



INTERNATIONAL COALITION

AGAINST ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

c/o AFAD Office Rms. 310-311 Philippine Social Science Center Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel: +6324907862 Email: fpicaed@gmail.com Fax: +6324546759

Statement on the Commemoration of International Day of the Disappeared 2013

ICAED's Voice: Honor the Disappeared through incessant call for States' Accession to the Anti-Disappearance Convention

It has been 32 years ago since our Latin American sisters and brothers from the Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared-Detainees (FEDEFAM) initiated the commemoration of what is now officially recognized by the United Nations as the International Day of the Disappeared (IDD). Today, 30th of August, third year after its official recognition from the United Nations, we continue to honor our beloved *desaparecidos* from Africa, Asia, Europe, Euro-Mediterranean region, Latin America and the United States.

The International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearance (ICAED) continues to honor all the world's *desaparecidos* through its incessant call on states to act and decisively put to a stop enforced disappearance and eradicate it from the face of the earth. We honor them through the continuous call, in various ways, for states to sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Convention), to recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances and to ensure full implementation. The Convention stresses the importance of the non-derogable human right not to be disappeared. The treaty's strong provisions on the right to truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, if implemented, will go a long way to the realization of a world without disappeared persons.

We, advocates of human rights and human dignity, firmly believe that the right not to be subjected to enforced disappearances be granted to all citizens of the world. We are aware that people, especially the poor and the vulnerable, have been subjected to this atrocious violation even after states have acceded to the Convention, for which reason, full implementation of the treaty is important.

The urgency of the adoption of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances speaks of 53,986 outstanding cases from 84 countries since its inception in February 1980. More than three years since the entry into force of the anti-disappearance Convention, enforced disappearance cases of the past remain unresolved and we still witness the occurrence of new cases. There are only 40 States that have acceded to the Convention and only 16 of them have fully recognized the competence of the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances. Considering the global scale of enforced disappearances and the limited number of states that ratified the Convention, the urgency of universal implementation, therefore, is imperative.

This international mechanism envisioned to prevent the crime of enforced disappearance from recurring and to punish the perpetrators is far from reaching universal accession. As an example, Asia, noted as the biggest region of the world in land mass and population, has registered the highest number of recent cases of disappearances and also the least number of global-local (*glocal*) mechanisms and domestic laws including the Convention that translate their human rights obligations to resolve this scourge. Even so, laudable improvements that we have seen in the recent months particularly the unexpected accession of Cambodia to the Convention in June, are humble steps towards our vision of a world without disappearances. We look forward to the plausibility that other Asian states and the rest of the world will follow such steps in the coming days, months and years and join our call to the universal accession to the aforementioned Convention.

The ICAED, as one voice, compels all states of their responsibility to protect their citizens from being subjected to the crime of enforced disappearance through their accession and full implementation of the Convention. We, as one voice, are seeking for justice to all the disappeared and their families who suffer and are continuously suffering from the pain of having lost loved ones, whose whereabouts are still unidentified.

As one voice, we invite all concerned to join the struggle towards a world free from injustices and disappearances.

We, as one voice, urge all stakeholders to act and step up against the blanket of impunity.

We, as one voice, demand to the responsible states to give us the peace we have been longing for - a peace where an atmosphere that brings about respect of basic human rights exists, a peace where enforced disappearances are resolved and have no room in a civilized society; a peace springing from the wells of justice.

The ICAED, as one voice, compels all states to accede to the CONVENTION NOW!