



International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

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Committee on Enforced Disappearances

Fifth session

Summary record of the first part (public)* of the 59th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 4 November 2013, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chairperson: Mr. Salama (Director, Human Rights Treaties Division)

Chairperson: Mr. Decaux

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* No summary record was prepared for the second part (closed) of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Temporary Chairperson**, speaking on behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, declared the fifth session of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances open. Recalling the courageous struggle of the relatives of the victims of enforced disappearance, he welcomed the Human Rights Council's adoption of resolution 24/24 requesting the Secretary-General to nominate a focal point against reprisals. He noted with satisfaction that the Committee had nominated one of its members to focus on that issue. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights supported the Committee's actions to protect members of civil society, notably through awareness-raising campaigns in the media and online. The Committee's cooperation with other treaty bodies and certain special-procedure mandate holders was all the more important as the Committee was beginning to receive individual communications and would have to ensure the harmonization and coherence of its jurisprudence. The Committee had actively contributed to the treaty body strengthening process, one of whose aims was to secure additional budgetary resources. The adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 68/2 was an encouraging development in that regard. The previous Chairperson had emphasized before the General Assembly that all necessary measures should be taken to enable the Committee to consider State party reports within the time limit set. In the hope that the General Assembly would have adopted a substantive resolution on treaty body strengthening before the Committee's next session, he wished the members of the Committee successful deliberations and a productive session.

Solemn declaration by a newly elected Committee member

2. In accordance with rule 11 of the Committee's rules of procedure, **Mr. Corcuera Cabezut** made the following solemn declaration:

"I solemnly declare that I shall perform my duties and exercise my powers as a member of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances independently, objectively, honourably, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously".

Election of the Bureau

3. In accordance with rule 15 of the Committee's rules of procedure, Mr. Emmanuel Decaux (France) was re-elected Chairperson of the Committee. Ms. Suela Janina (Albania), Mr. Mamadou Badio Camara (Senegal) and Mr. Mohammed Al-Obaidi (Iraq) were elected Vice-Chairpersons; Mr. Alvaro Garcé García y Santos (Uruguay) was elected Rapporteur.

4. *Mr. Decaux took the Chair.*

5. **The Chairperson** thanked the members of the Committee for their renewed confidence and said that, during the new cycle, the Committee would continue its work as before. The Committee's website, which was already very full, would undergo a general overhaul. Since the Convention had entered into force on 23 December 2010, the number of States parties had doubled and it was hoped that that trend would continue. In order to assist States in transposing the technical provisions of the Convention into their internal legal order, the Committee would have to identify some "good practices" or model laws. Some 20 States parties had not fulfilled their obligation to submit their report within two years of the Convention's entry into force. Longer sessions would soon be necessary to prevent the Committee from accumulating a backlog, which would run counter to the spirit and letter of the Convention. He therefore fully supported the initiatives taken by Ms. Pillay to strengthen the treaty body system. As to countries that did not submit their report, he suggested a midway solution between a public debate in Geneva and a visit to the country

under article 33 of the Convention. A preliminary evaluation of the urgent action procedure under article 30 would need to be carried out. The Committee was particularly concerned about the risk of reprisals against victims' relatives and welcomed resolution 24/24 recently adopted by the Human Rights Council. The clarification of the linkages between the procedures of the Committee and those of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances would be an important agenda item. The Committee should also meet with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence during its sixth session. All Committee members were also available to establish official contacts with NGOs. He hoped that the session would enable the Committee to adopt rules of methodology for its relationships with civil society and knew that it could count on the full cooperation of all stakeholders, including States parties and NGOs.

Adoption of the agenda (CED/C/5/1)

6. *The provisional agenda (CED/C/5/1) was adopted without amendment.*

Minute of silence in remembrance of victims of enforced disappearances

7. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence in remembrance of victims of enforced disappearances.*

The first part (public) of the meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.