



INTERNATIONAL COALITION
AGAINST ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

ICAED STATEMENT ON THE INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF THE DISAPPEARED 2019

The International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED) joins families worldwide in remembering the *desaparecidos* on the International Week of the Disappeared (IWD). The IWD is a time to reflect on the work that remains before every human rights advocate in the pursuit of truth and justice. **This year, the ICAED calls on governments to ratify and implement the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Convention). ICAED also calls on civil society to hold its leaders accountable to the principles of human rights.**

With Dominica's accession earlier this May, the Convention now has 60 state parties and 98 signatories. Even so, the work for the disappeared is far from over. State parties to the Convention need to continue their engagement with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED). As the CED monitors state parties' proper implementation of the provisions in the treaty, these states should not only comply but be proactive in reporting to the Committee.

Beyond ratifying the Convention, governments must enact complementary domestic laws criminalizing enforced disappearances (ED). Legislators should consult with families of the disappeared to gain a deeper understanding of the issues these victims face. There is also a need for the correct implementation of these laws, and thus civil society must see to it that governments fulfill their legal promises. Civil society should also take part in transmitting reports to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

State ratification, legal provisions, and civil society action do not create a panacea for enforced disappearances, however they are the key steps forward in obtaining justice to the deserving. Without these steps, society moves further away from being a world without disappearances.

ICAED recognizes that there are widespread constraints to achieving the ideals above. In recent history, the world has seen an increasing shift to populism by various regimes. This trend precipitates further human rights violations including that of enforced disappearances. The need for the international community to take action has thus increased in light of repressive governments. When people of any country become victims of the atrocities of their own authorities, they should be able to find recourse in international mechanisms.

The United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), in particular, has handled 57,149 cases of ED worldwide. There are 45,499 cases from 92 States still unresolved as of 2 May 2018. There is good reason to suspect that actual number of ED is many times higher than the reported figure. From among the cases handled by the WGEID: 5,590 are from Africa; 26,840 from Asia Pacific; 819 from Eastern Europe; 108 are from Western Europe and other groups; 12,138 disappearances are from Latin America and the Caribbean Group; and 4 cases are from Palestine.



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ICAED stands firm in its commitment to end enforced disappearances. The Coalition longs to see perpetrators brought to justice and family members brought home. This International Week of the Disappeared, the cry remains clear: **neither one more victim of enforced disappearance nor one more criminal without full justice.**

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