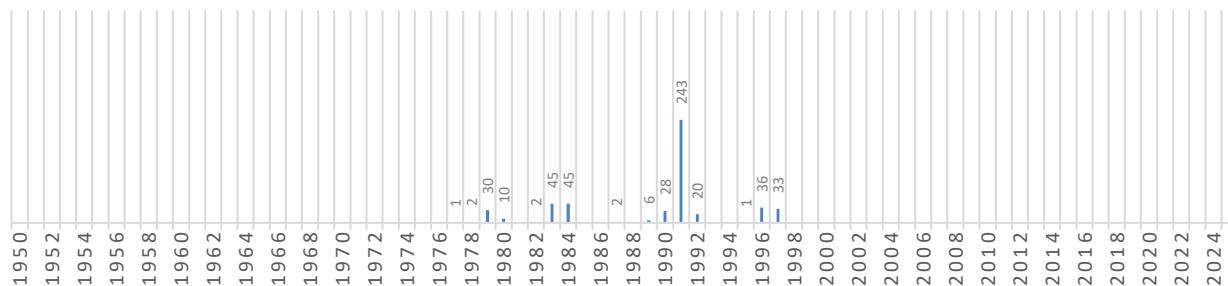


* Sudan ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in 2021.

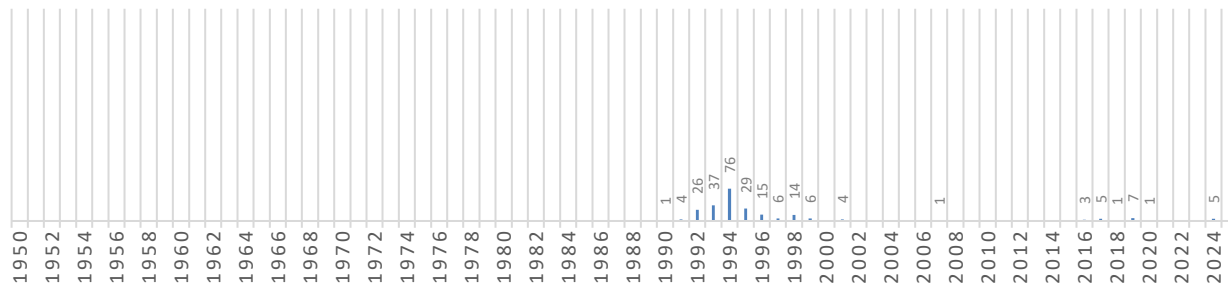
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

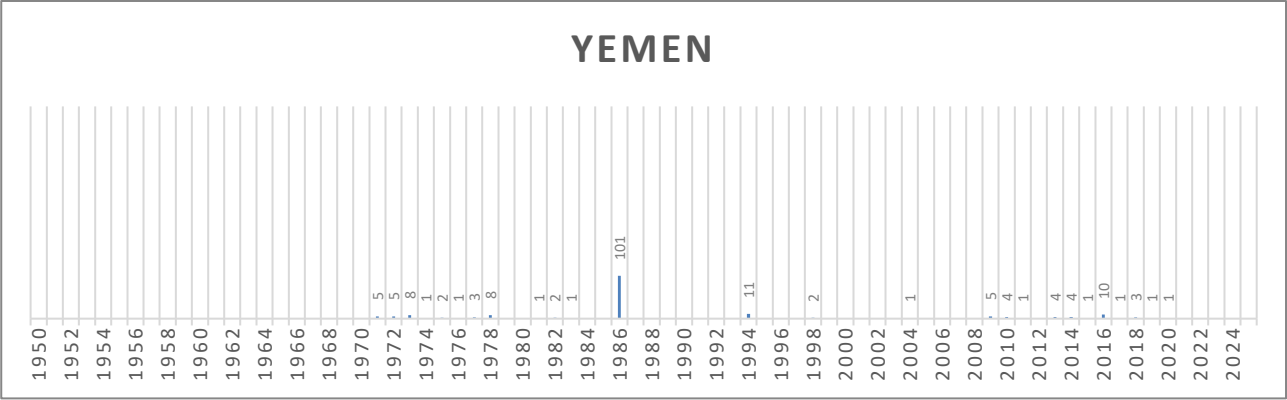


TIMOR LESTE



TÜRKİYE





Annex IV

Press releases and statements

1. On 20 May 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on Yemen, reiterating a call for the release of detained Bahá'ís.¹
2. On 29 May 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release expressing outrage by the Israeli strikes on civilians sheltering in Rafah camps in Palestine.²
3. On 14 June 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on the draft bill establishing statute of limitations on atrocity crimes contravening international standards in Peru.³
4. On 27 June 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on arbitrary executions as possible crimes against humanity in Iraq.⁴
5. On 2 July 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on the release of older political prisoners in Belarus.⁵
6. On 4 July 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on the possible extradition from Thailand to Viet Nam of refugee and human rights defender Y Quynh Bdap.⁶
7. On 11 July 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Kenya and Rwanda to provide information about a disappeared human rights defender.⁷
8. On 25 July 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on the immediate end to violent crackdown and full accountability for human rights violations in Bangladesh.⁸
9. On 30 July 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on life sentences handed down to human rights defenders in the United Arab Emirates.⁹

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/05/yemen-un-experts-reiterate-call-release-detained-bahais>.

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/05/un-experts-outraged-israeli-strikes-civilians-sheltering-rafah-camps>.

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/peru-draft-bill-establishing-statute-limitations-atrocity-crimes-contravenes>.

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/scale-and-cycle-iraqs-arbitrary-executions-may-be-crime-against-humanity>.

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/belarus-call-release-older-political-prisoners>.

⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/experts-alarmed-possible-extradition-refugee-and-human-rights-defender-y>.

⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/kenya-and-rwanda-must-provide-information-about-disappeared-human-rights>.

⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/bangladesh-un-experts-call-immediate-end-violent-crackdown-and-full>.

⁹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/united-arab-emirates-experts-dismayed-life-sentences-handed-down-human>.

10. On 2 August 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a statement on the Russian Federation, calling on the release of human rights defenders, journalists and anti-war critics convicted in sham trials.¹⁰
11. On 14 August 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on the international community not to normalise Taliban rule in Afghanistan.¹¹
12. On 15 August 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on Zimbabwe, calling for the release of human rights defenders ahead of Southern African Development Community summit.¹²
13. On 28 August 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on the misuse of counter-terrorism law against Montagnards in Viet Nam.¹³
14. On 29 August 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms; the Committee on Enforced Disappearances; the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the Chairperson of the Working Group on Death Penalty, Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Killings of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights; and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, issued a statement on the occasion of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances on 30 August, calling for urgent responses and concerted action for victims of enforced disappearances.¹⁴
15. On 4 September 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on concerning human rights violations committed following elections in Venezuela.¹⁵
16. On 24 September 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release on Mexico, concerning a constitutional reform proposal implying greater role of Armed Forces in public security.¹⁶
17. On 7 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling for the end of violence and accountability after one year of human losses and suffering and blatant disregard for international law in Gaza.¹⁷
18. On 8 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Rwanda to provide answers on the fate of disappeared brothers Jean Nsengimana and Antoine Zihabamwe.¹⁸
19. On 10 October 2024, the Working Group, other special procedure mechanisms, and the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights issued a press release concerning abducted human rights defenders Mamadou Billo Bah and Oumar Sylla in Guinea, at risk of

¹⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/08/russia-all-remaining-human-rights-defenders-journalists-and-anti-war-critics>.

¹¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/international-community-must-not-normalise-taliban-rule-afghanistan>.

¹² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/zimbabwe-must-release-human-rights-defenders-ahead-sadc-summit-say-experts>.

¹³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/08/experts-condemn-misuse-counter-terrorism-law-against-montagnards-viet-nam>.

¹⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/08/victims-enforced-disappearances-need-urgent-responses-and-concerted-action>.

¹⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/venezuela-must-stop-human-rights-violations-following-elections-say-experts>.

¹⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/09/mexico-un-experts-concerned-over-upcoming-constitutional-reform-proposal>.

¹⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/7-october-un-experts-call-end-violence-and-accountability-after-year-human>.

¹⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/rwanda-must-provide-answers-fate-abducted-brothers-jean-nsengimana-and>.

torture, ill-treatment and extrajudicial execution for defending democracy and human rights.¹⁹

20. On 14 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release expressing concern over the safety of migrants, refugees and victims of trafficking in Tunisia.²⁰

21. On 16 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release alerting Thailand of a court ruling putting a human rights defender in danger, if extradited to Viet Nam.²¹

22. On 17 October 2024, the Working Group and other special procedure mechanisms issued a press release calling on Tanzania for urgent action amid a crackdown on civil society ahead of elections.²²

23. On 21 October 2024, the Working Group addressed the General Assembly and issued a press release highlighting how enforced disappearances have a ripple effect on the communities and societies where they occur due to the continuous nature of the crime.²³

24. On 22 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release urgently seeking confirmation by Russia of reports of the death of Victoria Roshchyna, a Ukrainian journalist and woman human rights defender.²⁴

25. On 24 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release stressing that the statute of limitations must not deny justice to families of 85 victims killed in the Tak Bai incident in Thailand.²⁵

26. On 31 October 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release concerning inmate ill-treatment and possible enforced disappearances in Belarus.²⁶

27. On 15 November 2024, the Working Group and other special procedures mechanisms issued a press release calling Mozambique to stop post-electoral violence and repression.²⁷

28. On 25 November 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling for the immediate end of Russian attacks on Ukraine's electricity system to avoid the risk of nuclear disaster.²⁸

29. On 26 November 2024, the Working Group issued a press release at the end of an official country visit to Lithuania, acknowledging the country's solid legal framework as sound basis to continue progress in preventing enforced disappearance and sharing its preliminary findings.²⁹

¹⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/guinea-growing-concern-health-and-well-being-disappeared-human-rights>.

²⁰ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tunisia-un-experts-concerned-over-safety-migrants-refugees-and-victims>.

²¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/thailand-court-ruling-puts-human-rights-defender-danger-if-extradited-viet>.

²² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tanzania-experts-call-urgent-action-amid-crackdown-civil-society-ahead>.

²³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/victims-must-be-core-action-combat-enforced-disappearance-says-working-group>.

²⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/russia-must-confirm-news-ukrainian-journalists-death-custody-un-experts>.

²⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/thailand-statute-limitations-must-not-deny-justice-families-85-victims>.

²⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/belarus-inmate-ill-treatment-and-possible-enforced-disappearances-ongoing>.

²⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/mozambique-post-election-violence-and-repression-must-stop-say-un-experts>.

²⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/un-experts-call-immediate-end-russian-attacks-ukraines-electricity-system>.

²⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/lithuania-solid-legal-framework-sound-basis-continue-progress-preventing>.

30. On 26 November 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release urging full compliance with the International Criminal Court's (ICC) arrest warrants issued against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, and against Hamas commander Mohammed Diab Ibrahim Al-Masri (Deif) for war crimes and crimes against humanity.³⁰

31. On 2 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling for a "course correction" in the international response to the escalating crisis in Myanmar, as the civilian death toll eclipsed 6,000.³¹

32. On 11 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release highlighting how enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions are still used to silence opposition and critics in Nicaragua.³²

33. On 20 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling for unified support for Syria in its critical transition following the fall of the Assad regime.³³

34. On 23 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling for the release of activist Idris Khattak after five years in detention in Pakistan.³⁴

35. On 23 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release highlighting the documentation and preservation of evidence of gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed during years of conflict and authoritarianism in Syria, as critical to ensure truth and accountability in pivotal moment of early transition in Syria.³⁵

36. On 23 December 2024, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release expressing serious concern at what appears to be an increase in systematic targeting of women belonging to the Baha'i religious minority throughout the country in Iran.³⁶

37. On 8 January 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Lebanon to stop the extradition of Abdulrahman Al-Qaradawi to the United Arab Emirates.³⁷

38. On 8 January 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling on the United States for the release of Guantánamo Bay detainee Abu Zubaydah, arbitrarily detained for over two decades.³⁸

³⁰ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/11/icc-arrest-warrants-can-help-save-lives-must-be-respected-and-complied-un>.

³¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/myanmar-un-experts-urge-course-correction-civilian-deaths-exceed-6000>.

³² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/nicaragua-enforced-disappearances-and-arbitrary-detentions-still-used>.

³³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/syria-experts-advocate-sovereignty-democratic-reconstruction-and-respect>.

³⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/pakistan-experts-call-release-activist-idris-khattak-after-five-years>.

³⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/syria-evidence-gross-human-rights-violations-and-international-crimes-must>.

³⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/12/iran-experts-alarmed-systematic-targeting-bahai-women>.

³⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/lebanon-must-stop-extradition-abdulrahman-al-qaradawi-united-arab-emirates>.

³⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/experts-call-release-guantanamo-bay-detainee-abu-zubaydah-arbitrarily>.

39. On 10 January 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, issued a press release calling on Venezuela to respect the right to peaceful protest and democratic dissent as new presidential term begins.³⁹

40. On 15 January 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedures mechanisms, endorsed a press release by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, expressing concern about the use of anti-terrorism legislation against human rights defenders in Egypt.⁴⁰

41. 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 2025.⁴¹

42. 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 demand for accountability and warn that without guarantees for human rights and justice there can be no peace.⁴²

43. 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 2025.⁴³

44. 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 in the Democratic Republic of Congo and region.⁴⁴

45. 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.⁴⁵

46. 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.⁴⁶

47. 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.⁴⁷

48. 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

³⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/venezuela-must-respect-right-peaceful-protest-and-democratic-dissent-new>.

⁴⁰ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/egypt-special-rapporteur-concerned-about-use-anti-terrorism-legislation>

⁴¹ 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>.

⁴² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/russias-repression-home-and-aggression-against-ukraine-demand-justice-no>.

⁴³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/02/experts-urge-venezuela-comply-international-law-prevent-irreparable-harm>.

⁴⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/un-expert-expresses-extreme-concern-safety-human-rights-defenders-eastern>.

⁴⁵ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/belarus-experts-mark-second-anniversary-enforced-disappearance-siarhei>.

⁴⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/belarus-alarming-ill-treatment-women-prisoners-and-life-threatening>.

⁴⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/03/pakistan-un-experts-demand-release-baloch-human-rights-defenders-and-end>.

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).⁴⁸

49. On 11 April 2025, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release welcoming the unilateral ceasefire declared by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) on 1 March 2025, after more than 40 years of conflict with Türkiye.⁴⁹

50. 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, UN human rights experts raised alarm that widespread starvation and a distressing surge in acute malnutrition are unfolding.⁵⁰

51. 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.⁵¹

52. 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 called for full respect for international law.⁵²

53. 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 warned 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.⁵³

54. 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.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-end-isil-related-arbitrary-detention-north-east-syria-and>.

⁴⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-welcome-kurdish-workers-party-ceasefire-turkiye-and-urge-just-and>.

⁵⁰ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/sudan-faces-worsening-humanitarian-catastrophe-famine-and-conflict-escalate>.

⁵¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/belarus-experts-alarmed-reports-coercive-psychiatric-treatment-punishment>.

⁵² See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-urge-pakistan-address-human-rights-violations-balochistan>.

⁵³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/mali-un-experts-outraged-reports-summary-executions-and-enforced>.

⁵⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/04/un-experts-alarmed-illegal-deportations-united-states-el-salvador>.