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**Press Statement**

**ICAED Calls on Governments to End Practice of Enforced Disappearances**

**August 30, 2024**

**[Geneva, Switzerland]:** On the occasion of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, the International Coalition against Enforced Disappearance (ICAED) calls on states and the United Nations to take immediate and concrete steps to end the practice of enforced disappearances.

Today, observed globally, is a powerful reminder of the countless lives devastated by enforced disappearances—an egregious violation of human rights that persists in societies across the world. On this day, we honor the memory of those forcibly disappeared by authoritarian regimes, whose basic rights and fundamental freedoms, along with those of their families, have been cruelly denied. We pay tribute to the strength and resilience of the families who endure this unimaginable pain, and we reaffirm our commitment to a future where enforced disappearances are no longer a grim reality. We stand in solidarity with all families and communities who continue to suffer the anguish of not knowing the fate of their loved ones.

Enforced disappearance is not just a crime against individuals; it is an attack on humanity, designed to instill fear and silence dissent. It is used as a tool of repression by states and oppressors to erase the voices of weak opposition, leaving families in a perpetual state of grief and uncertainty. According to the July 2024 report of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (UNWGEID), “since its inception in 1980, the Working Group has transmitted a total of 61,626 cases to 115 States. The number of cases under active consideration that have not yet been clarified, closed or discontinued stands at 48,619 in a total of 100 States. During the reporting period, 199 cases were clarified.”

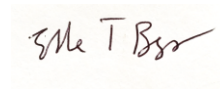
There are still significant challenges in accurately capturing the true scale of enforced disappearances. A key issue highlighted in the report is the problem of underreporting, which is caused by various factors. These include the lack of access to documentation by affected families, difficulties in reaching both local and international authorities, limited engagement with organizations that focus on enforced disappearances, and broader challenges such as militarization and displacement. These barriers often prevent families from documenting and reporting cases. The UNWGEID itself acknowledges this persistent issue, underlining the need for more effective mechanisms to ensure that all cases of enforced disappearances are brought to light and addressed.

In this context, we urge the national governments and all member states of the United Nations, regardless of whether or not they ratified the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (ICPPED), to establish monitoring and reporting mechanisms worldwide. to prevent enforced disappearances in particular countries or regions.

Likewise, we urge governments that have not yet ratified the ICPPED to do so immediately and call on those governments that have already ratified the Convention to implement it thoroughly by strengthening legal frameworks to hold perpetrators accountable and by establishing mechanisms to locate the disappeared and deliver justice to their families.

We also urge civil society, human rights organizations, and communities to remain vigilant and continue their relentless pursuit of truth and justice. The stories of the disappeared must not be forgotten, and the fight for their return and accountability for the responsible parties must persist.

Let us work together to ensure that future generations inherit a world where justice prevails and human rights are universally upheld.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edith T. Burgos". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light yellow rectangular background.

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