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**Committee on Enforced Disappearances
Fifteenth Session**



**Closing Statement by
Suela Janina
Chairperson
Committee on Enforced Disappearance**

Geneva, 16 November 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Committee Members, dear colleagues,

During the 15th session we are concluding today, we have been constantly reminded that what has been achieved in the fight against enforced disappearances, including our convention (ICPPED), has not been granted. It required for several long years, the sacrifices, courage and resilience of the families of disappeared persons in in the search for truth, justice and reparations for the victims.

The powerful messages we have heard during this session from mothers of the disappeared during dictatorships in Chile, Argentina and from mothers from Mexico in relation to recent disappearances, witness to this fight for achieving truth, justice and reparation for their loved ones.

The Committee has built upon the legacy of these courageous families and relatives of the disappeared, mostly them women, and since its establishment in 2011, has committed to support States parties and families of the disappeared persons in their efforts to develop the international framework set up in the Convention.

The Convention offers an array of tools for addressing enforced disappearances and on this session, the Committee has continued developing its working methods regarding these tools. For the very first time in the history of the Committee, the Committee held a follow-up dialogue with a State party on the additional information submitted by Mexico pursuant to article 29, paragraph 4 of the Convention. We have noted with appreciation the engagement of Mexico with the Committee in this process. It has proved that is a good practice that can be replicated with regard to other countries in the future.

Similarly, the Committee has moved forward in implementing its decision to review the implementation of the Convention in countries whose reports are overdue more than five years. The Committee has identified three countries with outstanding overdue reports and has decided that a list of issues will be prepared in relation to one of these countries during its 16th session in April 2019. While we note with satisfaction that Plurinational State of Bolivia, has submitted its report.

The Committee has put all efforts for a useful use of its meeting time. It considered the reports of Japan and Portugal, and is grateful to the high-

level delegations of these States parties which attended these dialogues and engaged in a fruitful exchange with the Committee. The Committee prepared list of issues regarding three countries (Italy, Chile, and Peru) to be reviewed during next session.

During this session, we have considered the follow-up report on the Concluding Observations regarding 5 countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador and Senegal) and also considered its follow-up report on its urgent action procedure. It is worth mentioning that until now the Committee has received more than 600 requests for urgent actions and issued more than 500 hundred urgent actions to different States parties. The Committee commends the cooperation of many of these States parties with this procedure and makes a general call to all concerned States parties to cooperate fully with the Committee, under this mechanism.

Let me mention with satisfaction our progress in the preparation of draft guiding principles on the duty to search for and to locate disappeared persons. The Committee has decided to engage in a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders and has decided to make a call for submissions, which will be open until 25 January 2019. The Committee intends to adopt these guiding principles during its 16th session in April 2019.

In line with our good practice of a stable and fruitful cooperation with other stakeholders, we have good exchanges with state parties, representatives of NHRI and NGO.

In order to explore further ways to increase cooperation between the Committee and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances we had an exchange via videoconference with the Chair of the WG. We believe that our complimentary can be more effective, if opportunities for more frequent meetings during our sessions can be offered.

Today CED met with the Committee against Torture in a very productive discussion of matters of common interest. In this joint meeting, the members of the two committees exchanged on the common elements of the mandates and identified the fields for future cooperation, with the aim of having tangible results in the near future.

CED has regularly expressed its commitment to contribute to the process of the strengthening of human rights treaty body system. We further discussed in this session matters related to the 2020 review of the treaty

body system. The Committee has been very active regarding this topic by appointing focal points, developing its position regarding different proposals and responding to the questionnaire prepared by the Chairpersons of Treaty bodies.

Allow me to commend my fellow members of the Committee, the Secretariat, conference officers, interpreters, précis-writers and all UN staff involved in supporting the Committee.

As a way of concluding, I would like to recall the emotional strong and courageous plea from the mothers from Mexico “We will never give up on our children”, which obliges and motivates us not to let them down and never stop the fight against the enforced disappearance.
