



The International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances - August 30th, 2021

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Belady: an Island for Humanity-- a Human Rights Organization supporting Egyptian Women & Children since 2017

Belady aims to dismantle institutionalized violence by documenting the Egyptian regime's violations against women and children and educating national and international society and decision makers about them. We also pressure and advocate amendment of legislation that codifies violations while calling upon authorities to implement overlooked laws and treaties that would ensure respect for rights and freedoms. Belady provides legal and psychological support for Egyptian women and children who have been arrested and / or imprisoned in political cases.



Introduction

Since coming to power in 2013, the Egyptian regime has begun to create a bleak record of human rights violations. These violations include cases of enforced disappearance, which the regime does not hesitate to use with anyone who thinks to oppose or even question public affairs.

Imagine armed men raiding your home in civilian clothes. Then, without giving any reasons or showing any arrest warrant, and usually without disclosing their identities or the authority under which they are acting, they take one or more of your family members using violence when necessary, and their destination is unknown...

This is the first chapter of the story of enforced disappearance!

1- What is enforced disappearance?

According to Article 2 of The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) 133/47 of December 18th, 1992.¹ "enforced disappearance is considered to be the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law."

2- Is the Egyptian citizen subjected to enforced disappearance?

According to the report "Persistent violation and absent justice" ² The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights confirmed that the number of enforced disappearances from 2015 to 2020 exceeded 2700 persons, at a rate of 10 disappearances per week. These numbers are constantly ignored and denied by the Egyptian authorities.

Those days were the worst in my life. When I was transferred to the station, I felt like I was released.

The testimony of a former forcibly disappeared Egyptian to Belady. He was 13 years old at the time of arrest. He survived 27 consecutive days of enforced disappearance during which he was subjected to different types of violations. Cairo.

3- To which violations are the forcibly disappeared subjected to in Egypt?

The enforced disappearance violates various human rights, most importantly, the right to security and dignity, the right to protection from torture and degrading treatment, the right to a fair trial and the right to life. Between 2013 and 2020, Belady observed that 461 Egyptian women and girls were subjected to enforced disappearance, out of 1,222 female political prisoners.³

I was abducted for a week at the State Security Headquarters. On the last day, the officer told me "before you go, I will give you something to remember." Then, he took out his penis and he forcibly put it into my mouth.

The testimony of a female former forcibly disappeared Egyptian to Belady. Cairo.

¹ [The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance \(ICPPED\) 133/47 of December 18th, 1992](#)

² [Persistent violation and absent justice](#)

³ [The Egyptian Imprisoned Woman between the Hammer of Iniquitous Laws and the Anvil of Systematic Violations](#)

4- Does the Egyptian Law protect its citizens from enforced disappearance? What should be done if a citizen disappears?

The Egyptian legislation did not address enforced disappearance, nor did it consider it an existing crime. It only criminalized some similar concepts, such as illegal detention, and detention in places other than the places of detention. It should be noted that these crimes can occur alone or in conjunction with enforced disappearance.

But when the disappearance occurs, you can follow the legal procedures listed below:

- **The first action you can take immediately upon the arrest of the person, is to head to the nearest telephone center and submit a telegram detailing the arrest incident. It will be directed to each of the Public Prosecutor, the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Justice and the Director of the Governorate Security. It will also be sent to the President of the Republic. This telegram can be submitted via any landline by calling 124.**
- **You can also go to the police station that covers the area where the disappearance occurred and file a complaint in order to report on the incident. Stations often refuse to edit such reports. After their refusal, you can refer to the Public Prosecution.**
- **You can head to the prosecution that covers the area where the disappearance occurred and file a report on the incident. Upon the police station's refusal, it is also possible to submit a report to the Public Prosecutor via his WhatsApp number designated to that (01111755959), or by heading to the technical office of the Public Prosecutor located in Al Rehab neighborhood in New Cairo.**
- **You can also file a complaint about the incident at the National Council for Human Rights.**
- **Finally, you can file a lawsuit before the Administrative Court of the State Council asking the Ministry of the Interior to disclose the place of detention of the disappeared person. Despite the difficulty of executing the sentences in these cases, they are strong evidence of the occurrence of disappearance. They reinforce the position of the person if he is charged with procedures or fabricated facts on a date later than the date of his arrest.**
- **Once any of these measures is taken, the complainant will be called to the prosecution to give his statement about the disappearance incident and whether there have been any developments regarding the disappeared person.**

5- What are the five measures of high priority?

Belady calls upon the Egyptian authorities to accelerate in:

- **Ratifying ICPPED and accepting the jurisdiction of the International Committee on Enforced Disappearances,**
- **Legally criminalizing enforced disappearance and ensuring that there is no impunity, given the imprescriptible nature of enforced disappearance.**
- **Prosecuting all those who contributed to, planned and carried out the crimes of enforced disappearance against Egyptian citizens,**
- **Providing reparation and compensation for the citizens who have been proven to have been subjected to enforced disappearance and the accompanying violations,**
- **Observing, enumerating and documenting violations against Egyptian citizens, including enforced disappearances in this era, and working to develop and implement a comprehensive program for transitional justice.**