



Human Rights Council
Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances**Communications transmitted, cases examined, observations made and other activities conducted by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances*****118th session (13–22 May 2019)****I. Communications**

1. Between its 117th and 118th sessions, the Working Group transmitted 50 cases under its urgent action procedure, to: Bangladesh (3), Burundi (3), Egypt (19), India (1), Libya (1), Pakistan (11), Russian Federation (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Sudan (1), Syrian Arab Republic (2), Turkey (6) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (1).
2. At its 118th session, the Working Group decided to transmit 172 newly reported cases of enforced disappearance to 19 States: Algeria (5), Burundi (31), Cameroon (1), China (20), Democratic People's Republic of Korea (14), Egypt (2), Eritrea (1), India (17), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (4), Libya (2), Mexico (2), Pakistan (12), Republic of Korea (1), Saudi Arabia (2), Sri Lanka (45), Syrian Arab Republic (10), Tunisia (1) United Arab Emirates (1) and Yemen (1).
3. The Working Group clarified 62 cases, in: Azerbaijan (1), Bangladesh (2), China (1), Egypt (39), Morocco (4), Nigeria (2), Pakistan (3), Saudi Arabia (3), Syrian Arab Republic (1), Thailand (1) Turkey (4) and Ukraine (1). A total of 50 cases were clarified on the basis of information provided by the Governments and 12 on the basis of information provided by sources.
4. Between its 117th and 118th sessions, the Working Group transmitted 16 communications, either individually or jointly with other special procedures mechanisms: 9 urgent appeals, to China (1) India (1), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (1), Lao People's Democratic Republic (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Sudan (1), Thailand (2) and Viet Nam (1); 1 prompt intervention letter to Colombia (1); 6 allegation letters, to Argentina (1), Azerbaijan (1), China (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Thailand (1) and Turkey (1), and 4 "other letters", to Nepal (1), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (1), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1) and the Jasic Technology Company (1).¹

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

¹ Such communications are made public 60 days after their transmission to the State, along with responses received from the Government, if any, and are available from <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/Tmsearch/TMDocuments>.



5. On 25 February 2019, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release deploring the executions in Egypt of nine men convicted on the basis of evidence allegedly obtained under torture.²

6. On 11 March 2019, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release urging the Congress of Guatemala not to pass a new bill that would set up a general amnesty for serious human rights violations committed during the armed internal conflict.³

7. On 14 March 2019, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release renewing a call to the Chinese authorities for a comprehensive and independent investigation into the death in custody of the human rights defender and lawyer Cao Shunli, five years after her death.⁴

8. On 10 May 2019, the Working Group, together with other special procedure mechanisms, issued a press release condemning the lack of significant progress in the investigation into the disappearance in Mexico of lawyer and human rights defender Ernesto Sernas García, one year after his disappearance.⁵

9. Also at its 118th session, the Working Group reviewed and adopted two general allegations, concerning Bangladesh and the United States of America.

II. Other activities

10. During the session, the Working Group met with relatives of victims of enforced disappearance and with non-governmental organizations working on the issue.

11. The Working Group also held meetings with representatives of the Governments of Argentina, France, Japan, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar and the Republic of Korea.

12. During the session, the Working Group discussed its upcoming thematic report on standards and public policies for an effective investigation of enforced disappearances, to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its forty-second session.

13. The Working Group also participated in a workshop on forensic investigation and enforced disappearance.

III. Information concerning enforced or involuntary disappearances in States reviewed by the Working Group during the session

Algeria

Standard procedure

14. The Working Group transmitted five cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Ahmed Boukhatem, reportedly arrested on 13 December 1994 by masked soldiers while he was at a mosque near his residence;

(b) Mourad Raghis, reportedly arrested on 17 November 1994 by military security agents while on duty with the civil protection services at the Khelifi barracks at the Port of Algiers;

(c) Samir Hamdi Bacha, reportedly arrested on 22 December 1999 by police officers at his home;

² Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24204&LangID=E.

³ Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24300&LangID=E.

⁴ Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24331&LangID=E.

⁵ Available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24590&LangID=E.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Standard procedure

43. The Working Group transmitted 14 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Gyeong Hak Choi, allegedly detained in the State Security Department detention centre in Hyesan City, Ryanggang Province, Democratic People's Republic of Korea after being repatriated from China on 1 October 2016;

(b) Seong Ga Choi, allegedly detained in the State Security Department detention centre in Hyesan City, Ryanggang Province, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, after being repatriated from China on 1 October 2016;

(c) Hwa Yeong Park, allegedly abducted in Musan County, North Hamgyong Province, Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 25 September 1976 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea national security agents;

(d) Chansoo Ahn, allegedly arrested in Seoul on 5 July 1950 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea police officers;

(e) Geun-sik Kim, allegedly abducted from a boat near the Northern Limit Line, Republic of Korea on 15 February 1974 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(f) Jung-soo Heo, allegedly abducted from the Daehwatoe fishing grounds north-east of Ulleung-do Island, Republic of Korea on 8 August 1975 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(g) Yu-seok Jung, allegedly abducted from a boat near the Northern Limit Line, Republic of Korea on 15 February 1974 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(h) Joong-sik Kim, allegedly abducted from a boat near the Northern Limit Line, Republic of Korea, on 15 February 1974 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(i) Gil-soo Maeng, allegedly abducted from 6 km below the Northern Limit Line, Republic of Korea on 5 June 1970 by members of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea navy;

(j) Jung-ok Kim, allegedly abducted from the boat *Dongjin-ho* on 10 January 1972 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(k) Jun-soo Choi, allegedly abducted from the Yellow Sea, Republic of Korea on 20 March 1964 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(l) Nam-guk Kim, allegedly abducted from the Yellow Sea, Republic of Korea on 12 July 1968 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces;

(m) Sung-hyun Lee, allegedly abducted from Goseong-gun, Gangwon-do, Republic of Korea by Democratic People's Republic of Korea soldiers;

(n) Tae-ho Kim, allegedly abducted from the Yellow Sea, Republic of Korea on 16 October 1964 by Democratic People's Republic of Korea forces.

44. In accordance with its methods of work, the Working Group also transmitted a copy of 10 of the case files to the Government of the Republic of Korea.

Information from the Government

45. On 27 March 2019, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea transmitted information concerning 16 outstanding cases, which was considered insufficient to clarify them.

Observation

46. The Working Group is concerned about the lack of cooperation demonstrated by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through the identical replies received in relation to the transmitted cases. The Working Group is concerned in particular by the fact that the Government, instead of cooperating with the Working Group in relation

to the very serious allegations of grave and systematic enforced disappearances in the country, has accused the Working Group of being partial and of being involved in an alleged political plot against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Working Group firmly reiterates that it operates while maintaining the highest levels of objectivity, independence and impartiality.

Egypt

Urgent action

47. The Working Group, under its urgent action procedure, transmitted 20 cases to the Government, concerning:

(a) Islam El-Sayed Mahfouz Salem Khalil, disappeared on 25 February 2019 from El-Santa Police Station in Gharbia Governorate, Egypt;

(b) Hozaifa Mohammed Abdelfatah Mohammed Ismail, taken on 8 February 2019 by security forces in plain clothes;

(c) Anas el-Sayed Ibrahim Mohamed, last seen on 26 December 2018 while he was awaiting release at police station II in Zagazig;

(d) Taher Monir Ahmed Abu Ela, arrested on 27 January 2019 at a village mosque by security forces in plain clothes and taken to an unknown location;

(e) Ahmed Ameen Abd Elrahman Mahmoud, arrested on 5 March 2019 by National Security Agency agents wearing civilian clothes and police officers in uniform, in the apartment of a person associated with him in Nasr City, Cairo;

(f) El-Sayed Mohamed Niazi el-Sayed el-Araby, abducted on 12 January 2019 from an apartment in Mansurah city, Egypt, by National Security Agency forces in plain clothes;

(g) Abdul Rahman Usama Mohamed Mohamed al-Akeed, arrested on 12 February 2019 at the police academy in Cairo by members of the National Security Agency;

(h) Hazem Hamouda, last heard from on 18 February 2019 while in detention at the Tora Prison;

(i) Ahmed Ragb Ibrahim Mohammed el-Ebshiby, disappeared on 20 December 2018 from the Cairo-Alexandria road while he was travelling to Alexandria on a minibus;

(j) Mohammed el-Tantawy Hassan, last seen on 5 February 2019 at the microbus station in Mokattam city;

(k) Islam Ali Abd el-Aal Mohammed, arrested on 26 January 2019 by police officers and National Security Agency agents at the Kobry el-Obba metro station, Cairo Governorate, Egypt;

(l) Abdallah Bu-Madiyan Nasr Eldeen Okasha Nasr, disappeared on 11 January 2019 from El-Arish police station;

(m) Abdel Malek Mohamed Abdel Malek Hussein, disappeared on 8 March 2019, from the 15th of May city police station while awaiting release;

(n) Amr Azab Mohammed Azab, arrested on 3 March 2019 by agents of the National Security Agency in plain clothes while on his way to Beni Suef University;

(o) Mohamed Abdullah Mohamed Ahmed, disappeared on 7 April 2019 from the Minya al-Qamh police station while awaiting release;

(p) Mahmoud Ghareeb Mahmoud Qassim, arrested on 17 March 2019 at 5 p.m. by members of the State security forces in plain clothes, while he was walking near Al-Saah Square on his way to the grocery store;