



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

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**Committee on Enforced Disappearances**

**First session**

**Summary record of the 8th meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 11 November 2011, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Decaux

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*The meeting was called to order at 4.45 p.m.*

**Closure of the session**

1. **The Chairperson** said that the Committee's historic inaugural session was drawing to a close. The Committee was fully operational, however, and a team of three rapporteurs would be available at all times to deal with any emergencies that arose within the Committee's mandate. Two thematic subjects had been identified, on which the Committee would carry out comparative studies and consult all stakeholders; the first was women and children in the context of enforced disappearances, and the second was the role of non-State actors and the responsibility of the State.
2. The Committee members were guardians of, and ambassadors for, the Convention which, while constituting a solid legal framework, was a complex, innovative and sophisticated instrument. The Committee would carry out its work in a spirit of continuity and consistency, building on the excellent work carried out by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, while making clear the Committee's own specific role. The Committee's approach would also be one of vigilance, not just when in session but throughout the year, and it intended to send a clear message to all States parties and NGOs to that effect. Once the Committee had received 20 or 30 State party reports, it would possibly need to hold much longer sessions. In addition, owing to the nature of its duties, the Committee would need to be able to react to emergency situations, possibly by convening extraordinary sessions. The Committee would work to establish a mechanism for country visits, so that if and when an emergency arose it would be ready to act.
3. The Committee would be drawing up a strategy of consultation with all stakeholders, a coordination strategy for its work with the Working Group and other United Nations treaty bodies, and an information strategy for communications and complaints. The Committee would also be drawing up a strategy to raise States parties' awareness of the Convention and promote its ratification, including through the provision of support to States parties in amending their national criminal and civil legislation.
4. It had been decided that a minute's silence would be observed at the start of each session to pay tribute to victims of enforced disappearance. The Committee was ready to work rigorously, and passionately, to protect possible future victims from that crime.
5. After the customary exchange of courtesies he declared the first session of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances closed.

*The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.*