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Follow-up to the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in the report of its visit to Cyprus from 5 to 12 April 2022

Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances**

Summary

The present document contains information provided by the Republic of Cyprus, the Turkish Cypriot authorities, international organizations, civil society and other stakeholders, relating to the measures to implement the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances following its visit to Cyprus in 2022 (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1).

In paragraph 7(a) of its resolution 7/12, the Human Rights Council requested governments that have accepted visits to give all necessary attention to the Working Group's recommendations and invited them to inform the Working Group of any action they take on those recommendations. The Human Rights Council reiterates this request in paragraph 16(a) of its resolution 21/4.

The Working Group decided in 2010 to adopt the present format to its follow-up reports with the aim of rendering them reader-friendly and of facilitating the identification of concrete steps taken in response to the specific recommendations and to reflect the opinions of the different actors involved in the process. For this reason, follow-up tables have been created. The tables contain the recommendations of the Working Group, a brief description of the situation when the country visit was undertaken, an overview of the steps taken on the basis of the information gathered by the Working Group both from governmental and non-governmental sources, and the observations of the Working Group on the level of implementation of the recommendations.

The Working Group continues to offer its assistance to the governments that have received a visit to comply with the recommendations made and stands ready to assist them in their efforts to prevent and combat enforced disappearance.

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I. Follow-up to the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in the report of its visit to Cyprus from 5 to 12 April 2022

1. On 11 December 2024, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances requested the Republic of Cyprus to provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations that were made in the report A/HRC/51/31/Add.1 (paragraph 76), following its visit to the country in 2022. Similar requests were made to the Government of Türkiye and to the Turkish Cypriot authorities. On 13 March 2025, the Republic of Cyprus provided the requested information. Additionally, on 14 March 2025, the Turkish Cypriot authorities provided their submission.[1]

2. The Working Group thanks the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot authorities for their submissions for the follow-up report, noting, however, that the information provided often lacked substance and was insufficient to assess the implementation of its recommendations. While welcoming progress in the implementation of some recommendations, it notes that many have only been partially addressed or remain unaddressed. The Working Group recalls the importance of full implementation of all the recommendations made in its report.

Legislation and institutional framework

3. The implementation of most of the recommendations issued by the Working Group upon its country visit to the Republic of Cyprus greatly depends on the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (the 'International Convention').

4. Despite the Republic of Cyprus having signed the International Convention in 2007, it has not advanced much towards its ratification. The Republic of Cyprus has expressed its readiness to begin a dialogue with the Working Group in order to better understand the provisions of the International Convention.[2] However, there has not been much progress in this regard.

5. The Working Group notes that States and communities facing unresolved legacies of mass human rights violations often seek reciprocity when committing to certain obligations, including in the ratification of core human rights treaties. However, the Working Group stresses that enforced disappearance is not a matter for political negotiation. It is a crime under international law and a grave violation of multiple human rights. Indeed, the prohibition of enforced disappearances and the corresponding obligation to investigate them have acquired jus cogens status.[3] The ratification of the International Convention should thus not be perceived as a concession, but as a principled, strategic, and future-oriented act for the protection of the victims.

6. The ratification of the International Convention would allow the Republic of Cyprus to align with the aspirations of families of disappeared persons to learn the truth about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones. It would further indicate a genuine commitment towards the rule of law, and it would allow the Republic of Cyprus to fully engage with international human rights bodies, such as the Committee on Enforced Disappearances. This engagement provides an additional venue for international scrutiny and assistance, thereby reinforcing the Republic of Cyprus' own efforts to seek justice for disappeared persons.

[1] The Working Group stresses that the present report does not in any way imply the expression of any opinion concerning the legal status of any territory, city or area, or of its authorities.

[2] Note verbale of 22 June 2022.

[3] Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, A/HRC/51/31/Add.3, paras. 74-77.

Truth, justice and reparations

7. Despite the explicit call on the leaders of the Greek Cypriot community and Turkish Cypriot community to stop politicizing the issue of disappeared persons, the Working Group notes with concern that the truth, justice and reparations efforts are often instrumentalized. Instead of searching for the disappeared, as well as investigating the cases of enforced disappearance in the territory under their control, each side has rather devoted time and resources to accuse the other one for their failure to do so.

8. The Working Group takes note of the efforts reported by the Republic of Cyprus to strengthen its response vis-à-vis enforced disappearance, including the establishment of a specialized police unit, and the Missing Persons Investigating Team, operating under the supervision of the Attorney General. According to the State, this unit is tasked with investigating the circumstances surrounding the disappearance and death of individuals, including Turkish Cypriot disappeared persons, once remains have been located and identified. The Republic of Cyprus emphasized that the investigations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights, and that the families are informed of progress. It further referred to European Court of Human Rights (the "ECtHR") decisions that found the investigations conducted concerning four cases, to be procedurally adequate.[4] While acknowledging the ECtHR decision, the Working Group remains concerned that most cases are not investigated at all and victims of disappearances face limitations in accessing the courts. The ECtHR decision refers to four cases only and should not be interpreted as an overall assessment of the investigations concerning victims of disappearance.

9. The Working Group also remains concerned that, despite the existence of institutional procedures, no criminal prosecutions have been initiated in connection with cases of enforced disappearance. Investigations appear to be constrained to the identification stage and have not translated into accountability measures. The absence of a systematic framework to collect, preserve and legally qualify forensic and testimonial evidence discovered through exhumations conducted by the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus (CMP) significantly limits the possibility of judicial follow-up. The CMP's strictly humanitarian mandate does not include the preservation of evidence for legal proceedings, which, in turn, weakens the effectiveness of investigations from an accountability perspective. As reiterated by the Working Group in its report, investigations into enforced disappearances must aim not only to establish the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared, but also to identify and hold perpetrators accountable.

10. The Working Group further notes that the legal framework in the Republic of Cyprus does not include explicit safeguards to prohibit amnesties or other measures that could impede investigations or shield perpetrators of enforced disappearance from accountability. While the Republic of Cyprus stated that no such measures currently exist and clarified that informal assurances dating back to the 1990s are not binding and are not being used in practice, it has not adopted legislation that would formally exclude amnesty for this crime. The Working Group notes, however, that the absence of an official review or abrogation perpetuates legal uncertainty and undermines the broader accountability framework. Furthermore, enforced disappearance is not criminalized as an autonomous offense in domestic law, despite the recommendations made by international human rights mechanisms, including the Working Group.

11. The Working Group emphasizes that the right to justice requires not only the opening of investigations, but also to know the truth and the establishment of a legal and institutional framework capable of effectively prosecuting those responsible for enforced disappearance. The lack of prosecutions to date, the legal ambiguity surrounding amnesties, and the absence of an autonomous criminal offense of enforced disappearance together represent significant impediments to accountability and the realization of victims' rights.

12. The Working Group encourages the Republic of Cyprus to take further steps to address these gaps, including by enacting legislation that explicitly prohibits amnesty for

[4] See, *Gürtekin and others v Cyprus* (dec.), nos. 60441/13, 68206/13 and 68667/13, and *Semra Emin Mustafa and others v. Cyprus* (dec.), no. 1476/14.

enforced disappearance, criminalizing the offense as a distinct and continuous crime in line with international standards, and ensuring that forensic and testimonial evidence gathered through humanitarian efforts is preserved and utilized for judicial purposes. These measures are essential to ensure truth, justice and reparation for families and disappeared persons and to fulfil Republic of Cyprus' obligations under international human rights law.

13. The Working Group observes that the Republic of Cyprus reports steps to comply with ECtHR judgments concerning disappeared persons, particularly by supporting the work of the CMP and conducting post-identification investigations into the fate of Turkish Cypriot missing persons. However, the implementation of general measures stemming from relevant judgments remains incomplete. While formal investigations have been initiated, they have not resulted in prosecutions, nor has the domestic legal framework been amended to address comprehensively the structural deficiencies identified by the ECtHR. These include the absence of a mechanism for preserving potential criminal evidence discovered during CMP-led exhumations and the lack of legal reforms to criminalize enforced disappearance as an autonomous offense. As such, although the Republic of Cyprus has shown institutional commitment and engaged with the ECtHR, the broader requirements of enforcement – particularly in relation to truth, justice, and accountability – are only partially fulfilled.

14. The Working Group notes with concern that the Republic of Cyprus has not established a comprehensive national reparation programme addressing the harm suffered by victims of enforced disappearance and other serious human rights violations. While families of the disappeared receive certain forms of social support, these services are not provided within a reparative framework and do not constitute formal recognition of the harm suffered or the State's obligation to provide redress.[5] Moreover, the existing measures are not part of an integrated strategy that includes the full spectrum of reparations as articulated in international human rights law – namely, compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition. The Working Group also notes the absence of a participatory process involving affected communities in the design or implementation of any reparation initiatives. Without such a programme, disappeared persons and their families remain without full acknowledgment of their suffering or access to redress tailored to their rights.

Preventive measures in the context of non-refoulement

15. The Working Group remains concerned that procedures relating to the return, expulsion, and treatment of migrants in Cyprus do not fully align with international standards designed to prevent collective and undocumented expulsions, which, accordingly, may lead to enforced disappearance. The situation of migrants and asylum-seekers stranded in the buffer zone in 2023-2024, as documented by OHCHR,[6] underscores the vulnerabilities that arise in the absence of transparent and well-documented return procedures. Although the Republic of Cyprus, along with the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), provided humanitarian assistance, including emergency shelter, food, and medical services, the conditions observed by OHCHR indicate serious procedural and protection gaps. In particular, the lack of clarity surrounding the legal status of those stranded, coupled with inadequate documentation of returns and the potential risk of refoulement, raises concerns regarding the State's compliance with its obligations to prevent disappearances during migration control operations. The Working Group emphasizes that the return or removal of individuals must be strictly regulated, documented, and monitored to prevent any enforced disappearance especially in contexts where individuals are denied access to formal asylum procedures. In light of these findings, the Working Group considers that the implementation of its corresponding recommendation remains insufficient.

16. As concerns the recommendation to guarantee individual, case-by-case evaluation of expulsions, in line with article 8(1) of the Declaration, the Working Group notes that it has not been adequately implemented in the northern part of Cyprus. According to information provided by OHCHR, there is no functioning asylum system in the areas not under the

[5] See, for instance, ICRC, CMP, Needs of Families of Missing Persons in Cyprus, 2019.
[6] See A/HRC/58/21, paras. 33-36, A/HRC/55/20, para. 41.

effective control of the Government of Cyprus. Reports indicate that a significant number of individuals – over 5,000 in 2023 – were prevented from entering, while nearly 2,000[7] were detained and deported, and hundreds of others returned to Türkiye from the northern part of the island, without the benefit of formal procedures or individualized risk assessment, including for women, children and other persons facing increased vulnerabilities. The absence of legal safeguards, oversight mechanisms, and documentation procedures raises the possibility that returns and expulsions may occur in violation of the principle of non-refoulement and without consideration of whether individuals face a risk of enforced disappearance. While the territory controlled by the Turkish Cypriot authorities falls outside the control of the Republic of Cyprus, the Working Group reiterates the obligation of the State to prevent enforced disappearance in all territories under its jurisdiction or effective control and to cooperate with relevant actors to address protection gaps. In the absence of a reliable and transparent framework for evaluating the risks faced by returnees, the Working Group considers that its recommendation remains unimplemented.

17. The Working Group remains deeply concerned by the continued practice of pushbacks and collective expulsions of migrants, including asylum-seekers, by the Republic of Cyprus, both at sea and along the Green Line, which are contrary to the State's obligations under international law, particularly the principle of non-refoulement. Information received indicates that, between 2023 and 2024, multiple incidents occurred in which migrants arriving by boat, including 109 Syrians, were returned to Lebanon without an assessment of their protection needs and were subsequently deported to the Syrian Arab Republic – a country where they may face serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearance. In addition, the practice of pushing asylum-seekers back into the buffer zone continued despite repeated expressions of concern by United Nations special procedures,[8] the Human Rights Committee,[9] and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.[10] These pushbacks affected individuals facing increased vulnerability, including women, unaccompanied children, persons with disabilities, and those in need of urgent medical care. Some asylum-seekers were reportedly subjected to mistreatment and arbitrary detention by immigration officials before being expelled.

18. The Republic of Cyprus has stated that asylum-seekers entered irregularly into the northern part of Cyprus and transited through Türkiye, adding that Türkiye should have been responsible for examining their asylum claims.[11] The Republic of Cyprus' justification – that responsibility lies with Türkiye as the point of transit – does not relieve the Republic of Cyprus of its obligations under international human rights and refugee law in all areas under its jurisdiction, including the buffer zone. The lack of a legal prohibition on pushbacks, combined with the absence of transparent, individual assessments of protection claims, heightens the risk of refoulement and contributes to situations where individuals may be exposed to enforced disappearance upon return or during undocumented expulsions. In light of the consistent and well-documented reports of such practices and the State's failure to adopt legal or procedural safeguards to prevent them, the Working Group concludes that its recommendation has not been implemented.

19. The absence of targeted awareness-raising and capacity-building activities for State officials, including asylum officers, specifically focused on the concept of enforced disappearance and the associated risks linked to returns and expulsions that may violate the principle of non-refoulement, remains an issue requiring attention. Despite recurring reports of pushbacks, returns and expulsions without individualized risk assessments, there is no indication that trainings have been integrated into standard procedures for migration and asylum management. The information available does not indicate that officials responsible

[7] See A/HRC/55/20, para. 43.

[8] See for instance, the joint allegation letter CYP 2/2021.

[9] See CCPR/C/CYP/CO/5, paras. 31 and 32.

[10] Council of Europe, *Cyprus: Commissioner O'Flaherty expresses concern about the situation of migrant and asylum-seeking people stranded in the buffer zone and allegations of summary returns at sea*, 23 October 2024; Council of Europe, *Cypriot authorities should investigate allegations of pushbacks and ill-treatment of migrants, improve reception conditions, and ensure an enabling environment for NGOs*, 18 March 2021.

[11] See reply to CYP 3/2024.

for processing asylum applications or enforcing border measures are systematically informed of the risks of enforced disappearance that may arise as a consequence of return or expulsion. This lack of specialized training is particularly troubling in light of documented returns of asylum-seekers to countries where they may face grave human rights violations, including enforced disappearance. Without institutionalized and regular training programmes to raise awareness of these risks, the State cannot ensure that its personnel is adequately equipped to uphold its international human rights obligations in this context. As such, the Working Group considers that its recommendation remains unimplemented.

Engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms

20. The Working Group welcomes the standing invitation to all special procedures extended by the Republic of Cyprus in March 2001 and echoes the position of the Working Group on the use of mercenaries in commending the Republic of Cyprus for its quick response to a request for a country visit.[12]

21. The Working Group also observes that access by the UN human rights and humanitarian actors to all affected persons – particularly in the northern part of the island – remains significantly constrained. While the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control over the northern part of Cyprus, it retains an obligation to take all reasonable measures to ensure that UN human rights mechanisms, OHCHR and UNHCR are not obstructed from fulfilling their protection mandates. Reports indicate that the lack of a functioning asylum system in the north, combined with administrative and political barriers, continues to prevent effective monitoring and protection for migrants, asylum-seekers, and other vulnerable individuals. While OHCHR and UNHCR have had some access, such as when interventions have been required in response to stranded persons in the buffer zone, these interventions have been limited and reactive. The Working Group stresses that full and unhindered access to affected populations is essential to prevent protection gaps, including situations that may give rise to enforced disappearance. In light of these restrictions, its recommendation is assessed as not implemented.

22. The Working Group welcomes the establishment of Independent Institution on Mission Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic in June 2023[13] and encourages all relevant actors in Cyprus to extend cooperation to this institution to clarify the fate and whereabouts of all missing persons in accordance with its humanitarian mandate, notably in relation to those who may have gone missing on the island while fleeing Syria.

Recommendations to the leaders of both communities

23. The issue of disappeared persons in Cyprus continues to be framed through political lenses by both communities. Despite declarations of humanitarian concerns, the dialogue remains marked by mutual accusations of politicization. The Turkish Cypriot authorities assert that Greek Cypriot engagement with international mechanisms reflects political motives, while the Republic of Cyprus emphasizes Türkiye's obstruction as politically driven. This ongoing mutual attribution underscores that the issue remains politicized rather than being treated solely as a human rights and humanitarian matter.

24. Both sides report continued cooperation with the CMP. The Republic of Cyprus has increased its financial and logistical support, and the Turkish Cypriot authorities note facilitated access to civilian and some military areas. However, persistent delays in granting access to critical sites, particularly those designated as military areas, and the selective and inconsistent sharing of archival materials – especially those potentially held by Türkiye – continue to constrain the CMP's effectiveness. While cooperation exists, it remains incomplete and at times obstructed.

25. There has been no tangible progress toward establishing an inclusive truth-telling mechanism on the island. The Republic of Cyprus has expressed its willingness to consider

[12] Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, preliminary findings following the official visit to the Republic of Cyprus from 16 to 24 January 2025.

[13] A/RES/77/301.

the creation of such a body as a future confidence-building measure, but views its establishment as contingent upon broader political developments. The Turkish Cypriot authorities reportedly dismiss the need for such a mechanism, asserting that the CMP and national structures are sufficient. This lack of mutual commitment and absence of concrete steps renders the Working Group's recommendation unimplemented.

26. Authorities in the northern part of the island report that families are able to conduct burials of missing persons in accordance with their preferences and in a respectful environment. There is no indication of State interference or obstruction in the burial process, and families are reportedly able to choose between martyrdoms or other burial locations. Information on practices in the south is limited, but there is no reported evidence suggesting impediments to dignified burial arrangements. Based on available data, the practice appears to be respected.

27. Support to family associations exists within both communities, although its scope and consistency differ. The Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot authorities each report backing to specific associations that represent the interests of families of the missing. The extent to which this support is inclusive, unconditional, and geared toward promoting human rights awareness rather than historical narratives is unclear. While some support is evident, it lacks comprehensive and impartial implementation.

28. There has been no reported initiative to create a shared commemorative space for all disappeared persons across communities. Existing remembrance practices remain divided and reflect community-specific narratives and symbols. A common, inclusive space of remembrance could contribute meaningfully to reconciliation efforts, but no steps have been taken to advance this vision.

29. Progress towards promoting peace education across the island remains limited and fragmented. While the reactivation of the Technical Committee on Education and the exchange of history textbooks in 2023 and 2024 represent important steps, peace education has not yet been integrated into formal curricula. Civil society initiatives, notably those supported by the European Commission, have played a key role in fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and shared educational experiences for Cypriot youth. However, the continued rejection of textbooks, administrative delays, and the Turkish Cypriot authorities' withdrawal from the "Imagine" project illustrate the persistent politicization of education. Efforts remain largely extracurricular and insufficient to address the intergenerational trauma and divisive narratives entrenched in the educational systems.

30. Although the Turkish Cypriot authorities have proposed a cooperation mechanism on migration and irregular border crossing, no mechanism ensuring adherence to the principle of non-refoulement has been established in the northern part of the island. Technical committees mandated with addressing migration and protection issues continue to face political and operational constraints. There is no indication of comprehensive support or effective coordination from either side to enable these committees to function free of political obstruction.

Recommendations to the Government of Türkiye

31. Türkiye plays a crucial role in enabling or limiting the access granted to the CMP, particularly with respect to military zones and archival material. While a degree of cooperation has been reported – such as access to over 1,275 civilian sites and 109 military areas – this access remains limited by strict geographical constraints, annual permit quotas, and narrow excavation zones. The release of information from military archives continues to be partial and non-systematic. Reports of disturbed or relocated burial sites without prior notification to the CMP further compromise the preservation of evidence and humanitarian cooperation. These restrictions suggest that Türkiye's support, while present, remains conditional and insufficient to enable the CMP to fully and effectively carry out its mandate.

32. Türkiye has not complied with the relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning disappeared persons in Cyprus. In *Cyprus v. Turkey* and *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, among others, the European Court has identified violations relating to the lack of effective investigations and the failure to provide reparations, including just satisfaction. Despite the Court's judgments, Türkiye has not undertaken credible

investigations nor fulfilled its paid compensation obligations.[14] The humanitarian contribution of the CMP is acknowledged, yet it does not replace the State's legal duty to ensure accountability and redress. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe continues to monitor Türkiye's persistent non-compliance. This sustained failure to implement both individual and general measures of reparation significantly undermines the rights of victims and their families.

33. Asylum-seekers expelled from the northern part of Cyprus to Türkiye face considerable obstacles in accessing asylum procedures and are at risk of refoulement. Credible reports from UNHCR document multiple incidents in which individuals – particularly from Syria – were expelled to Türkiye and subsequently deported to countries where they may be at risk of serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearance. These expulsions have occurred without individualized risk assessments or procedural safeguards. In light of the absence of a functioning asylum system in the northern part of Cyprus, Türkiye's failure to provide access to fair and effective asylum proceedings constitutes a serious gap in protection. This practice raises significant concerns under international refugee and human rights law, particularly with regard to the principle of non-refoulement.

Recommendations to the international community

34. The Working Group notes that the international community has maintained a consistent level of support to the CMP, both financially and politically, contributing to the progress achieved thus far. Since its establishment, the CMP has benefited from contributions from over 40 donor countries and organizations, including the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and several individual States. This support has enabled the CMP to expand its forensic capacity and improve the pace of exhumations and identifications. However, the pace of progress has slowed significantly in recent years. As of the end of 2023, 976 individuals remain unaccounted for. Field operations continue to face serious constraints, including limited access to burial sites and delays in the sharing of critical archival information—factors which are beyond the CMP's control, but directly impact its effectiveness. Although the international community remains engaged, the Working Group encourages donors and international partners to redouble efforts, including through political advocacy and sustained funding, to ensure that the CMP can fulfil its humanitarian mandate in a timely and effective manner. The Working Group's recommendation is therefore considered partially implemented, with a continued need for reinforced and targeted support.

[14] See, for instance, 1521st meeting (4-6 March 2025) (DH) - H46-31 Cyprus v. Turkey (Application No. 25781/94), 1521st meeting (4-6 March 2025) (DH) - H46-36 Varnava and Others v. Turkey (Application No. 16064/90).

Follow up to the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, following its country visit to Cyprus from 5 to 12 April 2022 (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
76. The Working Group makes the following recommendations:			
To the Republic of Cyprus			
Legislation and institutional framework			
(a) Codify enforced disappearance as an autonomous crime in the Penal Code, punishable by appropriate penalties that take into account its extreme seriousness. The introduction of this crime should be independent from the ratification of the Convention and should encompass:	Paras. 44, 45, 75		Implementation of the recommendations (a)(i) to (iii) directly depends on the codification of enforced disappearance as an autonomous crime in the Penal Code. The Working Group is not aware whether any work has been done in relation to amending the existing Penal Code with a view to introducing an autonomous crime of enforced disappearance. The Penal Code of the Republic of Cyprus contains several articles, which cover various elements of enforced disappearance. These include articles 249 (Kidnapping or abducting in order to murder), 250 (kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person), 251 (Kidnapping or abducting in order to subject person to grievous hurt, etc.), 252 (Wrongfully concealing or keeping in confinement, kidnapped or abducted person), and 253 (Kidnapping or abducting child under fourteen years with intent to steal from its person). None of these articles, however, fully conforms with the definition of enforced disappearance under the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (the Declaration) or International
(i) The introduction of the various modes of criminal liability, including in relation to any person who commits, orders, solicits or induces the commission of, attempts to commit, is an accomplice to or participates in an enforced disappearance;	Para. 46		
(ii) The application of command or superior individual criminal responsibility for such crimes;	Para. 46		
(iii) The express mention that enforced disappearance is a continuous crime to which amnesties or immunities cannot be applied and	Para. 40		

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
that statutes of limitations, if provided, shall be substantial and commensurate with the extreme seriousness of the offence, and only commence from the moment when the offence of enforced disappearance ceases;			Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (International Convention). The Working Group notes however, that, under domestic law of the Republic of Cyprus there are no statute of limitations for the above-mentioned crimes.
(b) Complete the ratification process of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance as soon as possible, with the express recognition of the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances pursuant to articles 31 and 32 of the Convention;	Paras. 69-70, 75	*Republic of Cyprus* The Government of the Republic of Cyprus would like to reiterate its readiness to begin a dialogue between the Ministries/Offices of the Republic of Cyprus and the Working Group in order to better understand the provisions of the International Convention. The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus in Geneva will act as the contact point facilitating this dialogue.	The Working Group is not aware of any progress made with regard to completion of the ratification process of the International Convention. The Working Group welcomes the readiness of the Republic of Cyprus to begin a dialogue with the Working Group to better understand the provisions of the International Convention. The Working Group remains open to assist the Republic of Cyprus in this matter within its mandate.
Truth, justice and reparations			
(c) Ensure that the authorities in charge of investigations related to enforced disappearances have access to all relevant information, and that all the information gathered in the search process, including possible criminal evidence, is collected, investigated and preserved for possible disclosure and use at a later stage;	Paras. 42, 73	*Republic of Cyprus* 1. For compliance with the Republic's international obligations arising out of Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights within the specific context of the Turkish Cypriot missing persons in Cyprus (see *Emin and others v Cyprus and other applications decision*, no. 59623/08, decision of 3 April 2012, paragraph 30),[15] we reiterate that the Attorney General directs the Chief of Police to carry out investigations to ascertain the circumstances of disappearance and death of Turkish Cypriot missing	The Working Group is not aware of any changes in the law or practice of conducting the investigations related to enforced disappearance.

[15] Paragraph 30 states: "[…] the Court considers that the discovery of the remains of the applicants' relatives bearing signs of violence and buried in circumstances highly suggestive of extra-judicial execution or murder triggered an obligation on the authorities to take investigative steps to identify the remains, the likely cause and circumstances of death and the identity of the perpetrators of any unlawful violence."

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		persons once their remains have been found and/or identified. These investigations are allocated to a special unit within the Police, entitled Missing Persons Investigating Team, which is comprised of experienced investigators. 2. At the investigation stage, police take statements from missing persons' relatives and in the absence of any complaint from relatives, police publish an announcement at the daily Turkish Cypriot press in which they call the relatives of the missing person to get in touch with the police in order to arrange for their statement to be taken. Moreover, inquiries are made with a number of authorities/organizations which might possibly have any files or records in their keeping, giving leads for investigative steps, including Cyprus Central Intelligence Service (Missing Persons Department), Cyprus Red Cross, the Greek Cypriot member of the CMP, UNFICYP, the Missing Persons Service, the National Guard Authorities, the Police Operations Office and National Archives. As per the Working Group's recommendation number 76(iii), these authorities/bodies cooperate fully with the police. 3. Police take statements from witnesses in the villages where the bodies of the missing persons had been found, and where events were reported to have occurred. Police pursue all available leads and directions for collecting further evidence in respect of each case. The investigation is supervised by the Attorney General, an independent officer, who may refer the case back to the police with instructions to take further investigative steps. The decision as to whether prosecutions will be ordered rests with the Attorney General who studies the investigation files with all evidential material collected and reaches a	

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		conclusion in each case separately as to whether there is sufficient evidence to bring prosecutions before a court of law. The Attorney General's instructions to the police are for the investigation to be returned to him, if any further evidence is uncovered during other investigations. The relatives of the missing persons are kept informed of the investigation and the Attorney General's office issues detailed reports on the investigations which are sent to the missing persons' relatives and/or counsel.	
(d) Prohibit amnesties and other measures that may be aimed at avoiding or indirectly hindering the obligation to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of enforced disappearances;	Para. 40	*Republic of Cyprus* 4. The investigations are not "dropped" as suggested in para. 44 of the Report, due to lack of credible evidence. Rather, the Attorney General may decide not to bring prosecutions before a court of law because in the particular circumstances of a case there is insufficient evidence. This decision however, maybe reviewed if further evidence is uncovered in the future in the course of other criminal investigations. It is noted that under domestic law there are no statute of limitations for the crimes that are investigated. Moreover, the reason why there are no prosecutions thus far does not lie with any alleged or perceived amnesty, as suggested in para. 40 of the Report. It is noted in this regard that the Attorney General is not bound by any decision of any of his predecessors, let alone any decision of the former Attorney General in the 1990s. 5. The investigations that are carried out are effective within the meaning of Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights' case law. The European Court of Human Rights had the chance to review/examine four such investigations in the case *Gurtekin and others v.*	As of the latest available information, the Republic of Cyprus has not explicitly prohibited amnesties or similar measures that could impede the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of perpetrators of enforced disappearances. International human rights standards emphasize that enforced disappearance is a serious violation of multiple human rights and, when part of a widespread or systematic attack against civilians, constitutes a crime against humanity. Such crimes are subject to obligations under international law, including the duty to prosecute and the inapplicability of statutes of limitations. While the Republic of Cyprus has supported initiatives related to investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of enforced disappearances, there is no evidence of domestic legislation that explicitly prohibits amnesties or similar measures for these crimes. The absence of such legal provisions indicates that the recommendation to prohibit amnesties and other measures that may hinder the obligation to address enforced disappearances remains unimplemented.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		Cyprus (dec.) nos. 60441/13, and *Semra Emin Mustafa and others v. Cyprus* (dec.), no. 1476/14. The applicants'/relatives of Turkish Cypriot missing persons' principal argument under Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights concerned the effectiveness of the investigations carried out by the Cypriot authorities into the deaths of the missing persons following the discovery of their bodies. They also complained under Article 3 that the failure of the authorities to pursue an effective investigation caused them distress. 6. the European Court of Human Rights reached the following conclusions. First, with regards to the investigation's impartiality and independence, the European Court of Human Rights noted: "There is no indication of any links existing between the police authorities or Attorney General and any political figures of organizations purportedly tainted by involvement in events in 1963-1964. The applicants' allegations largely amount to a general assertion that no Cypriot authority could claim to be independent of past events or those involved in them. The Court sees no basis on the materials or arguments before it for finding any such theoretical impossibility for the Republic of Cyprus to carry out an effective investigation."[16] Second, with regards to the effectiveness of the investigation, the European Court of Human Rights noted: "[…] the police have followed numerous leads in the three cases, making enquiries with official bodies and organizations, updated statements from the relatives of the deceased, looking for witnesses in the villages where the bodies were found or where events were reported to have	

[16] *Gurtekin and others v Cyprus* (dec.), nos. 60441/13, 68206/13 and 68667/13 paragraph 31.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		occurred and tracking down to the extent possible the names of potential suspects which have been mentioned by witnesses. […] those named as being incriminated in events who have been found and questioned by the police, all have denied any knowledge of, or participation in, any unlawful acts."[17] Third, with regards transparency of the investigation, the European Court of Human Rights noted: "the Attorney General issued reports on the investigations."[18] The Court observed that "[these] reports were detailed, gave relevant and plausible reasons for the decision not to prosecute and made it clear that if any further evidence was uncovered during other investigations that this decision would be reviewed."[19] Fourth, with regards to the complaint that the investigations have ended without prosecutions, the European Court of Human Rights noted that "a prosecution, particularly on such a serious charge as involvement in mass unlawful killings, should never e embarked upon lightly as the impact on a defendant who comes under the weight of the repercussions on reputation, private, family and professional life. Given the presumption of innocence enshrined in Article 6§2 of the Convention, it can never be assumed that a particular person is so tainted with suspicion that the standard of evidence to be applied is an irrelevance. Rumour and gossip are a dangerous basis on which to base any steps that can potentially devastate a person's life."[20] 7. The Government submits that all pending and/or completed investigations of this kind are investigated	

[17] *Ibid.*, paragraph. 25.
[18] *Ibid*., paragraph. 24.
[19] *Ibid*., paragraph 29.
[20] *Ibid*., paragraph 27.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		(or have been investigated) with the same rigour in terms of effectiveness, transparency, independence and impartiality as the above four investigations. 8. Reference to the above decision must be made in para. 47 of the Report where the Working Group notes that relatives of the missing persons applied to the European Court of Human Rights. These decisions are appended to the present comments. In relation to the reference "*(…) that in the 1990's the prosecutorial authorities from the two communities assured the CMP through an exchange of letters that no witness would be prosecuted for sharing confidential information about gravesites*" we would like to clarify that the investigative team of the Police, which deals with the criminal investigation of cases of missing persons of the periods 1963-1964 and 1974, has never used or is using the said letter within the framework of the examinations it carries out.	
(e) Enforce all relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning disappeared persons in Cyprus, including by implementing general measures stemming from the judgments;	Paras. 35, 47		The Republic of Cyprus has taken steps to address the issue of missing persons, particularly through its support of the CMP. The CMP, a bi-communal body established under the auspices of the United Nations, has been actively involved in the exhumation, identification, and return of remains to the families of missing individuals. The Republic of Cyprus has facilitated the CMP's work by providing necessary resources and ensuring access to relevant sites within its effective control. However, challenges remain, particularly concerning the full implementation of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) judgments related to missing persons. The ECtHR has underscored the need for effective investigations into the fate of missing

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
			persons and the circumstances of their disappearances. While the CMP focuses on the humanitarian aspect of locating and identifying remains, it does not have a mandate to conduct criminal investigations or attribute responsibility. The Republic of Cyprus has initiated some investigations through its law enforcement agencies. However, these efforts have faced obstacles, including the passage of time, the death of potential witnesses, and the lack of access to areas not under its control. As of the latest available reports, these investigations have not led to prosecutions or comprehensive accountability for the disappearances. Given these factors, while the Republic of Cyprus has made commendable efforts in addressing the humanitarian needs of the families of missing persons, the full implementation of the ECtHR judgments, particularly regarding effective investigations and accountability, remains incomplete. Therefore, the recommendation to enforce all relevant ECtHR judgments concerning disappeared persons in Cyprus is considered to be only partially implemented.
(f) Establish a comprehensive national reparation programme, with the participation of the communities affected, that includes compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition for all victims of human rights violations, including enforced disappearance, without discrimination;	Paras. 31, 36, 48, 49, 52, 53, 71-73		As of the latest available information, the Republic of Cyprus has not established a comprehensive national reparation programme addressing all victims of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances. While the Republic of Cyprus supports the CMP in its humanitarian efforts to locate and identify missing individuals, these initiatives do not encompass the full spectrum of redress measures outlined in international human rights standards.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
			Specifically, there is no evidence of a coordinated programme that provides compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition to all victims without discrimination. The absence of such a programme has been noted in discussions with international human rights bodies. For instance, during the Human Rights Committee's review of the Republic of Cyprus in June 2023, experts inquired about plans to criminalize enforced disappearance and establish mechanisms for truth and reconciliation. The Cypriot delegation indicated that a truth and reconciliation commission was not under consideration at that time. Given the lack of a formalized and comprehensive reparation framework, the recommendation to establish a national reparation programme for all victims of human rights violations in the Republic of Cyprus remains unimplemented.
(g) Ensure that the provision of social services for victims is not confused with their right to obtain reparation;	Para. 52		The Republic of Cyprus provides social services to victims of certain crimes, such as domestic violence and human trafficking, through agencies like the Social Welfare Services (SWS) and collaborations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, these services primarily focus on immediate support and protection, including shelter, counselling, and legal assistance. They do not constitute a comprehensive reparation framework that encompasses compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition for all victims of human rights violations, including enforced disappearances. The absence of such a framework has been noted in international discussions. For instance, during the Human Rights Committee's review of the Republic of

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
			Cyprus in June 2023, experts inquired about plans to establish mechanisms for truth and reconciliation, as well as comprehensive reparation programmes (CCPR/C/CYP/CO/5, para. 18). The delegation of the Republic of Cyprus indicated that such initiatives were not under consideration at that time. Therefore, the recommendation to ensure that the provision of social services for victims is not confused with their right to obtain reparation remains unimplemented.
Preventive measures in the context of non-refoulement			
(h) Ensure strict adherence by the relevant authorities to the applicable procedures for extradition, return and expulsion, and formally document all returns of migrants in order to avoid disappearances during those process, including temporary or short term;	Paras, 58, 59, 62, 63	*Other* 34. UNFICYP and UNHCR established two camps within the buffer zone for the stranded individuals and provided them with emergency shelter, food and other immediate necessities. The Republic of Cyprus also provided supplies to meet their basic needs and an ambulance to ensure their access to healthcare. OHCHR visited one of the camps housing the remaining stranded asylum-seekers and observed that they had faced a very difficult situation as a result of being stranded in the buffer zone.	Measures have been taken to improve the situation of migrants in buffer zones, reflecting a positive step forward. However, the Working Group remains concerned about the lack continued of systematic identification and documentation in these areas. Therefore, the recommendation remains partially implemented.
(i) Guarantee the evaluation of returns on a case-by-case basis in order to establish whether there are grounds for believing that the person could be subjected to enforced disappearance, in accordance with article 8 (1) of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;	Para. 62	*Other* 43. There continued to be concerns about the lack of an asylum system in the northern part of Cyprus. Reportedly, efforts were still being made to prevent irregular migration, with about 5,157 persons prevented from entering areas in the northern part of Cyprus and about 1,898 persons detained and subsequently deported. Furthermore, 246 passengers from 16 boats were identified and detained in the	The Working Group welcomes the identification of individuals that attempt to enter the country but remains concerned over whether the evaluation of returns or expulsions is being done in a case-by-case basis or whether all individuals are returned or expelled after being identified and without having a risk-assessment made. Based on the above, the Working Group concludes that the recommendation has been partially

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		northern part of Cyprus and subsequently returned to Türkiye.	implemented and reiterates its call to ensure an evaluation system is used to determine one a case-by-case basis the risks of returns and expulsions.
(j) Expressly prohibit, in law and practice, the pushing back or collective expulsion of migrants, which is contrary to the international obligation of non-refoulement and may lead to enforced disappearances;	Paras. 58-61, 75	*Other* 42. Pushbacks at sea were also reported during the period under review. The Republic of Cyprus returned 109 Syrians who had arrived by three separate boats to Lebanon; they were then reportedly deported by Lebanon to the Syrian Arab Republic without having their protection needs assessed. 44. In its concluding observations, the Human Rights Committee expressed its concern about multiple reports of pushbacks of people on the move, both at sea and at the Green Line, noting that such actions did not comply with the State party's international obligation of non-refoulement. The Committee recommended that the State party should increase its efforts to respect the principle of non-refoulement and to ensure that independent and effective investigations were carried out into allegations of pushbacks of migrants and asylum-seekers, including persons who may be in need of international protection. *Other* 33. Despite repeated calls by the Security Council and the Secretary-General to respect applicable international law in the handling of asylum-seekers and refugees, the Republic of Cyprus continued to engage in pushbacks of asylum-seekers across the	The Working Group notes that, following its visit, push-backs still occur, with them being reported as recently as March 2025.[21] The Working Group notes with concern the lack of independent and effective investigation into the issue and possible human rights violations in buffer zones. The Working Group recommends establishing enforcement mechanisms to ensure that an individual assessment of protection needs is carried out with regard to every person, and to ensure that no person is expelled, returned (refouler) or extradited to another State where there are substantial grounds to believe that they would be in danger of enforced disappearance.

[21] See UNHCR concerned about reports of pushbacks of Syrians | UNHCR Europe.

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		Green Line, which, according to UNHCR, led to 154 persons (including 35 children, of whom 16 were unaccompanied) being stranded in the buffer zone between 16 May and 14 November 2024. The stranded individuals included asylum applicants originating from countries affected by conflict or serious human rights violations, persons with disabilities and serious health conditions and women in vulnerable situations. Some of the stranded individuals had reached the Pournara first reception centre before being pushed back into the buffer zone. UNHCR also received 107 reports of alleged physical violence, arbitrary detention and mistreatment of asylum-seekers by Greek Cypriot immigration police officers. 35. Six special procedures mandate holders issued a communication on 23 July 2024 to the Republic of Cyprus to raise concerns regarding the pushbacks of asylum-seekers into the buffer zone in violation of the principle of non-refoulement and the negative effects of the pushbacks on their physical and mental health. In its reply of 30 October, the Republic of Cyprus stated that the stranded asylum-seekers had entered irregularly into the northern part of Cyprus and had transited through Türkiye, adding that Türkiye should have been responsible for examining their asylum claims. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights noted that the obligations of the Republic of Cyprus under international refugee and human rights law continued to apply in all areas under its jurisdiction, including the buffer zone.	
(k) Develop awareness-raising and capacity-building activities for State officials, including asylum officers, on the concept of enforced	Para. 62		As of the latest available information, the Republic of Cyprus has not developed specific awareness-raising and capacity-building activities for State officials, including asylum officers, focusing on the concept of

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
disappearance and on the return of individuals in this context potentially constituting a violation of the principle of non-refoulement;			enforced disappearance and the potential violation of the principle of non-refoulement in this context. While there have been general training sessions and awareness campaigns for officers in various services, particularly those handling asylum applications, these have not explicitly addressed enforced disappearance or its implications related to non-refoulement. Additionally, recent reports indicate ongoing concerns regarding the treatment of asylum-seekers and potential violations of non-refoulement obligations. For instance, in March 2025, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported instances where the Republic of Cyprus allegedly intercepted boats transporting migrants and prevented them from disembarking, actions that may contravene the principle of non-refoulement. Given the absence of targeted training programmes, addressing enforced disappearance and non-refoulement, coupled with reports suggesting gaps in adherence to international obligations, the recommendation to develop such awareness-raising and capacity-building activities remains unimplemented.
Engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms			
(l) Engage further with United Nations human rights mechanisms, including through further visits by special procedure mandate holders, such as the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, and	Para. 65		The Republic of Cyprus issued a standing invitation to special procedure mandate holders in March 2001. Since then, it has been visited by four mandates, including the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion (2012), SR on cultural rights (2016), Working Group on enforced or involuntary disappearances (2022) and the Working Group on the use of mercenaries (2025).

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants;			In this regard, the Working Group notes the openness of the Republic of Cyprus to host country visits by the special procedures mandate holders.
(m) Ensure that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant actors, such as UNHCR, have access to all persons potentially affected in order to avoid any protection gap, notably in the northern part of the island;	Para. 57		The recommendation calls for ensuring that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other relevant actors, such as the UNHCR, have access to all persons potentially affected to avoid any protection gaps, notably in the northern part of Cyprus. As of the latest available information, this recommendation has not been fully implemented. The northern part of Cyprus, administered by the Turkish Cypriot authorities and recognized only by Türkiye, presents significant challenges for international organizations seeking access to affected populations. The Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control over this area, limiting its ability to facilitate such access. UNHCR operates in Cyprus with a mandate to ensure the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. However, its activities are primarily concentrated in the areas under the control of the Republic of Cyprus. In the northern part, the absence of a formal asylum system and the lack of recognition of UNHCR's mandate by the local authorities hinder effective protection and assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees. Reports indicate that individuals entering the northern part without authorization are at risk of arrest and deportation, often without the opportunity to seek asylum. Furthermore, the suspension of the EU acquis in the northern part complicates the implementation of standardized human rights protections. While

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			UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus) maintains a presence in the buffer zone, its mandate and capacity do not extend to comprehensive human rights monitoring or ensuring access for other UN bodies in the northern areas. Given these constraints, the recommendation to ensure that OHCHR and other relevant actors have access to all persons potentially affected, particularly in the northern part of Cyprus, remains unimplemented. Addressing this issue would require concerted efforts involving all relevant stakeholders to overcome political and administrative barriers to access.
To the leaders of both communities			
(n) Stop politicizing the issue of disappeared persons and treat it as a human rights and humanitarian issue. Political and other considerations should be put aside in order to allow the Committee on Missing Persons to fully and effectively fulfil its mandate;	Paras. 22, 29, 39, 72	*Turkish Cypriot authorities* The Turkish Cypriot side has been doing its utmost on this humanitarian issue affecting both sides to assist the CMP in order to enable it to successfully deliver its mandate. The Turkish Cypriot side has always refrained itself from politicizing this humanitarian issue. On the other hand, the Greek Cypriot side has always been politicizing the issue of missing persons. For example, the remains of the Turkish Cypriot Missing Persons from the Atlılar mass grave, women and children massacred in 1974, could only be excavated very recently, although their burial sites were known for decades. As a result, their remains are yet to be identified and returned to their relatives for a long-awaited closure. *Varnava vs. Turkey* case is another solid example of how the Greek Cypriot side displays clear intent to divert the focus of work undertaken by the Committee through politicizing the issue before the European Parliament, the Council of	The Working Group notes that, according to the information provided, there have been advancements in cooperation between both communities, making joint visits to relevant institutions. As well, there has been a slight increase in the access parties have granted one another to find and identify remains. The Working Group welcomes the cooperation given to the CMP to fulfil its mandate. The Working Group notes with concern the continued politicization of the issue of enforced disappearances. As it determined in its report, there needs to be a stop to this in order to increase efficient investigation.

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		Europe, particularly in the European Court of Human Rights. It is our expectation that future reports denounce the unacceptable approach of the Greek Cypriot side of politicizing the issue of missing persons and jeopardizing the work of the CMP, so as to encourage the Greek Cypriot side to refrain from similar actions in the future, which give rise to nothing but unnecessary prolongation of the grievance of the relatives and leave them in uncertainty regarding the whereabouts of their beloved ones, also depriving them of a proper closure. *Other* 17. On 28 July 2023, the Greek Cypriot leader and the Turkish Cypriot leader jointly visited the Committee's anthropological laboratory and reaffirmed their strong support for its humanitarian operation. It was the first joint visit since 2015.	
(o) Continue the cooperation with, and the support provided to, the Committee on Missing Persons, in particular through providing full access without delay to all areas, responding in a timely manner to requests for archival information on possible burial sites, as also recommended by the Security Council,[22] and adequately preserving archives;	Paras. 7, 9-27, 72, 73	*Republic of Cyprus* The Republic of Cyprus, from 2024 onwards, contributes an annual amount of €300,000 (up from €175,000) to UNDP as part of an Agreement aimed at supporting the CMP. The increase in the state's contribution to the CMP is intended to gradually increase the number of teams from 7 to 10 to expedite its work and consequently improve its results. Since 2006, the Republic of Cyprus has contributed a total of €4,012,700 to the CMP.	The Working Group welcomes the continued support by both sides to the CMP, allowing access to burial sites, increasing funding, and well as allowing access to archival information to better determine possible burial sites in which to launch investigations. In addition, the Working Group welcomes the use of new technologies in the search process, so as to increase effectiveness and identifications. The Working Group encourages the continued support to the CMP and the guarantee of access and information given to the institution.

[22] See, for instance, Council resolution 2587 (2021).

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		Turkish Cypriot authorities The assistance provided to the CMP by the Turkish Cypriot side not only encompasses the practical facilitation of the work of the CMP, but also providing the CMP with relevant information enabling it to locate possible burial sites, facilitating excavations in civilian and military areas, as well as carrying out effective investigations. As for the potential burial sites, the Turkish Cypriot side accommodates the access of the CMP to any area throughout the TRNC, be it by interrupting the construction of a major road or giving access to those military areas CMP asks for according to its work plan. As also recorded by the Department for the execution of ECHR decisions of the Council of Europe, in its notes prepared prior to the March 2025 meeting, "With respect to the CMP's possibility to access potential burial sites, the fact that to date the CMP has been able to carry out excavations in a total of 1,275 civilian areas and 109 military areas in the TRNC (of which 100 in civilian areas and 14 in military areas in 2024) indicates that, in general, the systems in place to secure access operate satisfactorily" and concluded on its behalf that "the Turkish authorities have provided all the relevant information available to them to the CMP" (CM/Notes/1521/H46-31E). *Other* 15. As a result of the intercommunal fighting of 1963 and 1964 and the events of July 1974 and thereafter, both communities officially reported 1,510 Greek Cypriots and 491 Turkish Cypriots as missing to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus. The tripartite Committee continued its bi-communal	

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		project on the exhumation, identification and return of the remains of missing persons thanks to funding from donors, with the European Union being the main contributor. As at 30 November 2023, the Committee had exhumed the remains of 1,223 individuals on both sides of the island and identified 1,036 missing individuals. During the reporting period, 27 persons were exhumed, and eight individuals were identified as missing persons and returned to their families for dignified burial. Three other individuals not on the official list of missing persons were identified and returned to their families. 16. As at 30 November 2023, the Committee had identified 91 potential burial sites ready for excavation. The Committee conducted excavations in seven of the military areas in the northern part of Cyprus to which access had been granted in June 2019, with six recoveries made. 18. In order to obtain additional information on the location of possible burial sites, the Committee continued its efforts to gain access to information from the archives of countries and organizations that had maintained a military, police or humanitarian presence in Cyprus in 1963–64 and 1974. The Turkish Cypriot office of the Committee continued to have access to Turkish army aerial photos taken in 1974 and the Greek Cypriot office of the Committee continued to research the Republic of Cyprus National Guard archives of 1974. The Committee completed its own review of Cyprus-related archives at United Nations Headquarters in New York, UNFICYP in Nicosia, the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and the British National Archives in London.	

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		20. In its concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of the Republic of Cyprus, the Human Rights Committee noted the State party's efforts to identify Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots who remain missing and to investigate these disappearances. It expressed concern, however, at the lack of recent prosecutions and of a specific programme to ensure appropriate redress for families of victims. The Committee recommended that the State party should continue to support the CMP, ensure that families of victims obtain full reparation, reconsider creating a truth and reconciliation commission and consider ratifying the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. *Other* 13. As a result of the intercommunal violence of 1963 and 1964 and the events of July 1974 and thereafter, both communities officially reported 1,510 Greek Cypriots and 491 Turkish Cypriots as missing to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus. The tripartite Committee continued its bi-communal project on the exhumation, identification and return of the remains of missing persons. As at 30 November 2024, the Committee had exhumed the remains of 1,688 individuals on both sides and identified 1,051 missing individuals. During the reporting period, 19 persons were exhumed, and 15 individuals were identified as missing persons and returned to their families for dignified burial. Four other individuals not on the official list of missing persons were also identified and returned to their families. The Committee had identified 86 potential burial sites ready for excavation and conducted 10 excavations in military areas in the northern part of Cyprus to which access had been granted, during which three	

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		recoveries were made. Two excavations in military areas were ongoing. The Committee also continued its efforts to gain access to information on the location of the burial sites of missing persons from the archives of countries that had maintained a military or police presence in Cyprus in 1963 and 1964 and 1974. 15. OHCHR received information that the families of missing persons on both sides have become increasingly frustrated at the slower rate of progress in recent years in the search for the missing persons as a result of several challenges beyond the control of the Committee on Missing Persons. The significant passage of time since the intercommunal violence of 1963 and 1964 and the Turkish intervention of 1974 has resulted in the deaths of witnesses, fading memories and changing landscapes (including new building construction), making it increasingly difficult to obtain and corroborate reliable information to improve the success of excavations and identifications. Several individuals expressed concern to OHCHR that the Committee has not yet been provided with all potentially relevant information that would aid it in locating possible new burial sites. Several actors, such as the authorities of Türkiye, stated that they do not have additional information on burial sites, including from military archives. 16. In that context, OHCHR welcomes information received that the Committee on Missing Persons is examining the possibility of deploying new technologies, such as ground penetrating radar, to increase its efficiency and success rate in excavating new remains for identification.	

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(p) Consider the creation of an inclusive and impartial truth-telling mechanism, which could bring together and respond to the need of families of both communities, clearly expressed during the visit, to protect and uphold their right to truth as both a collective and an individual right;	Para. 35	*Republic of Cyprus* President Christodoulides, has proposed the idea of establishing a Truth Commission, as a broader confidence-building measure aimed at fostering reconciliation between the two communities. This initiative should not overlap with the work of the Committee on Missing Persons (CMP) nor be considered in connection with Türkiye's obligations under the 2001 *Cyprus v. Turkey* judgment. The President's proposal for a Truth Commission is part of a wider effort to build trust and promote reconciliation between the two communities. However, the issue of missing persons in Cyprus and the investigation into their fate remains primarily a responsibility of Türkiye, which, as the occupying power, remains accountable for the failure to locate and determine the fate of the Greek Cypriot missing persons. The comparison with other cases, like South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission is problematic because South Africa's commission was established after apartheid ended, not during the conflict, and perpetrators weren't automatically granted amnesty but had to apply and meet specific criteria. A Truth Commission would be more appropriate after the resolution of the Cyprus problem and the end of Turkish occupation, or as part of preparation for reunification, as such commissions are typically established for national reconciliation following internal conflicts like apartheid in South Africa, genocide in Rwanda, dictatorships in Latin America, or slavery in Mauritius – none of which involved occupation by a foreign country.	The Working Group welcomes recent talks into the creation of a Truth Commission. In addition, ongoing efforts to establish local commissions that look into victims from the other side, increase the prospects for reconciliation and aiding families. However, the Working Group notes that local commissions should not be used to replace a Truth Commission that cooperates impartially with both sides. The Working Group notes the challenges in establishing a Truth Commission, and the past overlooking of its implementation in the country. The Working Group additionally notes that the current proposal remains vague and has no concrete terms of reference or timeline for possible implementation. In addition, there is currently no consensus between both parties, creating challenges on its possible implementation. The Working Group reiterates its call to establish an inclusive truth-telling mechanism, which cooperates with both parties to uphold the right to truth.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		At the same time, the Republic of Cyprus is fully committed to assisting CMP in its vital mission. It actively supports efforts to locate, identify, and return the remains of missing persons to their families. Providing financial, logistical, and technical assistance, Cyprus ensures this humanitarian issue remains a priority while urging full cooperation from all relevant parties. *Turkish Cypriot authorities* The Turkish Cypriot side has the Missing Persons Unit (MPU), which deals with the cases of the Greek Cypriot missing persons whose remains have been found, identified and returned to their families. The Missing Persons Unit conducts criminal investigations into the cases of the identified missing persons under the supervision of the constitutionally independent TRNC Attorney-General's Office. The CMP and MPU established by the TRNC is already an effective mechanism for the Greek Cypriot missing persons in Cyprus. It also addresses the issue of right to truth, which has been scrutinized and found effective by the ECtHR and CM(DH). The Turkish Cypriot side refrains from any actions that would jeopardize the effectiveness of this mechanism. Besides, truth commissions elsewhere, that proved to be successful, were all established after an agreement between the relevant parties was reached, which is not the case in Cyprus. If the Greek Cypriot Leadership is genuine in its quest for the right to truth, it would be well advised to come up for its obligations regarding the Turkish Cypriot missing persons, and in particular, conduct effective investigations into the Turkish Cypriot missing civilians, who died at the hands of Greek Cypriot paramilitary groups.	

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		Other With reference to Recommendation (p) to the two leaders to consider the creation of an inclusive and impartial truth-telling mechanism, which could bring together and respond to the need of families of both communities, clearly expressed during the visit, to protect and uphold their right to truth as both a collective and an individual right, it should be noted that the issue has recently gained public awareness, after the current Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Christodoulides publicly expressed his support. The idea of establishing a truth commission in Cyprus had for many years been championed by civil society activists with little interest from either of the Greek Cypriot or Turkish Cypriot leaders. However, the current Greek Cypriot leader seems to have warmed up to the idea, which he recently included in a set of proposals to the Turkish Cypriot leader presented at a joint leaders' meeting hosted by DSASG Stewart on 20 January 2025. Truth and reconciliation are important parts of peace processes. Much of the current experience and evidence suggests that they can provide an important and integral step towards building trust and openness in a political process. This can be cathartic. Truth and reconciliation commissions allow parties to feel that their grievances (in this case, particularly sensitive and important issues such as the disappearance, torture or killing of people from their communities and family members) are not dismissed, but heard and that there is a process through which they can be acknowledged.	

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		There is research to suggest that older people who had experienced frequent and sustained bi-communal contact in their village will be an asset for successful reintegration. There is a significant opportunity to take advantage of those who lived through events in the sixties and seventies and can share their experiences, rather than lose their experiences. Those who experience events can reconcile in a way not open to younger generation, many of whom will inherit inter-generational trauma about what happened to family members. In the Cyprus context, concerns exist on both sides about the proposal to set up a truth and reconciliation process. If not designed and implemented with sensitivity, there are concerns about contributing to escalation by scapegoating and demonizing of the other side. Many have expressed the view that this may be better done after a settlement, while some argue that it should not wait – especially in the context of decades of frozen conflict, with those with direct experience of the events of the 1960s and 1970s getting older and passing away. In his January proposal to the Turkish Cypriot leader, the Greek Cypriot leader did not elaborate on the details of his proposal, leaving room for interpretation regarding the format, mandate, terms of reference and other features of the commission. In conjunction with the Greek Cypriot leader's proposal, on 13 January 2025, a Cypriot civil society group who has been long advocating for a truth commission in Cyprus sent a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, suggesting that the Secretary-General's good offices' mandate accommodate a discussion about the establishment of a truth commission in Cyprus, including the procedural	

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		aspects; ideas like building on the CMP in Cyprus and modifying its mandate to include findings as to the circumstances and cause of death of missing persons; and suggesting new elements like limiting the commission's work to instances resulting in the missing of people in both communities (although similar mechanisms in the world usually cover a wide array of issues related to human rights). In discussions with the CMP in Cyprus, it was noted that a truth commission, if established, should be a stand-alone body, separate from the CMP in Cyprus, whose success is attributed, inter alia, to its apolitical nature, and which would prefer avoiding political influence. There is historical experience from different conflict and peace processes of different types of truth and reconciliation commissions and processes. It is worth exploring and sharing with the parties the different options available and potential benefits to see if they might be of interest in considering or exploring further this idea. From the UN's perspective, we would welcome the establishment of a transitional justice mechanism (e.g., a truth commission), as a key part of building a sustainable peace and advancing human rights. While the United Nations Good Offices Mission (OSASG-Cyprus) would not be the face of or take the lead in the initiative, provided that there is agreement of the two leaders, the Mission would be ready to support and assist any initiative that has broad support across the island as needed.	
(q) Ensure that families can carry out burials of their family members in a dignified manner in a safe and	Paras. 12, 28	*Turkish Cypriot authorities* The Government of the TRNC is taking all necessary measures for proper and dignified burials of the	The Working Group notes the efforts by the Turkish Cypriot authorities to ensure the proper and dignified burials of the remains of missing people. The

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
enabling environment without fear, interference or pressure;		remains of the missing persons. The families are able to carry out burials of their beloved family members in a dignified manner in a safe and enabling environment without fear, interference or pressure either in designated martyrdoms or elsewhere according to their preferences.	Working Group questions whether this extends throughout the territory.
(r) Provide unconditional support to the work of all family associations in an effort to raise awareness about humanitarian and human rights aspects of the disappeared persons issue;	Paras. 27, 30, 32, 34, 35, 72	*Turkish Cypriot authorities* The main association for the relatives of the Turkish Cypriot missing persons is the Association of Martyr's Families and War Veterans. TRNC authorities have been providing unconditional support to the work of the association along with other civil society associations. At the same time, families of the missing persons have been and are being provided with a wide range of benefits and privileges.	The Working Group notes the support to Associations searching for disappeared relatives from Turkish Cypriot individuals. In addition, the Working Group notes the apparent bias in the implementation of these efforts.
(s) Review the legality of the de facto amnesty initiated in the 1990s, which has resulted in a total lack of accountability for enforced disappearances;	Para. 40	*Turkish Cypriot authorities* Confidentiality has formed the bedrock principle of CMP since its inception, enabling witnesses to come forth with information on possible burial sites and witness testimony continues to be the primary source of information to locate burial sites in the Cyprus context. Against this background, the Turkish Cypriot side has established the MPU in order to carry out effective investigations into the circumstances leading to disappearance of these people. Scrutinizing the work of the MPU, the Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe, which has been commending the efforts of the Turkish Cypriot side to carry out effective investigations into these cases on the basis of its periodical examinations of this issue, has in its most recent decision dated 6 March 2025 highlighted our authorities "commitment to provide continuing assistance to the CMP, including unhindered access	The Working Group acknowledges the fact that the de facto amnesty initiated in the 1990s still holds, with the Turkish Cypriot authorities expressing their support to the CMP and MPU to carry out the investigations and ensure confidentiality as all times.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		to all areas, as well as all information relevant for its work and to continue the work of the MPU."	
(t) Consider creating a common space of remembrance for all disappeared on the island;	Para. 54		As of the latest available information, the Republic of Cyprus has not established a common space of remembrance dedicated to all disappeared persons on the island, encompassing individuals from both the Greek Cypriot community and Turkish Cypriot community. While there are several memorials and monuments commemorating missing persons, these are typically community-specific and do not serve as unified spaces for collective remembrance. For instance, in June 2024, President Nikos Christodoulides inaugurated a monument dedicated to the fallen and missing persons of the Pigi and Peristerona communities in Famagusta. The Working Group notes that while local commemoration is important for communities, state authorities should both support local commemoration and aim for a collective remembrance. Additionally, there have been proposals from civil society for the creation of a common memorial. In February 2020, a proposal was made for constructing a monument dedicated to the memory of all Cypriot dead Cypriots during the events of 1963-1964 and 1974, regardless of their community or the circumstances of their death. This initiative aimed to provide a neutral space for collective mourning and reflection. However, as of now, this proposal has not been realized. The absence of a unified memorial has been noted in international observations.

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			Given the lack of a dedicated, inclusive memorial space that honors all disappeared individuals from both communities, the recommendation to establish a common space of remembrance remains unimplemented.
(u) Promote peace education across the island, including in schools and textbooks, with a view to contributing to confidence-building between the communities, refrain from divisive narratives and promote grass-roots bicommunal initiatives and activities;	Para. 55	*Other* Under the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community (EU Regulation EC 398/2006), the European Union is financing bi-communal actions for civil society organizations and activists that support reconciliation and confidence-building between the two Cypriot communities. Following a call for proposals in March 2022, eleven grants were awarded to bi-communal projects implemented together by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot civil society organisations. Implementation started in February 2023. These projects have implemented activities in the areas of human rights, confidence-building and the Cyprus settlement process, peace journalism, youth dialogue, shared cultural heritage, sport, environment, women health, joint advocacy and civic engagement, and fight against trafficking in human beings. Another call for proposals was launched in April 2024 and implementation of the selected projects will start in the second semester of 2025. The global objective of this call for proposals is to support civil society in enhancing trust, dialogue, and cooperation and in promoting European Union values and standards through actions that contribute to promoting the reunification of Cyprus. As in the previous calls, a thematic lot – bi-communal confidence-building actions – is targeting joint actions by civil society	The Working Group welcomes efforts by the EU to increase the level of confidence between the Greek Cypriot community and Turkish Cypriot community. These include education projects and support of civil society in an effort to increase trust and dialogue between both sides. The Working Group additionally welcomes the implementation of the independent bi-communal Cyprus Dialogue Forum, which brings various stakeholders together and includes and Education Task Force to create common education framework for both communities. The Working Group further welcomes bi-communal activities of translation and interpretation, encouraging bi-communal cooperation. While the Turkish Cypriot authorities report the revision of their educational materials to remove content promoting racial hatred or intolerance, and emphasize their restraint in political discourse, these measures appear limited to one side of the island. The submission further underscores the persistence of deeply divisive narratives, particularly within Greek Cypriot public and institutional discourse, including in political statements and religious institutions. The reference to the 2023 ECRI report suggests that problematic rhetoric continues to shape

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		organisations across the divide to promote dialogue and collaboration between the Cypriot communities. Regarding applications submitted within other lots of the call, bi-communal co-operation is always highly encouraged and evaluated as an added-value element. The European Union has also funded the independent bicommunal Cyprus Dialogue Forum since January 2019 until 2027. Founded in 2014, CDF brings together around 80 stakeholders such as political parties, trade unions, business/professional/employer associations and CSOs from both communities to create joint visions, resources and mechanisms that support the wider peace process. The general objective of the project is to create collaborative spaces for dialogue and knowledge creation, thus broadening the peace infrastructure and contributing to prepare the ground for a comprehensive and sustainable settlement of the Cyprus issue. The CDF's Education Task Group, one of currently three active task forces, is working towards the development of a conceptual and institutional framework for education in each community based on shared values, principles and standards that would act as the lenses through which to shape education in the two communities in the current and future socio-political context. The Education Task Group is made up of the mandated representatives of 18 stakeholders from both communities: CSOs, teacher/academic unions, business/professional associations and political parties. As a result of their dialogue, the Task Group has formulated a written Common Understanding constituting a consensus document between stakeholders on their shared vision and roadmap for their future discussions.	intercommunal relations and impedes confidence-building efforts. Crucially, there is no indication of coordinated or joint initiatives across both communities to promote peace education or foster a shared historical narrative in school curricula. The recommendation calls for island-wide efforts, including cooperation in educational reform, avoidance of inflammatory rhetoric, and support for grassroots reconciliation activities. The absence of such collaborative or bicommunal initiatives, combined with ongoing mutual accusations of hostility and intolerance, points to a broader failure to engage in substantive peace education. The Working Group recommends continuing educational and other campaigns to trust-building between both communities, as well as refraining from divisive narratives.

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		The EU is also committed to promote peace education across the island with a view to contributing to confidence-building between the communities through a partnership with the United World Colleges (UWC). In 2019, the EC created a scholarship programme for Cypriot youth at UWC and since then the programme has engaged more than 3,000 Cypriot youth as well as an extended community of parents, educators and other partners with UWC's peace education model. To date, the programme has also provided 84 scholarships to bi-communal pairs of Cypriot youth to attend the two-year International Baccalaureate diploma programme at a UWC school, welcomed 530 participants in short courses and youth engagement activities on the island, and attracted a growing number of applicants as well as a volunteers-selectors for the scholarship programme year-on-year. Centred on the commitment to peace and sustainability, the UWC educational model offers a unique opportunity to prepare the Cypriot youth to unite and bring peace and a sustainable future to their island. Through the programme, not only young people change their understanding of the other community and start healing from a past of inflicted trauma, but they also bring their parents and extended families into the programme through the different activities that take place during the scholarship. The EU is the only donor of significance in the Turkish Cypriot community, aside from embassies which run only very small programmes. The stated goal of the Aid Programme is to facilitate Cyprus' reunification, so all projects must contribute to this objective. When it comes to support of Turkish Cypriot civil society, the EU has provided, since 2006, more than	

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		XX in grants and other support to more than 150 civil society organisations active in this community. Many of the funded projects have focused on confidence-building and reconciliation. The EU has also financed around 130 training sessions to reinforce the capacities of Turkish Cypriot civil society organisations related to strategy and advocacy, a rights-based approach, fundraising, and communications. Outside the civil society field, the EU has also financed many bi-communal initiatives. It is the main donor of the bi-communal Committee on Missing Persons and the bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, which has restored or protected more than 160 cultural monuments across Cyprus. In the socio-economic field, up to 16 innovative Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot starts-up are trained together every year since 2019 to become commercially successful and pitch their business ideas in a competition. The winners attend the world's leading start-up event "Slush" in Helsinki (Startups4Peace, joint project with the Embassy of Finland in Cyprus). A community centre was constructed with EU funds in the Maronite village of Kormakitis to serve as a multi-cultural event venue for all Cypriot communities. Opened in March 2023, it hosts educational and youth activities, conferences, meetings, and cultural events. The centre offers basic accommodation facilities and catering for around 70 people. Another example is the EU Linguistic Support Project for the Turkish Cypriot community, which was	

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		launched in 2020 to improve the overall quality of translations from and into Turkish. One of the key milestones of the project was to initiate the establishment of a bi-communal professional association for translators and interpreters in Cyprus. In 2023, a group of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot translators and interpreters visited Brussels where they met with the translation and interpretation services of the European Commission and the European Parliament. *Turkish Cypriot authorities* In an effort to establish good neighbourly relations between the peoples of the two States on the island, the Turkish Cypriot side has in the past years, revised all its textbooks ensuring that they contain no elements of racial hatred or intolerance. Greek Cypriot leadership continues to hold on to the Greek Cypriot textbooks which unequivocally contain materials offensive to the Turkish Cypriot people and incite feelings of hatred amongst the Greek Cypriot children towards Turkish Cypriot people. The Turkish Cypriot side expects that the Working Group makes a strong call to the Greek Cypriot side to follow the example set by the Turkish Cypriot authorities in its future reports. The Turkish Cypriot authorities are always refraining from divisive narratives that will not contribute to building trust and cooperation between the two sides. On the other hand, there is a tendency of increasing racism, anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim sentiment within the political discourse and public narratives, including high-ranking politicians and high- ranking officials of the church, as well as journalists. Within this context, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in its report titled “ECRI Report	

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		on Cyprus" dated 2023 March noted with regret that, "officials from the Orthodox Church of Cyprus contributed to the development of […] divisive public discourse."	
(v) Provide the necessary political support and overall guidance to the technical committees, notably those in charge of the question of irregular migration, and spare them from obstructions due to political considerations in their work, so that they can function effectively – as requested also by the Security Council. A mechanism should be adopted in the northern part of the island to ensure adherence to the principle of non-refoulement, to allow the timely identification of all persons in need of international protection;	Para. 65	*Other* Under the Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community (Regulation EC 398/2006), European Union is financing the actions of civil society organizations including in the area of irregular migration. The Human Rights Platform (HRP) is an association of 7 rights-based CSOs (including the Refugee Rights Association) which is implementing an EU direct grant between October 2021 and March 2026 (EU budget EUR 1.45 million). Refugee rights and trafficking against human beings are two of the five thematic areas of intervention of HRP. The main activities implemented include annual monitoring and reporting on human rights issues, training, legal aid and support to the victims of rights violations, monitoring legal texts, legal gap analysis, advocacy, strategic litigation and raising awareness campaigns. In this context, the HRP (concretely, the Refugee Rights Association) and UNHCR Cyprus worked in January 2023 with the local body responsible for interior from the Turkish Cypriot Community on a draft legal amendment to the local legal framework on immigration, to uphold non-refoulement and non-penalization principles. The Refugee Rights Association (RRA) has also implemented other EU-funded projects related to irregular migration awarded following calls for	The Working Group welcomes advancements in the effort to address the issue of migration and irregular border crossing, including the cooperation between the Turkish Cypriot community and UNHCR to draft a local legal framework in migration which sought to uphold human rights principles. The Working Group additionally welcomes the efforts to implement measures which seek to increase the respect of human rights of migrant communities and transforming public perception. The Working Group notes the cooperation proposal drafted by the Turkish Cypriot authorities and sent to the Republic of Cyprus but observes with concern the lack of progress on this proposal. The Working Group notes the role of the technical committees to increase cooperation and dialogue between both sides but notes with concern the lack of progress inside of the committees due to external challenges. The Working Group reiterates its call to establish a mechanism which looks at migration and irregular border crossing, especially in the northern part of the island.

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		proposals for civil society organisations. The "Better Together" project implemented between January 2022 and January 2025 had as the objective to contribute to improving respect of the human rights of vulnerable migrant groups, through better services for these groups, advocating institutions, and transforming the public perception. The project "United Action Against Human Trafficking" implemented jointly by RRA and Caritas Cyprus between March 2023 and September 2025 aims to contribute to improve assistance for human trafficking survivors on both sides of the divide and to conduct advocacy for increased bi-communal cooperation on human trafficking cases. *Turkish Cypriot authorities* The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus tabled a comprehensive cooperation proposal to the Greek Cypriot side in July 2022. Our proposal was conveyed to the Greek Cypriot side through the United Nations in July 2022.This proposal envisages the establishment of a cooperation mechanism under the auspices of the UN, aiming at jointly striving to curb irregular migration in a way which does not prejudice the rights of refugees as enshrined in international conventions, through a mechanism that would be in line with the UN Convention of 28 July 1951 on the Status of Refugees. Regrettably, the Greek Cypriot side has so far not responded to our proposal made in 2022.On its part, the Government of the TRNC, with its meagre financial resources, has been doing its utmost not only to fight irregular migration, but also to provide assistance to migrants arriving in the TRNC, despite the lack of support from the international community except for Türkiye.	

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		Other 11. The 12 technical committees, facilitated by the Secretary-General's good offices mission with the support of UNFICYP, continued to be indispensable for interaction and cooperation between the two sides on mutually important issues, despite the negative political atmosphere, including the situation in and around the buffer zone. While the work of the Technical Committees on Cultural Heritage and on Education faced challenges, other technical committees continued to work once understanding were reached concerning the Pyla/Pile plateau. The Technical Committees on Broadcasting, Culture, Environment, and Economic and Commercial Matters approved projects in the last quarter of 2023. *Other* 11. In the absence of formal negotiations, the 12 technical committees, established by the leaders and co-facilitated by the good offices mission of the Secretary-General and UNFICYP, remained a critical platform that continued to foster dialogue and cooperation between the two sides with a view towards improving the daily lives of Cypriots. OHCHR, however, received information that differences in positions between the two sides and negative developments in and around the buffer zone presented challenges that hindered the necessary work of some of the technical committees.	
To the Government of Turkey			
(w) Continue supporting and cooperating with the Committee on	Paras. 25, 26	*Republic of Cyprus*	Türkiye has extended certain forms of cooperation to the CMP, which have been acknowledged by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers. This

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Missing Persons in Cyprus,[23] including by making sites in the northern parts of Cyprus accessible to the Committee for further assessments at all times, providing full access to military archives to the Committee and family associations, with a view to identifying new burial sites,[24] and adequately preserving archives;		However, Türkiye has failed to take all necessary measures to execute these judgments fully. Its obligations extend beyond mere cooperation with the CMP and the payment of just satisfaction. When it comes to CMP, a bi-communal mechanism which does not discharge Türkiye from its obligations, we expect not be hindered by the responded state. Cyprus points at the specific measures that need to be taken by the Turkish authorities, i.e. to provide **all relevant information from its military archives** and **immediate and unhindered access to all military areas** in Cyprus, to **take concrete positive measures to protect and safeguard known burial sites** and any areas which could contain the remains of missing persons, including relocated remains, as well as to **avert any future relocation of remains and disturbance of burial sites**, including with the establishment of a mechanism to ensure the protection of all such sites and areas. Despite commitments, significant barriers remain, including: 1. **Restricted Access to Military Zones**: Türkiye continues to classify large portions (approximately 60%) of occupied territory as "military zones," impeding excavations. Arbitrary restrictions, such as the 25-meter excavation limit and annual caps on permits, severely hinder CMP operations. The reclassification of civilian areas into	includes granting access to some military and civilian areas in the northern part of Cyprus, as well as providing limited archival material and supporting the CMP's ongoing humanitarian mandate. The continuation of these efforts, including the work of the Missing Persons Unit, has been welcomed by the Ministers' Deputies, who noted Türkiye's stated commitment to ensuring access and information-sharing. However, substantial and recurring obstacles continue to impede the full realization of this cooperation. The Republic of Cyprus and the CMP have reported serious restrictions in accessing approximately 60% of the northern territory designated as military zones. Excavations in these areas are limited by narrow permit conditions, such as the 25-meter excavation radius, annual permit caps, and bureaucratic delays, including reclassification of civilian sites into military zones. Furthermore, critical information – especially from military archives and battlefield operations – remains selectively disclosed. The Turkish authorities have not granted comprehensive access to records or facilitated testimonies from military personnel. Reports of reburials and the disturbance of burial sites without CMP notification point to practices that further obstruct truth-seeking and may contribute to evidence destruction. These constraints significantly limit the CMP's ability to identify new burial sites and recover remains. While Türkiye's cooperation has enabled

[23] A/HRC/33/51/Add.1, para. 79.
[24] See A/HRC/45/13/Add.4.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		military zones, as seen in Karavas, causes further delays. 2. **Limited Access to Civilian Areas**: Excavations are obstructed by landowners who refuse entry. The lack of **legal** mechanisms to enforce CMP access delays or prevents recoveries, particularly in areas Lapithos, Ammochostos, Kythrea, and Karavas. 3. **Disclosure of all relevant information including from Military Archives**: Türkiye has not provided full access to its military archives or testimonies of personnel involved in battlefield clearances and burials. The **selective** disclosure of aerial photographs to the Turkish Cypriot Member of the CMP is insufficient and has yielded no results. Cases such as Sysklipos and Lapatsa Hill highlight the detrimental impact of withholding information (See table annex 1 and 2). 4. **Reburials and Evidence Destruction**: Disturbed burial sites indicate that Turkish forces relocated remains without **informing** the CMP. Notable cases include the transfer of 70 murdered civilians from Ornithi to a landfill at Dikomo. This deliberate obstruction undermines truth-seeking efforts and exacerbates the suffering of families seeking closure (See letter annex 3). 5. **Lack of Protection for Burial Sites**: Despite calls for safeguards, Türkiye has failed to implement protective **measures** to prevent site disturbances and further relocations. Recent developments in excavation work:	progress and is non-negligible, it remains conditional, fragmented, and insufficient to fulfill the full scope of obligations under the ECtHR judgments and relevant UN recommendations. Therefore, the recommendation is assessed as partially implemented. Continued and proactive cooperation, including full and unrestricted access to military zones and archives, is essential for genuine compliance and for advancing the humanitarian and human rights aims of the CMP.

Recommendations (A/HRC/51/31/Add.1)	Situation during the visit (A/HRC/45/13/Add.1)	Observations: measures taken/current situation	Level of implementation and observations
		• Excavation at Karavas resumed in September 2024 after a 27-month delay due to the area being redesignated as a military zone • In 2024, multiple permits were used for single sites at Karavas, Kontemenos, and Skylloura due to the 25-meter radius limitation • Additional excavations are planned for Trachonas in 2025 after failed previous attempts in 2019-2021 and 2022 • New cases of denied access to suspected burial sites in civilian areas occurred in 2024 in Lapithos, Ammochostos, Kythrea, and Karavas Cyprus notes that the diminishing number of remains exhumed every year despite a high number of excavations is indicative of the need for Türkiye to share information to which only the respondent State has access. *Turkish Cypriot authorities* It needs to be underlined that the relevant parties to the issue of missing persons in Cyprus are the two sides on the island and as such, the visit of the Working Group did not include a visit to the Republic of Türkiye. Thus, the Working Group should have refrained from calling on Turkish authorities. Alternatively, the Working Group would have been well advised if it had invited also Greece to assist the CMP, in line with the call of the UN Security Council, enhancing "cooperation with the Committee's work, in particular, through providing full access without delay to all areas and responding in a timely manner	

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		to requests for archival information on possible burial sites". Despite all the calls, the Greek Cypriot side, as well as Greece, which maintained troops on the island between 1963 and 1974 and continue to do so – have yet to comply with the CMP's request to provide information from the relevant archives. While, the European Court of Human Rights, has been selective in delivering justice and has opted to hold only Türkiye accountable regarding the issue of missing persons in Cyprus, it is expected that the Working Group, shows the necessary due diligence and do not lose sight that Turkish Cypriot Authorities are in charge of executing the relevant judgements. Besides, it needs to be underlined once again that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which is entrusted with the supervision of the execution of the said judgements, is satisfied with the efforts in terms of access provided to burial sites and archives as also reflected in its relevant decisions. *Other* 21. The Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe continued to supervise the execution of judgments regarding Greek Cypriot missing persons and their families. On 9 March 2023, they acknowledged the progress made with regard to the fate of Greek Cypriot missing persons since the *Cyprus v. Turkey* judgment in May 2001, in particular the assistance given by the Turkish authorities to the Committee on Missing Persons and the work of the Missing Persons Unit. The Ministers' Deputies called upon the Turkish authorities to continue to ensure that the Committee had access to all areas that could contain the remains of missing persons and to all relevant information on any places where remains might be found. They	

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		invited the Turkish authorities to ensure the continuation of the investigations conducted by the Missing Persons Unit and to submit updated information regarding its work. *Other* 17. On 14 March 2024, the Ministers' Deputies of the Council of Europe recalled the progress made with regard to determining the fate of Greek Cypriot missing persons since the *Cyprus v. Turkey* judgment in May 2001, in particular the assistance provided by the authorities of Türkiye to the CMP and the work of the Missing Persons Unit and their ongoing commitment in this regard. They welcomed the commitment by the authorities of Türkiye to provide continuing assistance to the CMP, including unhindered access to all areas, as well as all information relevant for its work, and to continue the work of the Missing Persons Unit.	
(x) Implement all relevant judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning disappeared persons in Cyprus, including when it comes to reparations and just satisfaction, without further delay;	Para. 47	*Republic of Cyprus* The ongoing humanitarian issue of missing persons in Cyprus remains unresolved, with serious systemic failings and impediments attributable to Türkiye. Despite repeated commitments, Türkiye has not fully implemented the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) judgments in *Cyprus v. Turkey* (Application No. 25781/94) and *Varnava v. Turkey* (Application No. 16064/90). The Committee of Ministers (CM(DH)) has played a crucial role in ensuring progress, yet major obstacles persist, necessitating continued supervision of this critical matter.	Based on the comprehensive review of submissions from the Republic of Cyprus, OHCHR reports, and the supervision records of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Türkiye has not implemented the ECtHR judgments concerning disappeared persons in Cyprus. The ECtHR's judgments in *Cyprus v. Turkey* and *Varnava and Others v. Turkey* found Türkiye responsible for violations related to the disappearance of Greek Cypriots during the Turkish intervention of 1974. These violations include the failure to conduct effective investigations into the fate of the missing and the inhumane treatment of their relatives due to the prolonged uncertainty. The ECtHR emphasized Türkiye's obligation to investigate these

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		Türkiye, as the occupying power in the northern part of Cyprus, bears responsibility under International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law. In 2001, the ECtHR found Türkiye responsible for the situation in the northern part of Cyprus due to its military presence. The Court also established Türkiye's specific responsibility to account for the fate of missing persons following the 1974 invasion, ruling that Türkiye violated Article 2 (right to life) and Article 3 (continuing violation of the rights of relatives amounting to inhumane and degrading treatment). The ECtHR determined that Türkiye has a continuing obligation to conduct effective investigations into the disappearances (para. 148), stating that "from a humanitarian point of view, this failing cannot be excused with reference either to the fighting which took place at the relevant time or to the overall confused and tense state of affairs." The Court stressed the obligation of Türkiye to inquire into the fate of persons who went missing in life threatening circumstances. Rejecting that the respondent did not have information on those missing, the Court underlined Türkiye's obligation to look for information and to follow up on public accounts of events. While acknowledging the significant contribution of the CMP alluded to by Türkiye as a mechanism tasked with establishing the fate of the missing persons, the Court found this mechanism alone "not of itself sufficient to meet the standard of an effective investigation required by Article 2 of the Convention" (para. 128). The Court noted the "narrow scope of the	disappearances and to provide just satisfaction to the victims' families. Despite these judgments, Türkiye has not fulfilled its obligations. The Committee of Ministers has repeatedly deplored Türkiye's non-compliance, particularly its failure to pay the just satisfaction awarded by the Court. Furthermore, there has been no evidence of effective investigations or accountability measures taken by Türkiye to address these violations. The Working Group additionally notes the delay in the payment of the just satisfaction awards in the cases. The Working Group reiterates its call to ensure that full implementation of the relevant judgement occurs, as well as ensuring reparations are done.

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		body's investigation" as a limitation. The Court stressed in Varnava, that Türkiye's "obligation to account for the disappearance and death, and to identify and prosecute any perpetrator of unlawful acts in that connection" too (para. 145). *Other* 21. … The Ministers' Deputies deplored the absence of a response to its interim resolutions concerning the payment of the just satisfaction awarded in *Cyprus v. Turkey* and in *Varnava and Others v. Turkey*, and urged Türkiye to effectuate these payments without further delay. 22. On 7 June 2023, the Ministers' Deputies issued a decision on the supervision of the execution of the judgments in *Kakoulli and Isaak groups v. Turkey*. They recalled that the cases in question concerned four killings and one life-threatening injury of Greek Cypriots in 1996, three of which took place in or around the buffer zone, due to the excessive use of force or firearms by Turkish or Turkish Cypriot military or police, and the lack of effective and impartial investigations. They noted that no similar incidents involving the use of firearms by the military and police had occurred since 1996, which reflected the positive impact of training, and that primary legislation concerning the police and the military had been applied in a manner that had not resulted in the loss of life. The Ministers' Deputies welcomed the information according to which sufficient arrangements existed to ensure that investigative officers did not belong to the same military body as those involved in an offence, and found that no further measures were needed. They welcomed the willingness of the Turkish authorities to continue their	

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		close cooperation with the secretariat to clarify the outstanding questions regarding their obligation to carry out effective investigations in these cases. *Other* 17. ... However, the Ministers' Deputies strongly urged Türkiye to pay the just satisfaction awarded in *Cyprus v. Turkey* and in *Varnava and Others v. Turkey* without further delay. 18. On 14 June 2024, the Ministers' Deputies issued a decision on the supervision of the execution of the judgments in *Kakoulli and Isaak groups v. Turkey*, which concerned substantive right to life violations and the lack of effective and impartial investigations into four killings and one life-threatening injury of Greek Cypriots in 1996 due to the excessive use of force by Turkish or Turkish Cypriot military or police. They decided to close examination of the individual measures in the *Kakoulli* and *Kallis* and *Androulla Panayi* cases and also outlined the outstanding individual measures or clarifications required in the *Solomou*, *Isaak* and *Andreou* cases. Concerning general measures, in addition to recalling the positive steps adopted by the authorities of Türkiye regarding training, humanitarian interventions, effectiveness and independence of the investigations, they invited Türkiye to clarify whether the law specifies that firearms may only be used proportionately by the military and by the police in response to a threat to physical integrity or a violent offence.	
(y) Allow all asylum-seekers returned from the northern part of Cyprus access to the territory and to the	Para. 63		

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asylum procedures in Turkey in view of the principle of non-refoulment and the lack of asylum procedures in the northern part of Cyprus;			
To the international community			
(z) Continue unabated the support provided to the Committee on Missing Persons, with the aim of establishing the fate and whereabouts of the remaining 976 disappeared persons as soon as possible.	Para. 39	*Other* The European Union is committed to foster reconciliation, build trust and promote peace in Cyprus. Under the EU Aid Programme for the Turkish Cypriot community (Regulation EC 398/2006), the EU is financing and supporting the work of the bi-communal Committee on Missing Persons. Since 2007, the EU has contributed EUR 41.1 million, which has allowed CMP to exhume, identify and return to their families the remains of 1,052 people from an official list of 2,002 missing persons, thus helping close a painful chapter of Cyprus. The EU is the CMP's main donor, covering around 80% of its budget.	This recommendation has been partially implemented. The Working Group notes the commitment of the European Union to the CMP and its mission. The Working Group encourages the international community to continue such efforts to aid in the identification the remaining disappeared.