



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Union of Northwest Human Rights Organisation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 August 2024]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Enforced Disappearances in Sindh, Pakistan**

We would like to urgently bring to the attention of the United Nations Human Rights Council the alarming issue of enforced disappearances in Sindh, Pakistan. State security forces have been carrying out abductions, torture, and detentions as part of a broader strategy to suppress political opposition, intimidation, control, and silencing the voices advocating for the rights of Sindhi people.

With its distinct political, cultural, and linguistic identity and population of 55.7 million, Sindh has been under significant strain since its incorporation into Pakistan during the partition in 1947. The loss of provincial autonomy and threats to the Sindhi identity have been marked by the targeting of activists, political workers, writers, and journalists by Pakistani authorities, leading to a wide spread and deep fear and oppression.

These enforced disappearances are blatant violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture, both of which Pakistan has ratified on 23 June 2010. Furthermore, these acts directly contravene the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which categorically states that enforced disappearance is unjustifiable under any circumstances. Despite the constitutional guarantees of life and liberty (Article 9 of Pakistan's Constitution), the practice continues unabated, with the recommendations to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance being largely ignored.

Enforced disappearances have disproportionately affected Sindhi, Baloch and Pashtun, human rights activists and political rights workers. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has noted an alarming rise in the disappearances of minorities and individuals such as political activists, writers, journalists, and human rights defenders in Sindh.

Approximately five hundred Sindhis have been reported abducted by state forces, and over fifty-five individuals remain missing as of July 2024, most without formal charges or FIRs. Sadly, the tortured bodies of many victims have been found in the past. Numerous victims, such as Ayoub Kandhro, Insaf Dayo, Suhail Raza Bhatti, Kashif Tagar, Pathan Khan Zuhrani, Murtaza Junejo, and Mohan Meghwar, have been missing for years. The Sindh High Court's multiple directives to recover or locate 1,200 missing persons have seen limited compliance. However, Voice for Missing Persons of Sindh (VMPS) reports workers of Sindh rights political parties remained in state custody with the frequency of abductions have increased in recent years. VMPS recorded 30 disappearances in 2019, 99 in 2020, 47 in 2021, 130 in 2022, 70 in 2023, and 40 have been picked up by security forces in the first six months of 2024, mostly young students. VMPS is an advocacy group working for the enforced disappeared people in Sindh, is led by Ms. Sorath Lohar and Ms. Sassui Lohar, two brave daughters of Hidayat Lohar, who was twice enforced disappeared and later extrajudicially killed in February 2024 in broad daylight. Despite his killers have been identified, the state has failed to arrest the culprits.

In March 2021, the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) and seven UN Special Rapporteurs jointly communicated their concerns regarding enforced disappearances in Sindh and Pakistan. This comprehensive communication shed light on issues such as extrajudicial killings, intelligence agencies' role, and the judicial system's failure. Regrettably, Pakistan has not responded to this communication even after three years.

In light of these findings, we earnestly implore the UN Human Rights Council to:

1. Conduct thorough investigations into enforced disappearances in Sindh, leveraging the framework of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID).
2. Urge the Government of Pakistan to adhere to its international obligations and ensure accountability for these human rights violations.
3. Establish a mechanism to monitor Pakistan's compliance with international human rights treaties, particularly concerning enforced disappearances.

4. Provide support to the families of the disappeared and ensure justice for victims, including through appropriate reparations.
5. Raise international awareness about the human rights situation in Sindh, highlighting the issue of enforced disappearances.

We call upon the Council to recognize the severity of this situation and take decisive actions to protect the rights and lives of the people in Sindh, ensuring that justice is served, and the cycle of impunity is broken.

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