



ICAED Statement on the International Day of the Disappeared 2018

The International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED) stands in solidarity with all the world's *desaparecidos* and their families as we commemorate this year's International Day of the Disappeared (IDD). On the eighth year since the United Nations put the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (Convention) into force, the global community has seen developments in the struggle against ED: there are currently 97 Signatories and 58 States-Parties to the Convention. Several domestic laws criminalizing ED have also been enacted around the world.

An enforced disappearance is a continuing crime. Until the disappeared is surfaced, and until his or her whereabouts are unknown, those left behind have to wonder and wait for and to be revealed justice to be served. In this light, much remains to be done as families continue to search for their disappeared loved ones and as state impunity continues.

As of the report of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) to the 2017 to the UN Human Rights Council, there are a total of 45,292 outstanding cases - 20,648 from the Asia-Pacific Group, 12,483 cases from the Latin American and Caribbean Group, 11,236 from the African Group, 817 cases from the Eastern European Group, and 108 cases from the Western Europe and Others Group.

In Latin America, many authorities - both civilian and military - refuse to cooperate as families search for their disappeared loved ones, and inefficiency of the State and the bureaucratic systems run rampant. The emotional discord that families have to go through on top of this creates an even more problematic atmosphere in the region. Other devastating effects among the family members affect the family, the community and the greater society.

In the Euro-Mediterranean region, the situation of families of victims of enforced disappearances has not improved either. Impunity and lack of investigation remains. In addition, there has been no improvement concerning the ratification of the International Convention For the Protection of all Persons Against Enforced Disappearances by any countries in the Euro-mediterranean region.

In Asia, political persecution and the vilification of human rights defenders are rampant in countries with oppressive regimes. With the highest number of outstanding cases as per the UNWGEID records, Asia has only four countries that have ratified the Convention and only thirteen are signatories -- the lowest of all the regions. Only one country which has a domestic law criminalizing ED, but victims still await full implementation.

Today, we remember our brothers and sisters who remain disappeared, irrespective of ethnicity, country of origin, or nationality. The desire to see justice prevail and to see them come home unites every member of the ICAED and every loved one of the disappeared. This shared goal strengthens our resolve as we call for the universal ratification and implementation of the Convention. We stand firm as we call on governments across the



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world to act and respond to the cases of enforced disappearances and human rights violations at large. We cry for states to remember that a state is nothing without its people. Its mandate is to serve - not harm - its very lifeblood.

Today, we pay tribute to all the world's *desaparecidos*. The most concrete way of paying them tribute is to link arms with families of victims in their search for truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. We also take this opportunity to call on all States to sign, ratify and implement the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

The struggle for a world without *desaparecidos* is far from over.

END IMPUNITY NOW!