



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

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## Committee on Enforced Disappearances Twenty-sixth session

### Summary record of the 483rd meeting\*

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 26 February 2024, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. de Frouville

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*Additional information submitted by Honduras under article 29 (4) of the Convention*

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\* No summary record was issued for the 482nd meeting.

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.*

**Consideration of additional information submitted by States parties** *(continued)*

*Additional information submitted by Honduras under article 29 (4) of the Convention* (CED/C/HND/AI/1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Honduras joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation of Honduras to the meeting, explained that additional members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **A representative of Honduras** said that he and his high-level delegation were grateful for the opportunity to present his country's additional information and provide further details on the progress made towards promoting the development, rights and well-being of the people of Honduras. Unfortunately, those efforts continued to be hampered by the deep inequality and poverty plaguing the country in the wake of a series of military dictatorships and coups d'état and the imposition of an imported national security doctrine. Indeed, the Government of President Xiomara Castro was still in the process of reinstating democracy and the rule of law following the collapse of the dictatorship headed by former president Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado, who was currently standing trial for drug-related offences in the United States of America.
4. Faced with the damage caused by 12 years of corrupt and repressive dictatorship compounded by the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020, President Castro and her Administration had adopted the Government Plan to Refound the Homeland and Construct a Socialist and Democratic State 2022–2026. Under the Plan, a number of institutions had been created and strengthened in order to safeguard the rights of vulnerable sections of the population, including women, children, Indigenous Peoples and persons of African descent. As part of the Government's efforts to align national legislation with international standards, a technical committee on legislative harmonization had also been set up under the Ministry of Governance and Justice. The Special Commission on Migration had been created, and a series of amnesties had been granted for migrants in an irregular situation. The Government had established the Ministry of Transparency and Anti-Corruption Measures and had ordered the declassification of sensitive files related to cases of enforced disappearance. It had also held dialogues with local organizations and peasant farmers in an effort to tackle violence in regions such as Bajo Aguán.
5. A number of specific measures to prevent enforced disappearance had also been taken in recent years. Amnesty had been granted to 217 people wrongly prosecuted or sentenced by the previous regime under the Act for the Rebuilding of the Constitutional State of Rights and for Non-Repetition of 2022. The Programme of Memory, Truth, Reparation, Justice and Non-Repetition for the Reconciliation and Refoundation of Honduras, the National Day for the Right to Truth, Memory and Justice and the Museum of Memory had all been established. Families of victims of the most recent coup d'état had also been provided with comprehensive reparation measures under the Social Programme for the Families of the Martyrs of the Honduran Resistance. The Public Prosecution Service had established the facts and events surrounding the cases of 11 people who had survived enforced disappearance in the 1980s, and a colonel of the military police had been indicted on charges related to the deaths of five people during protests following the 2017 elections. After decades of denial, the State had acknowledged its responsibility for the extrajudicial execution of Herminio Deras in 1983, and steps were being taken to provide the victim's family with compensation. Lastly, an executive decree had been issued for the creation of a new national centre of historical memory, which would serve as a platform for activities aimed at researching, preserving and promoting the memory of victims.
6. In spite of the progress made, the Government recognized the need to continue to pursue its efforts to strengthen the State's democratic institutions, including by allocating sufficient human and financial resources to ensure the effective implementation of the measures it had adopted. In that regard, it looked forward to receiving the Committee's comments and recommendations, which would be analysed carefully and thoroughly in coordination with civil society. However, with respect to the wider global context, the State

remained extremely concerned about the threats posed by ongoing violence, the drug trade and climate change. If the international community did not take the necessary action to resolve those issues, many people living in Honduras and other regions would continue to be forced to migrate under conditions of extreme vulnerability, thereby exposing themselves to the dangers of crime, corruption and enforced disappearance.

7. **Ms. Villa Quintana** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee would welcome clear and precise information on the measures taken by the State party to fulfil its obligations under the Convention in relation to the definition of enforced disappearance as a separate criminal offence, appropriate penalties, and aggravating and mitigating circumstances.

8. Given that enforced disappearance had not been defined as a discrete offence in national legislation, she failed to understand the State party's assertion in its additional information that the Criminal Code provided that, in the case of continuous offences such as enforced disappearance, the statute of limitations ran from the day on which the unlawful situation ceased. Clarification of those comments would be appreciated. According to information received by the Committee, article 153 of the Criminal Code, on the responsibility of superior officers in relation to crimes committed by forces under their effective control, had been repealed. She would therefore like to know what measures had been taken to ensure that superiors were held criminally responsible for any involvement in acts of enforced disappearance.

9. In view of the limitations of the way in which the term "victim" was defined in the Code of Criminal Procedure, she would welcome further information on the steps taken to ensure that any individual who had suffered harm as the direct result of an enforced disappearance was granted that status. She would also like to know what action had been taken to ensure that victims' rights to truth, justice and full compensation were upheld, including any specific measures taken to bring the State party's practices into line with international standards pursuant to the recommendations made by the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It would be interesting to know what historical memory programmes had been put in place regarding the gross human rights violations that had been perpetrated in the country, including those committed under the so-called national security doctrine.

10. The Committee would welcome further information on the measures taken by the National System for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Media Professionals and Justice Officials to provide members of those groups with timely and effective protection. It would be useful to know how the National System carried out its risk assessments and what steps were taken to ensure that it incorporated gender and human rights perspectives into its work. She would also like to know what human and material resources it had been allocated, what technical tools it used to fulfil its mandate and how it coordinated its work with other State entities. It would be helpful to know whether the State party considered the System to have any particular shortcomings and, if so, what they were.

11. She would appreciate further information on the National Programme of Reparation Measures for Victims of the So-called National Security Doctrine, the Social Programme for the Families of the Martyrs of the Honduran Resistance and the Programme of Memory, Truth, Reparation, Justice and Non-Repetition for the Reconciliation and Refoundation of Honduras, including details on their scope, the resources they were allocated, their coordination with other entities and their results. She would also welcome updated information on the status of the bill on comprehensive reparation for victims of human rights violations caused by actions or omissions attributable to the State.

12. The delegation might like to outline what legislative measures the State party had taken to ensure the regularization of the legal situation of disappeared persons whose fate or whereabouts had not been clarified and that of their relatives, including by providing for the issuance of declarations of absence by reason of enforced disappearance. In particular, she would be interested to know whether any discussions or studies had been organized and whether any draft legislation had been prepared in that connection. It would also be helpful to know what mechanisms the State party had put in place to ensure that the families of disappeared persons could participate in the development of legislative and administrative initiatives related to enforced disappearance.

13. In the light of the concerns expressed by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances regarding the excessively formalistic and inefficient nature of the actions taken by the judicial authorities when a habeas corpus motion is lodged, she wished to know whether any specific measures had been taken to ensure that victims had access to prompt and effective judicial remedies. It would also be interesting to know whether any authorities other than judges had the power to hand down rulings on such motions.

14. She would welcome further information on the method used to keep the Digital Prison Records System up to date. It would be useful to hear more about the nature of the data stored on the System and to know whether it fulfilled the criteria laid down in article 17 (3) of the Convention. The delegation might also like to explain what the State party had meant when it had stated that the prison authorities were required to ensure confidentiality in the handling of the information contained in the System. She wondered whether that requirement might affect the right of any person with a legitimate interest to access such information, as set out in article 18 (1).

15. The Committee would welcome further information on any specific cases of the direct application of the Convention in judicial rulings. She also wished to hear more about the functions and activities of the Office of the Ombudsman for Persons Deprived of Their Liberty. Had it submitted any reports or formulated any proposals aimed at addressing the situation faced by persons deprived of their liberty?

16. **Mr. Albán-Alencastro** (Country Rapporteur) said that he would like to know what policies and measures had been developed to prevent the mass migration of Hondurans to other countries under conditions that put them at risk of disappearance. He wondered what steps had been taken to collect data on the number of Honduran migrants who had disappeared and whose whereabouts were still unknown. He also would like to learn of any efforts to improve the registration of persons, especially children, travelling as part of irregular mixed migration flows in order to facilitate the identification of persons reported as disappeared in a country other than their home country. What statistics were available as a result of those data-collection processes? He would welcome information on the actions taken to investigate the disappearance of migrants in transit through Honduran territory and on the results of those investigations, including the number of cases, persons accused, criminal proceedings initiated, convictions and acquittals.

17. He wished to learn what prevention mechanisms were currently being used to reduce the risk of disappearance for migrants deprived of their liberty for migratory reasons and how the State party ensured that migrants deprived of their liberty could maintain contact with their families, the consular authorities of their countries, international agencies and any other person of their choice or institution competent to handle their case. It would also be of interest to learn what policies and measures had been developed to prevent pushbacks and other forms of summary expulsion of migrants from Honduran territory.

18. The Committee would appreciate information on the guarantees of due process offered to migrants in relation to status determination processes and decisions on their right to remain in the country. Information on the measures in place to ensure that the principle of non-refoulement was respected would also be welcome. It would be useful to know what actions had been taken to search for migrants who had disappeared while in transit through the country and what the results of those actions had been, including the number of searches, persons found alive, bodies recovered, and remains identified and returned to families.

19. He wondered what mechanisms for cooperation and coordination existed with other countries, especially other Central American countries, to facilitate searches and investigations in cases of the disappearance of migrants in transit through Honduran territory and of Honduran migrants in other countries. What had the results of the use of such mechanisms been?

20. The Committee would be grateful for information on the mechanisms and the normative and institutional frameworks in place to ensure that migrants, victims of enforced disappearance and their families had access to justice, truth and reparation. He would like to know whether the State party intended to extend the exemption from fines for migrants who entered the country in an irregular manner. Information would also be welcome on the status

of the proposed amendments to the Migration and Aliens Act that would do away with such fines altogether.

21. He wished to determine whether the national migration policy included provisions aimed at preventing the disappearance of refugees and asylum-seekers. He wondered what measures had been adopted to strengthen State institutions' outreach capabilities and their presence at unofficial border crossings where they could identify persons reported as disappeared or at risk of disappearance. Information would also be welcome on any efforts made to inform local actors in border areas and key transit centres about existing mechanisms for reporting cases of disappeared persons.

22. The Committee would appreciate updated statistics on the investigation of cases of enforced disappearance, on the number of criminal proceedings that had been initiated concerning cases of enforced disappearance and cases of disappearances committed by private individuals, and on the number of convictions and persons sentenced. It would be of interest to learn what policies and measures had been developed to ensure that State entities and officials involved in the investigation and prosecution of cases of enforced disappearance enjoyed the necessary independence and impartiality. He wondered how the State party ensured that officials belonging to institutions suspected of involvement in a case of enforced disappearance did not participate in the corresponding investigations, prosecutions and searches and what measures were in place to support collaboration among all the institutions involved, including security forces and the armed forces, to ensure that all information relevant to criminal investigations was shared.

23. He would like to know what protection mechanisms existed for victims, witnesses and other persons who assisted with investigations and prosecution proceedings, including justice officials. It would be useful to hear what measures were in place, in law and in practice, to support the effectiveness of investigations, prosecutions and searches in cases of enforced disappearance. Information on the human, material, financial and technological resources available to the relevant State bodies in the investigation and prosecution of cases of enforced disappearance would be welcome.

24. It would be of interest to know what measures the State party had implemented to combat corruption in the investigation and prosecution of cases of human rights violations and what the results of those measures had been. Lastly, he wondered what measures had been taken to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and address the cases of enforced disappeared that had occurred during the 1980s and 1990s.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.30 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.*

25. **A representative of Honduras** said that the special committee created to review the procedures used to secure approval of the new Criminal Code had concluded that neither the constitutional nor other legal requirements for its adoption had been met, since it had been approved at a time when Congress had not been meeting in plenary, the opinion of the Supreme Court of Justice had not been received prior to its approval, and the congressional advisory committee had mainly been composed of deputies who had been under investigation for a number of offences. Furthermore, the entry into force of the amended Criminal Code had taken place during a period in which constitutional guarantees had been suspended, which was not permitted under Honduran law.

26. A committee for the harmonization of the relevant legislation had been formed and was being chaired by the Ministry of Governance and Justice. A bill dealing with searches and legal protection for disappeared persons that broadened the concepts of "victim" and "disappearance" and proposed further amendments to the Criminal Code was pending approval. A bill designed to ensure compliance with international human rights obligations regarding victims of the application of the so-called national security doctrine, which included both victims of enforced disappearance and victims of other human rights violations, had been presented by the Committee of the Families of Detained and Disappeared Persons in Honduras and submitted to the National Congress.

27. **A representative of Honduras** said that the most recent migration amnesty had been approved and would enter into force at the end of 2024. A package of reforms was being prepared that would ensure that a distinction was made between migrants entering the country

from Nicaragua and other persons who might enter the country in an irregular manner so that vulnerable migrants would not be fined.

28. **A representative of Honduras** said that two programmes had been set up to support victims and their families. The Social Programme for the Families of Martyrs of the Honduran Resistance comprised six reparation measures relating to access to housing, decent work, education, physical and mental health care and justice. Support for implementation of the programme had been requested from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. As part of the Programme of Memory, Truth, Reparation, Justice and Non-Repetition for the Reconciliation and Refoundation of Honduras, a compilation of public policies was being prepared that would cover issues such as prevention, symbolic and other forms of reparation, and social construction in line with international standards on truth, memory and justice.

29. **A representative of Honduras** said that Honduras was the only country in the region that registered all migrants upon their arrival using biometric technologies. Upon registration, migrants were given permission to remain in the country for five days. Reception centres provided migrants with access to the Internet, social services and counselling, among other services, free of charge. Two permanent reception centres had been built. No migrant attempting to enter the country was subject to pushbacks. Any migrant who entered at an unofficial crossing could register with the authorities and would be granted the right to remain for five days. Congress had not extended the formal amnesty, but a decision had been made to exempt all persons entering the country illegally in 2024 from fines. As almost all migrants entered Honduras with the intention of continuing on to Mexico or the United States of America, the Government of Honduras received very few asylum requests, and the country had only a small number of registered refugees.

30. Between 2015 and 2023, more than half a million Honduran migrants had been deported back to the country. The migration route through Mexico was beset by grave security risks, and 425 Hondurans had been reported missing. Of those cases, 220 remained active, 104 had been closed, and updated information was lacking in the other 101. The 104 closed cases included the cases of 25 persons who had been returned alive to Honduras, 11 who had been found alive and did not intend to return, 3 persons in detention and duplicate statistics indicating that 21 of the persons had died and the remains of 21 persons had been repatriated to Honduras. To assist in the search for the remaining missing migrants, a protocol based on international human rights standards had been developed in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross which took a comprehensive approach to identifying missing migrants, assisting their families and preventing further disappearances. Searches for migrants who had gone missing along the migration route towards the United States of America would be conducted in conjunction with the Guatemalan and Mexican authorities.

31. **A representative of Honduras** said that bilateral efforts were also being undertaken with the Venezuelan authorities and within the framework of the Central American Integration System.

32. **A representative of Honduras** said that searches for missing persons were conducted by the two prosecutors who staffed the Disappearances Unit of the Public Prosecution Service. Search efforts included locating a missing person's relatives and requesting information about remains from the Directorate General for Forensic Medicine. The Unit also worked with government agencies such as the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights, the migration authorities and the National Registry Office, as well as meeting with relatives to gather information that might shed light on the fates of missing persons. The Unit was currently working to identify the remains of eight persons who had been discovered in the 1980s, and it was hoped that a new genetic database and advances in technology would assist in obtaining complete genetic profiles with a view to locating their relatives.

33. Upon receiving a report of unidentified remains found abroad from, for example, the University of Texas, which held approximately 5,000 unidentified bodies, the Disappearances Unit collected genetic samples from presumed relatives to assist in confirming their identities. The Argentine authorities had collected almost 1,800 samples from the relatives of missing persons; those samples would be included in the new genetic

database and subsequently shared with authorities and organizations abroad on request for the sole purpose of identification. Draft legislation on missing or disappeared persons was currently under review. Under a protocol for returning migrants, minors were housed in a dedicated shelter, and genetic samples were obtained from them in order to verify their family relationships. Twenty-three foreign migrants had died in Honduras in 2021; 31, including 8 Venezuelans, in 2022; 21, including 1 Venezuelan, in 2023; and 5, including 1 Venezuelan, so far in 2024.

34. **A representative of Honduras** said that the public security powers of the National Police Force had been restored. To ensure impartiality, crimes involving, or suspected of involving, police officers were investigated by the Technical Criminal Investigation Agency. Cases of enforced disappearance were investigated in partnership with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), which maintained a database of missing persons and had opened an office in San Pedro Sula. The forms used to record information pertaining to investigations had been updated, and regulations and a protocol for an early warning system had been developed.

35. **A representative of Honduras** said that in, 2023, the armed forces, including the military police, had taken on the responsibility of running the country's prisons and had ensured that information on each prisoner was recorded in digital and physical registers. To allow the armed forces to gradually relinquish that responsibility, more than 1,000 new prison officers had been trained, and more than 1,000 additional recruits would begin training in 2024. The armed forces worked closely with all State bodies in investigations into crimes involving their officials or when they had information that could assist in investigations.

36. **A representative of Honduras** said that any third party could apply for a writ of habeas corpus, as provided for by the Constitutional Justice Act. The judge who granted the writ appointed an executing judge to verify the location of the person in question, without prejudice to the ex officio investigation that must be undertaken by the Public Prosecution Service. Work was under way to design a human rights curriculum for use in the training provided to judicial officials to ensure compliance with international human rights obligations and standards. That curriculum would also cover due diligence safeguards, the treatment of vulnerable persons such as migrants and human rights defenders, the right to information and measures for combating corruption. The judiciary participated in several forums that sought to devise legislative, structural and judicial solutions for social problems.

37. **A representative of Honduras** said that requests by foreign consular officials to speak with any of their nationals who were in Honduran prisons were communicated via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prisons Institute. A protocol intended to accelerate the identification and repatriation of children or, when appropriate, the conclusion of an agreement concerning another definitive solution for them, had been signed with the Guatemalan authorities. Since 2021, 891 foreigners had been reported missing in Honduras, of whom around 40 per cent had been found; the rest were presumed to have left the country.

38. **A representative of Honduras** said that the measures adopted to combat corruption in missing person investigations had included the declassification of information following the repeal of the Act on the Classification of Public Documents relating to Security and National Defence and the appointment of acting heads of the relevant departments of the Public Prosecution Service who had launched a review of the cases under investigation by the Service. In addition, the findings of the committee that had been set up to investigate the actions of former senior officials of the Service had led the authorities to seek the prosecution of some of those persons.

39. **A representative of Honduras** said that legislation on protection mechanisms needed to be amended in order to facilitate its enforcement. Protection measures must be balanced against the available financial resources, and although the Government had increased the relevant budget, there were disparities in terms of the amount of funds allocated for different cases. Protection mechanisms did, however, provide for the application of a gender-based protocol.

40. **Ms. Villa Quintana** said that clarification was required as to how the two prosecutors of the Disappearances Unit conducted searches for missing persons and how they ensured that searches were indeed carried out in all cases. She would like to know whether the Public

Prosecution Service had adopted an institutional policy on comprehensive searches, along with strategies, action plans and timelines. It would be useful to hear what results had been achieved to date through the use of new investigative technologies by the Directorate for Children, Adolescents and the Family and the Directorate General for Forensic Medicine. Information would be welcome on the protocols in place with regard to the human, material and financial resources allocated for searches for missing persons, including migrants who had gone missing anywhere along the migratory route.

41. She wished to know what the procedure for collecting DNA samples was under the National System for Human Identification and how many samples had been collected to date. She would like to know whether the State party had systematically logged the genetic profiles of the 5,000 unidentified bodies reported by the University of Texas and whether it shared relevant information with families searching for loved ones. She wondered how searches led by family members rather than the responsible institution were conducted, why the burden of searching for disappeared persons was sometimes placed on family members, what institutional capacity the State party had to conduct such searches and whether searches for disappeared persons were conducted under the presumption that those persons were alive.

42. She was eager to learn whether the State party had a register of unidentified bodies and remains. She would like to know whether other clandestine graves or remains had been identified, in addition to the eight skeletons from the 1980s mentioned earlier, and what processes were in place for the dignified return of remains to family members. She wondered whether the bill on a consolidated national register of missing or disappeared persons clearly defined the categories of disappeared persons, forcibly disappeared persons and missing persons, whether it identified the institution that was to be responsible for the register and whether it specified how the register was to be managed.

43. Information would be appreciated on the status of the bill on the establishment of a national institute of forensic medicine and forensic science. She would be interested to learn which institution was currently responsible for the identification of the human remains of disappeared persons, what protocols that institution followed and whether the national institute would be independent or part of the Public Prosecution Service.

44. She wished to know which inter-institutional and intra-institutional coordination mechanisms were in place regarding disappeared persons. She wondered what strategies and action plans the Public Prosecution Service had developed concerning the launch of exhaustive searches in response to the 33 urgent action requests submitted to the State party by the Committee, how many people were working on those searches and which specialist areas they worked in.

45. She wished to learn more about the differential approach adopted in the search for disappeared children, persons with disabilities, members of Indigenous Peoples, persons of African descent and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in line with principle 4 of the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons. She would be interested to hear whether search protocols ensured that searches would begin without delay and that proper legal assistance was provided to women who reported disappearances. She wished to know to what extent family members participated in searches for disappeared persons, how the Government gathered information from those family members and what official mechanisms were in place to enable the State to periodically update family members on the search effort.

46. She wished to know what the status of investigations by the Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families into irregularities in adoption processes was, how the State party ensured impartial and effective investigations into illegal domestic and intercountry adoptions, whether any State officials involved in illegal adoptions had been sanctioned and whether any criminal networks or organized crime groups had been investigated in connection with the wrongful removal of children. She wondered if the State party had databases on domestic and intercountry adoptions, what measures had been taken to prevent the wrongful removal and abduction of children in line with article 25 of the Convention and whether children identified as victims of illegal adoption or wrongful removal had had their identities restored and been returned to their families. In that connection, she drew the

attention of the delegation to the joint statement on illegal intercountry adoptions issued by a number of the United Nations treaty bodies.

47. **Mr. Albán-Alencastro** said that he wished to know whether new legislation on migration that was due to be introduced by 31 December 2024 would include permanent provisions for the waiver of fines applicable to migrants in an irregular situation and what criteria were to be used to differentiate between those migrants and migrants in situations of vulnerability, who were already eligible to have such fines waived.

48. He wondered how much capacity the new reception centres for migrants had, how many staff members worked there, which services were offered and how many people were already receiving assistance in the centres. He was eager to learn what administrative or judicial procedures were followed for the expulsion of persons from the State party, how those processes were conducted, what due process guarantees were afforded to persons at risk of expulsion and whether those persons were deprived of their liberty while their cases were pending. He wished to learn more about the unit of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights that specialized in disappearances and whether it had the necessary resources to manage and ensure due diligence in investigations, particularly in complex cases. He would like to know what efforts were being made to find the remains or to establish the fate of other persons who had disappeared during the 1980s and 1990s. He would welcome clarification as to whether prison facilities remained under the control of the armed forces and whether new and future prison officers would report to the armed forces or to an autonomous prison system.

49. **Ms. Villa Quintana** said that she wished to know whether the national prison registry was interoperable and whether family members could consult it in order to find out where a detained person was being held. She wondered what budget had been allocated for the different forms of reparation available to victims of enforced disappearance and whether a plan for the implementation of those measures was in place. She wished to know whether any preliminary bills were being developed to address the irregularities in the adoption of the Criminal Code and, if so, whether they provided for the participation of civil society and State institutions that could ensure compliance with international standards and the State party's obligations under the Convention. She would be interested to learn how closely prosecutors worked with family members and organizations established to search for persons who had disappeared during the 1980s and 1990s, whether there was a register of persons who had disappeared since the 1990s and, if so, how many persons were included on it.

50. She wondered how prevalent forced recruitment and forced displacement were in the State party and what measures the State party was taking in response to those practices. She wished to know what steps were being taken to avoid irregularities in the administration of civil registries that resulted in children being handed over to persons who were not their biological parents. She wondered how the State party went about ensuring the effective implementation of its early warning system, particularly with regard to disappeared children. Given that 50 per cent of adoptions in the State party were intercountry adoptions, she wished to know what the destination countries were for adopted children and how the journeys of those children were tracked. She wondered what safeguards the State party had in place to prevent the disappearance of children and how the Public Prosecution Service went about following up on reports of the illegal adoption, disappearance or wrongful removal of children.

51. She would like to learn more about the status of investigations by the Public Prosecution Service into disappearances in the Indigenous communities of Triunfo de la Cruz and what obstacles were impeding those investigations. In the light of reports that the perpetrators of up to 94 per cent of cases of disappearance in the State party went unpunished, she wished to know what statistics the Public Prosecution Service had regarding impunity and how many sentences had been handed down for enforced disappearance. She was eager to learn what kind of local presence the Public Prosecution Service maintained in the investigation of complex cases of disappearance dating back to the 1980s and 1990s and whether the Public Prosecution Service used contextual analysis techniques to establish strategies and action plans for its investigations and for searches for disappeared persons. She wondered whether such investigations were initiated by the police and later passed onto

prosecutors, or whether officials of the two bodies worked together throughout the investigation process.

52. **Mr. Albán-Alencastro** said that he wished to know how the national protection mechanism worked in practice and who it benefited. He wondered what measures the State party was taking to investigate cases of disappearance committed by persons or groups of persons acting without the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*