



# **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance**

Advance unedited text

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## **Guidance for the submission of a request for urgent action to the Committee\***

### **General information**

1. The Committee on Enforced Disappearances is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance by the States that have ratified the Convention.
2. Under article 30 of the Convention, the Committee can receive and consider requests for urgent action submitted by the relatives of a disappeared person or their legal representatives, their counsel or any person authorized by them, as well as by any other person having a legitimate interest, that seek to ensure that the State party concerned take, as a matter of urgency, all necessary measures to seek and find a disappeared person.
3. Requests for urgent action may be submitted with regard to:
  - A disappearance in a country that has ratified the Convention.<sup>1</sup>
  - A disappearance of a national of a country that has ratified the Convention.

In both cases, the disappearance must have commenced after the entry into force of the Convention for the State party concerned.

### **Requirements for a request for urgent action to be considered, in principle, by the Committee**

4. Requests must be submitted in writing.
5. Requests may be submitted with regard to cases referring to any State that has ratified the Convention. It is not necessary for the State to have made a specific declaration in that regard.
6. The identity of the authors of a request for urgent action will always remain confidential; the request must not, however, be anonymous. The identity and contact details of the persons submitting the request are required so that the Committee may contact them throughout the procedure.
7. The facts of the disappearance must have been presented to a competent national authority, such as those authorized to undertake investigations and searches, where such a

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its 20th period of session (12 April-7 May 2021).

<sup>1</sup> A list of the States parties to the Convention is available from  
[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CED&Lang=en](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CED&Lang=en).

possibility exists. If such a possibility does not exist, the authors of the request for urgent action must explain the reasons thereof.

8. Copies of supporting documentation relating to all the steps taken before national authorities should be attached. If such copies cannot be provided because of time constraints at the time of the request, a detailed account of the steps taken will be sufficient. The Committee may, however, request a copy of relevant documentation at a subsequent stage of the proceedings.

9. A request for urgent action must not have been already been registered by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (mechanism of the Human Rights Council) on the same disappearance.

#### **Interim measures of protection**

10. If the author believes that there is a risk of irreparable damage, the Committee may request the State party to take interim measures for the protection of:

- The families and relatives of the disappeared persons and their representatives or counsel.
- The author of the request for urgent action.
- Witnesses to the disappearance.
- All persons participating in searches or investigations.
- Any element or pieces of evidence that can help to locate the disappeared person.

11. Persons submitting a request for urgent action may request the Committee to transmit to the State party a request for interim measures:

- (a) In the initial request for urgent action;
- (b) At any time after submission of the request for urgent action, while the procedure is ongoing.

#### **Recommendations for persons submitting a request for urgent action**

12. The present guidelines are not compulsory. They aim at providing guidance to ensure that persons submitting a request for urgent action provide all the information relevant to the case. In the event that the person submitting a request is unable to reply to any of the points listed below, the request will still be registered. Persons submitting a request are nonetheless encouraged to provide the information requested on the form to the fullest extent.

13. Persons submitting a request are invited:

- (a) To provide the full names of the institutions to which reference is made (security forces, government agencies or other bodies); abbreviations should not be used;
- (b) To complete the form by computer (or typewriter). Requests should be submitted in Word format; if this is not possible, they should be completed by hand in block capitals.

14. Requests may be submitted in any of the working languages of the secretariat of the Committee against Enforced Disappearances (Arabic, English, French, Russian or Spanish). Annexes will be considered only if they are submitted in one of these languages (an unofficial translation will suffice).

15. Further information on the Convention and the Committee's rules of procedure is available on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>2</sup>

**Where to send requests for urgent action**

**By e-mail:** [petitions@ohchr.org](mailto:petitions@ohchr.org)

**By mail:**

Petitions and Urgent Actions Section/Committee on Enforced Disappearances  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
United Nations Office at Geneva  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/ced/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/ced/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx).

## Committee on Enforced Disappearances

### Form for the submission of a request for urgent action

The following form provides guidance for persons wishing to submit a request for urgent action to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, in accordance with article 30 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, with the aim to request the State party to take immediate action to search for, find and protect a disappeared person.

To the extent possible, please provide information on each of the items listed below. Please replace the dotted lines in each section with the corresponding text.

**1. The State party concerned by the request for urgent action: .....**

**2. Person or organization requesting the urgent action:**

2.1 Family name(s): .....

First name(s): .....

OR

Name of Organization: .....

2.2 Contact information: .....

• Address:.....

• Telephone:.....

• Email:.....

2.3 Relationship with the disappeared person:.....

**3. Alleged victim or victims**

**Please provide the following information for each of the alleged victims on whose behalf the request for urgent action is being submitted:**

3.1 Family name(s): .....

3.2 First name(s): .....

3.3 For names in Arabic, Chinese or Russian, please also provide the full name of the victim(s) as spelled in the original language:

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3.4 If necessary, pseudonyms (aliases, nicknames or other names by which the person is known):

3.5 Nationality or nationalities:.....

3.6 Sex/gender: M ☐ F ☐ Other:.....

3.7 Date of birth: .....

3.8 Was the victim under 18 years of age at the time of his or her disappearance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

3.9 Place and country of birth: .....

3.10 Name of the mother (if known):

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3.11 Name of the father (if known):

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3.12 Contact information of the family of the disappeared person (if available):

- Telephone:.....
- Email:.....

3.13 Victim's last known contact information:

- Usual address:.....
- Telephone:.....
- Email:.....

3.14 Identity document (passport, national identity document, voter's card or other means of identification) – Please specify the number of the ID document and provide a copy thereof if available:.....

Country and place of issue:

3.15 Marital status:

Single ☐ Married ☐ Consensual union ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐

3.16 Name of spouse/partner (optional):.....

3.17 Does the victim have any children? Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, how many?.....

Children's ages: .....

3.18 Does the victim have any other dependents? Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, who? .....

Reason for their dependence? .....

3.19 Was the victim pregnant when she disappeared?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, approximately how many months pregnant was she at the time of her disappearance? .....

3.20 If believed to be relevant, indicate whether the victim belongs to any groups (e.g., indigenous peoples, national minorities, political party or movement, trade union, religious group, human rights group, non-governmental organization, LGBTI community)

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3.21 If believed to be relevant, indicate whether the victim has a disability:

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, please specify:

3.22 Profession: .....

3.23 Occupation or trade at the time of disappearance: .....

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#### 4.1 Data of life

4.2. Place of disappearance. Place, as specific as possible, indicating the street, city and

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[illegible]

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4.6 Possible perpetrators of the disappearance:

(a) Provide any information you may have about the possible perpetrators of the disappearance, and the reasons why you believe that they might be responsible: .....

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(b) Please specify whether you think that the alleged perpetrator (or perpetrators) of the disappearance belongs to the authorities of the State party or are linked to them. In particular, specify whether you think that the alleged perpetrators acted with the support or approval of the State, and if so, why: .....

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**5. Report of the disappearance to the competent bodies of the State party concerned, such as those authorized to undertake searches and investigations, where such a possibility exists:**

5.1 Please indicate the competent authorities or institutions of the State party to which the disappearance has been reported, when, and by whom:

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5.2 Actions taken by the competent authorities / institutions of the State party following the report of the disappearance:

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5.3 Please attach copies of any relevant documentation, such as submitted complaints, decisions or replies of the authorities to which the disappearance was reported. **Do not send originals.**

**List the copies of documents attached to the request for urgent action:**

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5.4 If it has not been possible to report the disappearance to a State authority competent to undertake an investigation or to search for a disappeared person, please specify the reasons thereof:

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## **6. Request for interim measures of protection**

6.1 Have family members, relatives of the disappeared person or their representatives, witnesses or any persons participating in the search or investigation been subject to threats or pressure relating to the disappearance of the person on whose behalf this request for urgent action is submitted?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, would you like the Committee to request the State party to take interim measures of protection to avoid irreparable harm to these persons?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6.2 If so, please provide the following information:

(a) Person or persons for whom protection measures are being requested (name and connection with the case in question): .....

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(b) Description of the risk of irreparable harm faced by the above person or persons (such as pressure, acts of intimidation or reprisal): .....

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(c) Protection measures that could be taken by the State party to avoid these risks:

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6.3 Are any of the elements relevant to locating the disappeared person (such as any evidence relating to the case) threatened by a risk of irreparable damage?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6.4 If so, please provide the following information:

(a) Element(s) relevant to locating the disappeared person for which protection measures are being requested (description and location): .....

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(b) Description of the risk of irreparable damage faced by this or these element(s) (e.g., destruction, manipulation, transformation): .....

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(c) Protection measures that should be taken by the State party to protect the element(s) relevant to locating the disappeared person from these risks:

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## 7. Other international procedures

7.1 Has the same matter been submitted under another procedure of international investigation or settlement?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7.2 If so, please indicate:

(a) The body or bodies to which the case has been submitted: .....

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(b) The type of procedure involved: .....

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(c) Date of submission of the case to that body/ bodies: .....

(d) Measures adopted: .....

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Results:.....

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7.3 Attach copies of any relevant documentation.

**8. Place, date and signature**

8.1 Place and date: .....

8.2 Signature of the person submitting the request (an electronic signature is sufficient).

In the event that you cannot sign, please explain the reasons thereof:

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