

gewaltsames Verschwindenlassen

Berlin/Nürnberg, December 23rd, 2020

On December 23rd, 2010, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance entered into force. The Convention was the result of years of victims' worldwide struggle together with Human Rights Organizations. The Convention is a milestone in the fight against impunity, for the prevention of enforced disappearance and its acknowledgement as a human rights violation. For the people disappeared by force and their family members the Convention serves as the basis to claim their rights and it is protecting them. Thanks to the Convention, states are obligated to take the necessary measures in order to throw light on the crimes committed all around the globe. That includes the search for the disappeared and the constant briefing of the families regarding the process of the search and of criminal investigations.

10 years after the Convention's entry into force, 98 states have signed and 63 states ratified it. However, in many regions worldwide, enforced disappearance has remained a common practice. The crime goes along with torture, humiliation and intimidation of the victims, including their family members.

The *Koalition gegen Verschwindenlassen* (Coalition against Disappearance) is a union of Non-Governmental Organizations, academics and other persons working in this field within Germany and all over the world. We work side by side with victims of enforced disappearance and give detailed information to the German-speaking public concerning this cruel phenomenon. We want to use the occasion of the International Convention's 10th Anniversary to highlight the importance of the Convention for our work and to reaffirm our commitment to combat the crime.

We want to express our admiration to all recognized victims of the Convention, who struggle every day for their rights. They are the ones who make use of the Convention at first hand, demanding the compliance of national laws with the Convention and fight for putting it into practice – often under the threat of their own personal security. We thank the UN Committee against Enforced Disappearances for watchfully monitoring the implementation of the Convention by the member states, its interpretation and its publication.

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Convention, we ask the German Government to incorporate enforced disappearance as an independent crime within the German Criminal Code and thus follow a fundamental recommendation of the UN Committee. We also call on all states to ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and put an end to the practice of disappearance.