



AFAD

An Overview of the Work of the Asian Federation
Against Involuntary Disappearances
2016 Report

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*“To the mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, sisters, brothers, children of the disappeared;
From whose bosom the desaparecidos were plucked;
You on whose lives, the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances;
was conceived and given birth to;
You who, in our day to day work, we link arms with;
You who have given meaning and substance to the work of our Federation;
For you and because of you, we have gone beyond geographical distance;
transcend cultural, language, religious and political barriers;
In your honor, we struggle for solidarity in its most concrete terms;
For you and equally for your beloved desaparecidos,
We dedicate this hard-earned award, which should go a long way
Towards searching for the truth;
Overcoming the obstacles to justice;
Realizing the much-cherished dream for
Reparation, Memory and Non-repetition.
This award is dedicated to all of you and your beloved disappeared.”*

(Part of the Acceptance Speech of AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso during the awarding of the Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award 2016)

AFAD's Strategic Plan: Vision, Mission and Goals

VISION

A world free from enforced disappearances and injustices.

MISSION

An Asian federation of human rights organizations advocating truth, justice, reparation and empowerment for the victims and the reconstruction of the historical memory of the disappeared towards the eradication of enforced disappearances.

GOALS

The Asian peoples understand, respect and advocate for the right not to be subjected to enforced disappearance (by preserving the collective memory of the disappeared, learning lessons from the past and reminding the new generation of the dark past of their respective history);

Improved policy and structural reforms at the international, regional and national-levels to hasten the resolution of cases, prevent or totally stop involuntary disappearances;

Enhanced capacity of AFAD members and the Secretariat to effectively convince governments to address the issue of enforced disappearances in their respective countries and in Asia (e.g. demand for redress/reparation, restitution, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition).

AFAD 2016 Organizational Report

I. Introduction

1.1 Regional Human Rights Situation

The past year has seen the continuing reign of impunity in countries where AFAD has presence. This, despite efforts of human rights and victims' organizations to call for State accountability to enforced disappearance cases and other human rights violations. In Indonesia, for instance, the end of President Jokowi's second year in office found him failing yet again to fulfil his promise of pursuing justice for the myriad atrocities perpetrated by the Suharto regime. Instead, he promoted perpetrators of these past crimes to top government positions.

In Nepal, the slow-paced and faulty transitional justice processes has not yielded any substantive progress towards achieving justice for the victims of the civil war atrocities. The widely-known torture case involving an official of the Nepali Army, Col. Lama, was decided by a UK Court in favour of the perpetrator, contributing to the already widespread impunity in the country.

Many countries like the Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India (Kashmir) saw an upsurge of State violence. President Duterte's War on Drugs has spawned almost 6,000 extrajudicial killings and at least six reported enforced disappearances. The military justice in Pakistan has robbed many civilians of their right to due process. In Bangladesh, 70 people were allegedly disappeared between January and October 2016. The July protests in Kashmir were met with violence by Indian security forces, resulting in the extrajudicial execution of 100 civilians, and injuring more than 15,000 persons, about 4,500 of whom sustained injuries by the Indian military's indiscriminate shooting of pellet shotguns.

In these contexts, it is the human rights defenders who face the most intense of reprisals from the State for the work that they do. The case of the AFAD Chairperson, Khurram Parvez, is a prime example of how States would stop at nothing to silence dissenters and critiques of their atrocities. In Timor-Leste, members of *Asosiasiaun* HAK were harassed by security forces as the former were planning for a peaceful demonstration during President Jokowi's visit to Dili. President Duterte unequivocally declared that human rights advocates and defenders, and lawyers of drug lords may be the next target of summary executions as he accused them of obstructing his war on drugs.

It is unfortunate that with the sorry state of human rights in Asia, specifically in countries where AFAD member-organizations are based, the work of AFAD is as relevant as ever. The intention to render the work of AFAD irrelevant is far from being realized.

1.2 Organizational Situation

1.2.1 Membership

AFAD has thirteen (14) member organizations as of year 2016. The present member-organizations and the Executive Council supported the return of former AFAD member-organization in the Philippines, the Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND). The official list of AFAD member-organizations are as follows:

Country	Member-Organization
Bangladesh	1. Odhikar
Kashmir	2. Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP)
Indonesia	3. KontraS: The Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence 4. IKOHI: Association of Families of the Disappeared
Nepal	5. Advocacy Forum 6. Conflict Victims' Society for Justice (CVSJ)
Pakistan	7. Defence of Human Rights (DHR)
Philippines	8. Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND) and 9. Free Jonas Burgos Movement (FJBM)
South Korea	10. Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR)
Sri Lanka	11. Families of the Disappeared (FOD)
Thailand	12. Justice for Peace Foundation (JPF) and 13. Relatives Committee of the May 1992 Heroes (RCMH)
Timor-Leste	14. <i>Asosiasaun</i> HAK

1.2.2 The AFAD Council and Executive Council

The current composition of the AFAD Council and Executive Council are as follows:

AFAD Executive Council Members		
Name	Position	Country
Khurram Parvez	Chairperson	Kashmir
Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso	Secretary-General	Philippines
Sri Suparyati	Treasurer	Indonesia
*Nilda Lagman-Sevilla	Expanded EC member	Philippines
*Amina Masood Janjua	Expanded EC member	Pakistan

AFAD Council Members		
Name	Organization	Country
Adilur Rahman Khan	Odhikar	Bangladesh
Zahir Din	APDP	Kashmir
Muhamad Daud	IKOHI	Indonesia
Yati Andriyani	KontraS	Indonesia

Chudamani Acharya	AF	Nepal
Janak Raut	CVSJ	Nepal
Amina Masood Janjua	DHR	Pakistan
Nilda Lagman-Sevilla	FIND	Philippines
Edita T. Burgos	FJBM	Philippines
Joanna Hosaniak	NKHR	South Korea
Brito Fernando	FOD	Sri Lanka
Sisto dos Santos	HAK	Timor-Leste
Ng Shui Meng	Individual member	Lao PDR

The Council conducted seven (7) electronic meetings (March 3, April 26, June 21, August 19, September 24, September 29 and November 10) in the year and there was a high level of participation from majority of the Council members. The agenda of the meetings were usually management concerns, updates regarding future plans and activities, decision-making on important and urgent issues and strategic campaign planning to respond to persecution of AFAD human rights defenders, particularly, the campaign to release AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez from illegal detention.

The Executive Council organized the conduct of performance evaluations of Secretariat staff as part of its oversight and monitoring functions, being the Personnel Committee. The EC primarily coordinated all the Council electronic meetings and it also facilitated the appointment of Sri Suparyati as the Treasurer. All coordination work between the Council and the Secretariat were communicated by the EC.

1.2.3 The Secretariat

AFAD Secretariat		
Name	Position	Status
Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso	Secretary-General	Full-time
Christian Gultia	Assistant to the Secretary-General and Fundraiser	Full-time
Toni Soriano	Administrative Officer	Full-time
Maria Elizabeth Guzman	Finance Officer	Full-time
Sara La Rocca	Regional Campaign Officer	Full-time
Ivanka Custodio	Regional Research and Documentation Officer	Full-time
Ron de Vera	Philippine Project Coordinator	Full-time
Amy Viña	Bookkeeper	Full-time
Jaime Getanis	General Services Staff	Full-time
Bogie Bobis	Social Media Staff	Part-time

The Secretariat continued to be the center for service and coordination vis-à-vis the whole AFAD structure. The Office of the Secretary General leads the coordination with all

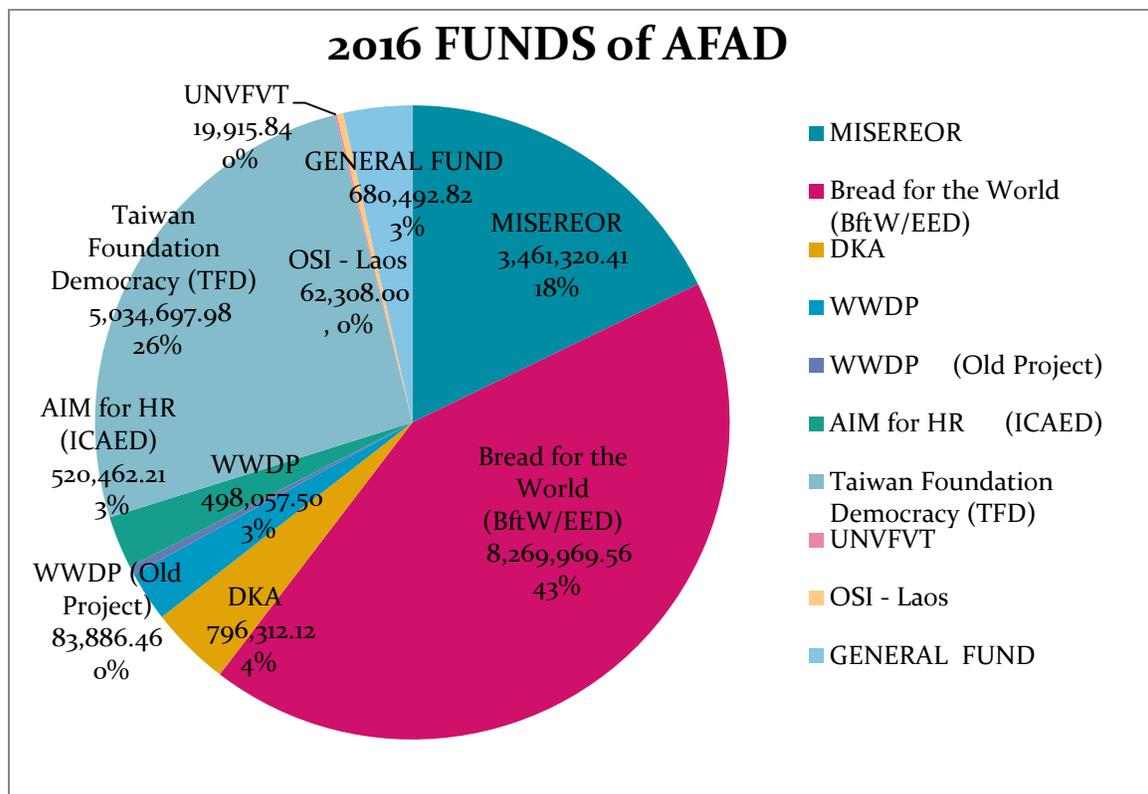
Secretariat members, Executive Council members, Council members and ICAED Steering Committee. In cooperation with the Council and Executive Council, it assisted in facilitating that boxes in the whole structure march in step towards the same direction. The Secretariat also relates with regional and international networks outside of AFAD for various purposes.

The Secretariat also coordinated implementation of AFAD projects and programs.

1.2.4 Organizational Financial Statement

The 2016 AFAD financial statement is reflected in the attached Institutional Audit Report.

1.2.5 Project and Program Funding in 2016



The Bread for the World primarily supports the comprehensive regional and international campaign and lobby work. The Misereor funds the Philippine project on enforced disappearance. The DKA Austria supports AFAD’s organizational and administrative needs, including capacity-building and support to other activities. The remaining donated funds from Aim for Human Rights are used to support the work in the International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED). The Women’s World Day of Prayer supports research and documentation including projects on victim and women empowerment.

II. AFAD in 2016: A Continuing Struggle for Truth and Justice

1. Regional Campaign and Lobby

AFAD's regional campaign and lobby is supported by Bread for the World and is being implemented by AFAD and its member-organizations in 9 countries, namely: Bangladesh, Jammu and Kashmir, South Korea, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. The project period covers January 2015 to December 2018.

The implementation of the regional campaign and lobby program was characterized by (1) changes in the political situation of some countries which may facilitate or make it difficult for human rights defenders and organizations to operate, (2) signing and ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Convention) by some countries and (3) the drafting of domestic laws criminalizing enforced disappearances in some countries.

1.1 Public Awareness

- The production of *The Voice*, AFAD's publication and its distribution to AFAD network.
- The conduct of traditionally-commemorated activities was maximized as one of the most impactful public awareness campaign. AFAD and its member-organizations completed the commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared, International Day of the Disappeared and the International Human Rights Day.
- Others: AFAD was able to release a number of open letters, solidarity statements and urgent appeals throughout the year. The Federation also prioritized its social media presence by ensuring that its social media fan pages and websites were updated.

1.2 Campaigns

- Country profiles were created to make sure that the Federation can keep an eye on country-specific and regional human rights situations. The country profiles are continuously being updated.
- The *#ReleaseKhurramCampaign* caught the attention of human rights defenders, media agencies and the international community. It was launched as a solidarity campaign to ask the Kashmiri police authorities to release the then illegally detained AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez.

1.3 Lobbying

- AFAD, through its Campaign Officer, visited Timor-Leste in June and Sri Lanka in October for lobbying purposes. The Campaign Officer was able to visit the Office

of the Ombudsman, the UN Human Rights Office, and International Committee of the Red Cross, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Embassy and the victims' organization in Dili, Timor-Leste. In Sri Lanka, the AFAD team joined the National Commemoration of the Disappeared on October 27. The team also visited the office of the Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) and the Families of the Disappeared (FOD).

- AFAD also actively engaged during the 33rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council (UN HRC) in September. AFAD team which was led by the Secretary-General and the Project Coordinator for the Philippines and joined by two members of the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons also met with the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearance (CED) and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID). The team was able to hold public activities as well during the sessions and delivered oral interventions during the official sessions of the UN HRC. In view of the arrest and detention of AFAD Chairperson, Khurram Parvez, the AFAD delegation also met with the UN Special Rapporteur on Arbitrary Detention and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders.
- At the beginning of the year, AFAD gathered all its campaign staff in the countries to come up with a synchronized and strategic campaign plan. It was also an opportunity to meet with other regional formation that are based in Bangkok, Thailand.

1.4 Solidarity Activities

- AFAD initiated solidarity activities for fellow human rights defenders in Bangladesh during the IWD and the meeting of campaign staff.' AFAD also participated in a Solidarity Conference for Bangladesh which was initiated by Forum Asia. The said conference was held in Bangkok, Thailand in May.
- An act of solidarity for disappeared Lao Magsaysay Awardee Sombath Somphone was also conducted during the IWD, ASEAN Peoples Forum held in Timor Leste in August and Sombath anniversary.
-

Meeting with regional organizations in Thailand

In May, AFAD had a meeting with regional human rights organizations that are based in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting served as an avenue to discuss regional cooperation and solidarity in terms of campaign and strategy. The AFAD team also took the opportunity to meet with the Embassy of Sweden in Thailand to discuss possible cooperation.



AFAD Secretary-General Ms. Mary Aileen Bacalso and Campaign Officer Ms. Sara La Rocca with the representatives of human rights organizations based in Thailand join the call to surface Lao development worker, Sombath Somphone.

Monitoring and lobby to Timor-Leste

In June, Campaign Officer Ms. Sara La Rocca visited AFAD member-organization in Timor-Leste, the HAK. She also visited the Ombudsman Office, the UN Human Rights Office and the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Campaign Officer Ms. Sara La Rocca and AFAD Council Member Sisto dos Santos in the office of the Ombudsman.



Campaign Officer Ms. Sara La Rocca presenting the Primer on the Convention to representatives of UN Human Rights Office in Dili.

Training with the UPR Info



Campaign Staff and other participants with Ms. Emilie Pradichit of the UPR Info.

In July, during the meeting of the campaign staff, a special session on how to maximize the Universal Periodic Review Process (UPR) was also conducted.

Solidarity events during the annual campaign staff meeting

During the campaign staff meeting, participants also showed solidarity with fellow human rights defenders in Bangladesh and in Kashmir.



Participants dedicating a moment of silence for fellow human rights defenders in Bangladesh.



Participants holding the photos of disappeared persons in Kashmir.

Solidarity Campaign for the release of Khurram Parvez



Secretariat staff call for the immediate release of AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez from illegal detention.



AFAD and FIND delivering a letter to the Indian Embassy in Manila to ask for the release of Khurram Parvez.



AFAD Secretariat joins the “Empty Chair” campaign which seeks to give emphasis on the absence of Khurram Parvez in AFAD.

Campaign visit to Sri Lanka

Campaign Officer Sara La Rocca and DHR Chairperson Amina Masood visited the Families of the Disappeared (FOD) in Sri Lanka from Oct. 25-29. They joined the national commemoration for the Disappeared on Oct. 27 and they also met the families of the disappeared.



Sara La Rocca and Amina Masood joined Brito Fernando and the families of the disappeared in the commemoration of the National Day of the Disappeared in Sri Lanka.

Anniversary of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance

AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso was invited by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearance to participate in the commemoration of the anniversary of the Convention.



Ms. Mary Aileen Bacalso together with members of the UN CED.

Conference of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance in Morocco

In February, the UN WGEID held a conference in relation to the possibility of including cases perpetrated by non-state actors in cases of enforced disappearance in its mandate. AFAD team which was led by Chairperson Khurram Parvez and Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso submitted AFAD's official position paper on the matter.



AFAD team with the members of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

Conference on Argentina in Berlin, Germany

Upon the invitation of Bread for the World, AFAD Secretary-General participated in a conference focusing on the human rights situation in Argentina. She shared the experiences in the Philippines and the human rights situation in the country. She was also able to meet the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Germany.



Participants during the conference organized by Bread for the World in Berlin, Germany.

AFAD's participation to the 33rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Objectives: (1) The Philippine State signs and ratifies, if not accedes to the Convention; (2) AFAD, FIND create favorable conditions in the executive branch (DFA, DOJ, PHRC, etc.) that will lead to signature, ratification and if not, accession to the Convention; (3) Philippines acts on cases submitted by FIND and FJBM, at least, in order to ensure impartial investigation; (4) the government invites the UN WGEID to conduct an official visit to the Philippines; (5) The Philippine government carries out full and strict implementation of the law, including full conduct and speedy handling of investigations, prosecution and conviction and reparations.

Activities: MEETING WITH THE STATES



In photo: AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso and Philippine Country Coordinator Ron De Vera present the Philippine UPR Stakeholder Report to the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the UN in Geneva.





In photo: AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso, Philippine Country Coordinator Ron De Vera and ICAED intern Eleanor Doig at the Embassy of Lithuania in Geneva.

AFAD team was able to meet with the Permanent Missions of the **Philippines, Germany, the Netherlands and the**

United States of America as well in between the actual sessions.

Activities: MEETING WITH UN REPRESENTATIVES

The AFAD team also took the lobbying with the UN representatives under the UN Human Rights Council. They met with the following: Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Secretariat of the Committee on Enforced Disappearance, Secretariat of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Secretariat of the UN Human Rights Council and staff of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.



In photo: Meeting with the Secretariat of the UN Human Rights Council and staff of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

SIDE EVENT ON THE STATE OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES IN THE PHILIPPINES



In photo: AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso presenting the Philippine situation in the side event entitled “The State of Enforced Disappearances in the Philippines”.

SIDE EVENT ON DRUG RELATED EXTRA-JUDICIAL EXECUTION IN INDONESIA AND THE PHILIPPINES



In photo: Presenters during the side event on drug-related extrajudicial killings in the Philippines and Indonesia.

SIDE EVENT ON THE IMPACT OF ED ON WOMEN



In photo: Presenters during the side event on the impact of enforced disappearance on women.

SIDE EVENT ON SITUATION OF ED IN SRI LANKA



In photo: Presenters during the side event on the situation of enforced disappearance in Sri Lanka.

ORAL INTERVENTION ON BANGLADESH



In photo: AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso delivering AFAD and Odhikar's oral intervention on Bangladesh.

RELEASE KHURRAM CAMPAIGN IN GENEVA



In photo: AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Bacalso, intern Eleanor Doig and other delegates join the "Release Khurram Parvez" campaign".

Outputs:

1. Twenty-five states, including the Philippines, were made aware of our stakeholder report as well as our recommendations
2. Five offices of the UN (UN WGEID, CED, HRC Secretariat, UN WGAD, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders) made aware of our stakeholder report and recommendations
3. Among states, some (unable to count) committed to coordinate with their capital in terms of including our recommendations and suggested questions when they participate in the review of the Philippines

States that received the Stakeholder Report:

Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Philippines, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Timor-Leste, UK and U.S.A.

2. INTERNATIONAL WORK: INTERNATIONAL COALITION AGAINST ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES (ICAED)

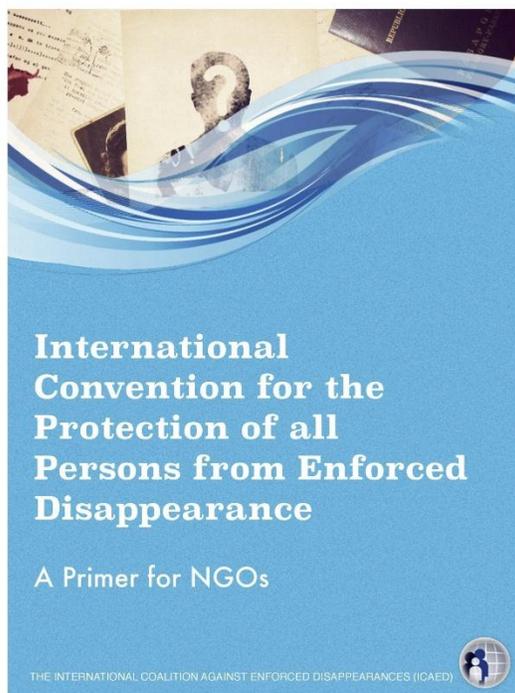
The International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED) is a coalition of 56 civil society organizations from all regions of the world. It is primarily headed by a Steering Committee composed of regional and sub-regional organizations of families of the disappeared. The functioning of the Steering Committee, however, is facilitated by a Focal Point. Presently, the Asian Federation Against Enforced Disappearances (AFAD) functions as the Focal Point. Individually, these civil society organizations work on a wide range of human rights issues. Collectively, ICAED focuses on the eradication of the phenomenon of enforced disappearance through its mandate to campaign for the universal ratification and implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the recognition of the competence of the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

In 2016, ICAED released statements during the traditionally-commemorated activities: **International Week of the Disappeared (IWD)**, **International Day of the Disappeared (IDD)** and **International Human Rights Day**.

On June 21, 2016, ICAED submitted a report of its activities to the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances. The report covered the period of the second half of 2015 up to the first half of 2016. Some of the major activities included in the report:

I. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

1. **Primer on the Convention** – ICAED launched a comprehensive Primer on the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances for both governments and NGOs. The primers were initially distributed to the networks of ICAED during the 30th Session of the UN Human Rights Council and it was also sent electronically to ICAED members. The primer may also be downloaded from the website of ICAED. (http://www.icaed.org/uploads/media/Primer_on_the_Convention_NGOs.pdf)



2. **The Abduction and Trial of Jestina Mukoko: The Fight for Human Rights in Zimbabwe** – In April 2016, Zimbabwe Peace Project National Director Ms. Jestina Mukoko published a book about her disappearance and torture in the hand of government agents in 2008. The book aims to retell the existing human rights violations in Africa. The book will soon be available online.

II. TRADITIONALLY-COMMEMORATED ACTIVITIES

1. **International Week of the Disappeared (May 2016)** – ICAED members from across the globe conducted simultaneous activities during the commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared (IWD) in 2015 and 2016. Through the ICAED focal point, the Coalition also released its official statement in relation to the commemoration. The statement is available in English, Spanish, French, and Russian, and can be viewed either through the ICAED website homepage, or through the link below.

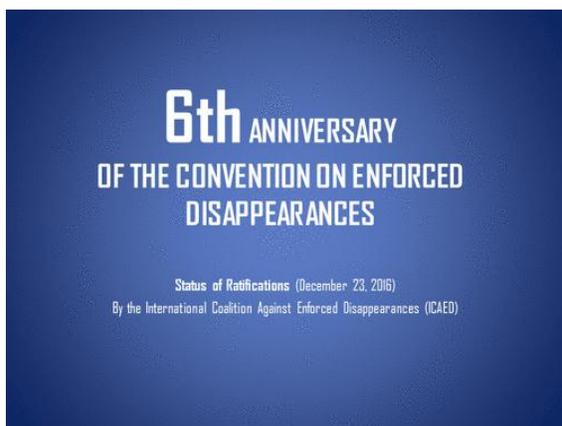
(http://icaed.org/fileadmin/user_upload/IWD_Statement_of_the_ICAED_English.pdf)

With the support and dissemination of the ICAED Steering Committee member Zimbabwe Peace Project, the IWD statement of May 2016 was also featured in a news article in Zimbabwe.

(<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2016/05/26/come-legislation-enforced-disappearances/>)

2. **International Day of the Disappeared 2016** – ICAED members in Asia and some Latin American countries such as Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and El Salvador, Uruguay commemorated synchronized events during the traditionally commemorated activities on August 30. ICAED statements translated to Spanish, Russian and French were distributed during this occasion.

3. **International Human Rights Day** – On International Human Rights Day, ICAED release a statement and a set of infographics explaining the current status of ratification from all the regions.



The infographics containing the Status of Ratification of States may be viewed and downloaded from the link:

<http://www.icaed.org/the-convention/>

III. **LOBBYING WORK**

1. **Thank You Letters** – ICAED commended countries who have manifested support to the Convention – be it active lobbying, actual signing, ratification, and recognition of the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances. Recently, ICAED commended the Government of Sri Lanka for signing, ratifying, and recognizing the competence of the CED on May 26, 2016.

https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-16&chapter=4&lang=en

2. **Meeting with the Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) in Bratislava**

ICAED Steering Committee members Mr. Ewoud Plate and Ms. Michelle Kissenkoetter represented the coalition to a meeting with the Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM). The meeting was coordinated by the European External Action Service (EAAS) and the meeting served as an avenue for ICAED to present the global situation of enforced disappearances as well as the responses of the States to solve the issue. The status of ratification by States was also discussed and a strategic proposal on how to campaign for universal ratification was presented by ICAED.

3. Campaign for the release of Khurram Parvez

The international community also supported the campaign to call for the immediate release of AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez. From sending letter to embassies, press releases and to social media campaigns, organizations and individuals from Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Chile, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Spain and Venezuela contributed in different ways to the successful campaign for the release of Khurram.



Members of the Comision Nacional



Members of the FEDEFAM joining the international campaign to call for the release of Khurram Parvez.

3. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CAMPAIGN

3.1 PHILIPPINES

The project entitled “**Anti-Enforced Disappearances Advocacy Work through Human Rights Education, Stakeholder Participation and Lobbying**” is a three-year project (January 2016-December 2018) being generously supported by Misereor. The overall goal of the project is to eradicate the practice of enforced disappearances and to protect human rights in the Philippines. The project objectives include:

- Political decision-makers and relevant government institutions pay more attention to the issue of enforced disappearances and take appropriate action to fight this problem effectively.
- A network of support groups and individuals is established and actively participates in the popularization of the anti-enforced disappearances campaign and in expanding the network of human rights defenders supporting the campaign.

The components of the project include: documentation, advocacy, conducting campaigns, lobbying activities, capacity development, establishment of a support network, networking and solidarity activities, human rights education and Breaking Impunity-activities.

The period may also be characterized by the following bullet points:

- ✓ In contrast with the first two Philippine projects where only FIND was involved, this is the first time FJBM will be formally involved in the Philippine project.
- ✓ The first half of the year coincides with the peak of the national campaign period as well as the transition of the new administration.
- ✓ The victory of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and his pronouncements have made the human rights community concerned with safety and security.

The second half of the year was marked with events which the human rights community reacted strongly to such as:

- ✓ The Supreme Court’s decision to allow the burial of the late dictator Marcos in the Heroes’ Cemetery including the unannounced burial of Marcos in the said cemetery.
- ✓ The moves of the current administration to lower the age of criminal liability from 15 to 9.
- ✓ The moves of the current administration to reinstate the death penalty.

3.1.1 Documentation

An exhumation mission was facilitated in Baguio City but the remains were not recovered. A compilation of selected exhumation reports was produced. It was initially collated by FIND. 164 cases were also encoded into the database surpassing the initial expectation of 150 cases. Four (4) new cases were also documented/gathered from field documentation

by FIND. Possible extraction of DNA samples shall be discussed in the next year of implementation.

3.1.3 Public Information

FIND started drafting a comprehensive paper on national situation with particular focus on enforced disappearances. The paper is expected to be released in time for the second State of the Nation Address of President Duterte in 2017. Traditionally-commemorated activities were also observed. During the IWD, a kite-flying family day for the families of the disappeared was celebrated.

The website which tracks the data on enforced disappearances cases in the Philippines is still up. It shall be updated once the data from the political mapping by the PLCPD has been secured.

The Philippine Project Coordinator, together with FIND, visited the University of the Philippines – Baguio, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University for a film showing and lecture/discussion on ED.

3.1.4 Advocacy: Campaign targeted at various sectors

AFAD, FIND and FJBM facilitated a truth-telling session during the *Kalbaryo ng Kawalan ng Katarungan* or Calvary of Injustice and during All Souls' Day.

The directory of all networks, including lawyers and government agencies, is continuously being updated.

3.1.5 Advocacy: Lobby Work

AFAD made its last ditch efforts to convince the then outgoing Philippine President Benigno Aquino III to sign and ratify the Convention. AFAD wrote to the Philippine Missions in Geneva and New York for coordination. Letters from the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Cong. Edcel Lagman and ICAED were also sent to the former President. AFAD also wrote letters to States Parties requesting the latter to support the last ditch efforts to ask outgoing President Aquino to sign the Convention.

AFAD also visited five (5) embassies in Manila and was able to meet with more than 20 Permanent Representatives during the visit at the 33rd Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland.

3.1.5 Capacity Development

The Philippine Project Coordinator participated in a training by FORUM ASIA on the ASEAN. The Coordinator also actively joined the ASEAN Peoples' Forum in Timor-Leste

3.1.6 Establishment of Support Network

AFAD, FIND and FJBM visited five (5) congregations in Baguio City (Pink Sisters Convent, Little Flower Convent, Daughter of St. Paul Media Center, Society of the Divine Word and Good Shepherd Convent) in line with its agenda to network with key religious leaders.

3.1.7 Human Rights Education

One module on basic human rights education was produced. Two educational discussions were facilitated by the AFAD Secretariat with the support of FIND. Meeting with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd) needs to be followed up.

3.1.8 Breaking Impunity

A motion for reconsideration on the case of the PICOP6 was filed. A case conference was conducted on the Daryl Fortuna case.

3.2 BANGLADESH

As part of the Campaign work, Odhikar gathers information on enforced disappearance through its countrywide network of local human rights defenders and includes them in its monthly human rights monitoring reports. Such information and reports were disseminated to the media and national and international networks. Case studies and updated information on enforced disappearance were incorporated into Odhikar's human rights reports and also published in the newspapers. This part of the activity raised awareness among the people and highlighted the significance for the ratification of the Convention. This has also created a wider scope to address the issue in favor of the ratification campaign.

Communication with the UN WGEID

Two cases were submitted to the UN WGEID during this reporting period using its standard communication form to consider actions under the 'Urgent Appeal' and 'Urgent Action' procedures. Odhikar also submitted its position paper on the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

Commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared

To commemorate the International Week of the Disappeared on the last week of May every year, Odhikar in collaboration with the families of the disappeared, organized several events, including human chains, press conferences and issued statements between 24 – 26 May 2016.



The families of the disappeared in collaboration with Odhikar organize a human chain in front of the National Press Club, Dhaka to mark the International Week of the Disappeared.



Odhikar President Professor Dr. C. R. Abrar expresses solidarity in a human chain to demand the return of the disappeared victims.

Observation of the International Day of the Disappeared (IDD)

On August 30, 2016, Odhikar organized a meeting to commemorate the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances where the families of the disappeared attended and gave their testimonials. It also issued a statement on this occasion and disseminated to the media and national and international networks.



Participants discuss the phenomenon of enforced disappearance in a meeting by Odhikar during the International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Submission to the UN Human Rights Council

As part of the campaign and lobby, Odhikar submitted oral statements to the 33rd regular session of the UN Human Rights Council under interactive dialogues on agenda item 3 – Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the WGEID and the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery; and under general debate on agenda item 4 – Human Rights situation that require the Council’s attention. AFAD Secretary-General Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso also delivered an oral intervention on the situation of Bangladesh during the same occasion. She also presented in a side event, the situation of women family members in Bangladesh and in other Asian countries where AFAD has members.

Commemoration of the International Human Rights Day

To commemorate the International Human Rights Day, Odhikar organized a discussion meeting at its office on December 10, 2016 which was attended by the families of the victims of enforced disappearance, torture and extrajudicial killing and other stakeholders, who presented statement. Odhikar also issued a statement on this occasion and disseminated to the media and national and international networks. In addition, Odhikar’s network of human rights defenders organized protest rallies, human chains and discussions in 10 districts against human rights violations and the alarming trend of enforced disappearances, on International Human Rights Day



Local human rights defenders associated with Odhikar rally in Khulna on the occasion of Human Rights Day on 10 December 2016.

3.3 INDONESIA

In his second year in office, President Jokowi has yet again failed to fulfil his promise of resolving past crime issues. He justified his failure through the following: the threat of political destabilization by individual perpetrators and institutions that are

linked to past crimes, prioritization of economic development and the corresponding human rights violations against activists who resist development aggression, and the misalignment of legal reform packages to international human rights standards.

As a result, human rights violations committed under the Suharto regime continue to be unresolved. Perpetrators of the violations have been largely met with impunity– some of them have even been selected to assume vital positions in the government.

9th Anniversary of *Kamisan*

The rally performed every Thursday by the victims, students, and human rights organizations front the State Palace already had its 9th anniversary. The victims were using umbrellas and aprons with cases written on them. At the end of the rally, the victims gave white roses to the policemen who were standing.

Audience with Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah-DPD)



This audience asking the role of Regional Representative Council in resolving past abuses. Chairman Irman Gusman promises to make a team consist of experts to solve the cases.



Audience with General Director of Multilateral in Foreign Ministry (10 March)

The audience asking the role of the Foreign Ministry in the reunification of disappeared Timorese children with their biological families.

Press Conference: International Day for the Right to the Truth



A press conference and rally during the commemoration of the International Day of Truth in the middle of government's inability to resolve past cases. The press release can be accessed through: <http://www.kontras.org/home/index.php?module=pers&id=2256>

Victims and CSOs Consolidation on the National Symposium to Unfold the 1965 Tragedy



Victims and civil society organizations gather to prepare for the National Symposium to unfold the 1965 tragedy.

Public Discussion on Local TRC in Aceh Province



More than 80 participants discuss the selection of candidates for the Aceh Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Press Conference “Tolak Gelar Pahlawan Soeharto”



KontraS, IKOHI and victims in a press conference object to the government's idea to give authoritarian leader Suharto the title "national hero.. Suharto committed gross human rights violations and massive corruption during his leadership in Indonesia.

Commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared



Victims, families, students, human rights activist and journalists gather to raise enforced disappearance in the Kamisan Thursday Rally.

Cultural Stage "Uncover the Smoke in 1998 Tragedy".



Young people gather as audience to the cultural stage which tackles past human rights abuses and unresolved cases.

Public Lecture on Human Rights: City, Memory and History of Violence in Indonesia.



Journalists and victims gather to attend a public lecture on human rights on the occasion of the International Week of the Disappeared.

Kamisan on Indonesia's Independence Day



Young people and human rights activist protest during the commemoration of the 71st anniversary of Indonesian independence.

Press Conference on the decision of the Constitutional Court.



KontraS and families of victims respond to the decision of the Constitutional Court on the Human Rights Court Law through a press conference.

Audience with the Ministry of Law, Ministry of Interior and the Presidential Staff Office



In cooperation with AJAR and KPK-Aceh, KontraS and IKOHI join the audience to the Ministry of Law, the Ministry of Interior and the Presidential Staff. The meeting focuses of the strengthening of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an institution.

Campaign for the release of AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez.



KontraS and IKOHI at a solidarity protest in front of the Indian embassy in Indonesia to demand for the release of AFAD Chairperson Khurram Parvez.

3.4 KASHMIR

The government did little in 2015 to implement promises by newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi to improve respect for religious freedom, protect the rights of women and children, and end abuses against marginalized. The northeastern state of Tripura revoked the draconian Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), citing a decline in insurgency. However, it remains in force in Jammu and Kashmir and in other northeastern states. AFSPA has been widely criticized by rights groups and numerous independent commissions have recommended repealing or amending the law, but the government has not done so in the face of stiff army opposition.

A 2015 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary, or Arbitrary executions noted that “impunity remains a serious problem” and expressed regret that India had not repealed or at least radically amended AFSPA.

Proposed police reforms again stalled in 2016 even as police committed serious violations including arbitrary arrests, torture, and extrajudicial “encounter” killings. In April, police killed 20 men in the forests of Andhra Pradesh, alleging they were smugglers and claiming they fired in self-defense. On the same day, five terrorism suspects in Telangana state were killed in custody as they were being transported from jail for a court hearing. Investigations are pending in both cases; rights groups say there is evidence that police staged both sets of killings.

Based from Human Rights Watch Report of 2016, nearly 600 people died in Indian police custody from 2009 to 2015 – many of them after being tortured. Police regularly disregard arrest procedures and they torture detained people to death. The police often blame such deaths on suicide or illness. Citing government data, the report said 97 people died in police custody in 2015. In 67 of those cases, the suspects died within 24 hours of being arrested or authorities failed to take the suspects before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest, as required by law. (Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/country-chapters/india>)

Jammu and Kashmir is one of the worst conflict hit areas in India. Since the inception of the armed conflict in 1989, more than 70,000 civilians have been killed, 8000+ have been subjected to enforced disappearances, hundreds and thousands have been tortured during illegal detentions. Besides this, Kashmiri people have witnessed hundreds and thousands of incidents of sexual violence, forced labor, damage to civilian property and other forms of human rights abuses.

The Indian state seems to have resorted to a systematic and institutional repression to retain Jammu and Kashmir as a part of India. The human rights abuses have mostly been carried by the military and paramilitary forces in the name of neutralizing armed insurgency. More than 700,000 armed forces equipped with impunity laws like Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), Disturbed Areas Act, Public Safety Act, and other draconian laws have been controlling the lives of the noncombatant Kashmiris and have resorted to various forms of violence to choke the voice of dissent, therefore infringing almost all the fundamental rights of Kashmiris. Existence of military and paramilitary posts and camps lead to various forms of

human rights violations. Most of the camps since the beginning of conflict have been used as torture and interrogation centers and have badly affected the routine life of communities. Indian forces have been accused (by Kashmiri, Indian and international rights groups) of human rights abuses against civilians since 1989.

Repressive mechanisms have been unleashed upon the Kashmiris: violent dispersals of peaceful gatherings (including funeral processions and public prayers), shutdown of telecommunication and internet services and an intense crackdown on media.

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The Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) continued its campaign with more vehemence and diligence. The efforts were made to lobby and network with various rights groups and individuals at the community level. The activities were conducted to build pressure on the government concerning the impending issue of human rights violations particularly phenomenon of enforced disappearances in Jammu and Kashmir.

The association, through its unrelenting campaign, demanded for an impartial investigation into all the cases of enforced disappearances and the prosecutions of perpetrators in Jammu and Kashmir. APDP emphasized on the mass awareness about the issue of enforced disappearance and continued to question the reluctance of the Indian government for conducting probe into all the cases of enforced disappearances in Jammu & Kashmir. Further, APDP made efforts to strengthen its capacity and expanding its campaign against enforced disappearances by engaging students, rights activists, academicians and other community members. Besides this, the association continued its documentation of disappearances cases for strengthening its database for the ongoing struggle.

Since April, many interns from various colleges and universities of India got associated with the association and also one intern from United States also worked for APDP for more than a month. The interns were assigned to assist in the documentation work. The interns, along with the APDP staff, adjusted more than 100 documented case testimonies of enforced disappearances to fit into the UN WGEID Complaint format.

On April 20, the 12th Martyrdom of rights activist Aasia Jeelani (staffer of APDP who was martyred in a land mine explosion in 2004 during a field trip to north Kashmir), the association organized, prayers sessions at the gravesite of Aasia Jeelani. On the occasion, special prayers were offered in favor of Aasia Jeelani. The association also recognized her excellent work in the struggle against disappearances. APDP staff, some family members and some activists participated in the event. After the prayers the participants visited the house of Aasia Jeelani and expressed solidarity with her family.

In the last week of May, to commemorate the IWD, APDP held a public protest outside Press Enclave of Srinagar. More than 30 members from different families of disappeared hailing

from various parts of Kashmir gathered at the place. Carrying posters, placards, banners, the members raised slogans and demanded truth and justice for the disappeared and also urged the government to prosecute perpetrators of enforced disappearances and extra-judicial executions.

The participants circulated a written message among the public and media wherein it was stated that the Indian State continues to remain in denial of the ongoing international movement against enforced disappearances. It has signed but not ratified the Convention against disappearances. Following the commission of widespread and systematic enforced disappearances, the Indian State has chosen to protect itself and its own forces by disregarding the very existence of the crime of disappearance itself.

Concerning the number of enforced disappearances, the association disseminated that it has recorded 1,536 cases of enforced disappearances. According to conservative estimates, and extrapolating from existing documentation, more than 8,000 people have been subjected to enforced disappearances in Jammu and Kashmir since 1989. There are 7000+ unmarked and mass graves in Kashmir. Despite APDP's consistent campaign from the last 22 years, no action has been taken. No Commission of Inquiry as demanded was set up, no investigations or no prosecutions have been made due to continued legal impunity in Jammu and Kashmir. The connected issue of unmarked and mass graves in Jammu and Kashmir, which was recognized by the State Human Rights Commission [SHRC] in 2011, 2,156 graves in three districts of North Kashmir], and the European Parliament in its resolution in July 2008, has not been addressed by the governments. The government of Jammu and Kashmir has refused to accept the recommendations of SHRC for comprehensive forensic investigations into all the unmarked and mass graves. The Indian state so far seems to be in complete denial for tracing the whereabouts of thousands of disappeared people in Kashmir and in providing justice to their victimized families.

Inviting the attention of media, the participants emphasized that since 2012, through reports and campaigns, the APDP has begun a concerted work on identifying and shaming State personnel accused of crimes including enforced disappearances. Most recently, in September 2015, the APDP with the help of its report entitled "Structures of Violence," 333 crimes were analyzed in which 972 alleged perpetrators were identified. Of these 333 crimes, 73 were related to enforced disappearance. Most importantly, this report specifically named and shamed those perpetrators who are accused of committing enforced disappearance in Jammu and Kashmir. APDP termed that this is an important exercise not just in the legal struggle against enforced disappearance but also as a part of a larger social movement against the crime of enforced disappearances.

Eventually, the protesting members urged that since the Indian federal and the J&K state governments have ignored the plight of more than two hundred thousand relatives of the disappeared persons, it is therefore, the responsibility of the international community to intervene and hold the government of India responsible. To note, India is a claimant for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, accountable for more than 8,000 cases of

enforced disappearances, for the existence of 7,000+ unmarked and mass graves and for complete denial of truth, justice and reparations in Jammu and Kashmir.

The program was accomplished successfully despite the surveillance of various security agencies. The event invited the attention of the masses and updated them about the fate of the disappeared, including their family members. In the IWD, the APDP organized a two-day tour program for the relatives of the disappeared to one of the famous tourist destinations of Kashmir. During one of the executive meetings, it was discussed that the relatives of the disappeared live a complex life in which they feel fatigued, tired and in some cases lose interest to take judicial fight. These families have been going through tough times especially so that they continue their struggle inexorably. Some of the executive members suggested that a recreational tour be organized for the distressed member families and in due course, a two-day tour was organized during the IWD. About 30 members from the families of disappeared from different parts of Kashmir were taken to the trip.

There are cases wherein the State Human Rights Commission has already made recommendations and has directed District authorities across Kashmir that the families be provided with monetary compensation i.e. ex-gratia relief of rupees 100,000 or benefit of rupees 400,000 under SRO-43 [in lieu compassionate appointment to the next of kin of the disappeared under the statutory rule]. In some cases, the police is directed to register cases in the concerned police stations. But the District authorities have always been delaying the disposal of such cases on the bases of inconsistent and baseless adverse reports of police and intelligence agencies. As a result, despite the recommendations from SHRC, most of the families are denied such interim relief.

With the help Right to Information Act-2009, the association has been seeking information from the government and its institutions regarding all encounters/ counterinsurgency operations, which the government claimed to have been held between the armed forces and militants since 1990. In response to the APDP request, huge information in the form of FIRs [First Information Report] and also other records relating to all encounter and related counter insurgency operations since 1990 have been collected from the police department of J&K.

The association has been constantly disseminating documented information on enforced disappearance among the journalists and some research scholars who have been working on their assignments and research studies. The information about the phenomenon of enforced disappearances in Jammu and Kashmir has attracted the attention of many students and academicians who have to start working on the issue for their research purposes.

The documentation work forms the bases of campaign against disappearances, as the case testimonies are being filed for legal intervention and when the state and its institutions including the judiciary fails to deliver justice. It becomes imperative to call on international community and seek their solidarity for urging government of India for investigation, prosecution, justice to the victims' of enforced disappearances.

On 8th March, the International Women's Day, member families of the disappeared held a public forum near the press enclave of Srinagar. In the event, more than 30 families

participated. During the program, the APDP members underlined the Kashmiri Women's Struggle for Truth and Justice. Through an appeal, the members emphasized that In Jammu and Kashmir, women have suffered both at the hands of the militarized occupation and the patriarchal society. Last 26 years of brutal military response against the freedom struggle in Jammu and Kashmir has increased the sufferings of the women. More than 70,000 people, mostly men have been killed, around 8,000 people subjected to enforced disappearances, thousands of women raped and molested. There are more than 1,500 wives waiting for their disappeared husbands, who are referred to as half widows due to the legal uncertainty in their lives.

The participants marked that Kashmiri women have dominated the struggle for justice in these cases of disappearances and other forms of rights violations. It is the women, who have always been the first to protest on streets, file cases in courts, campaign for justice and also sustain the memory of the sufferings.

The members reiterated that whether the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of the killed and the disappeared or the women who were raped or molested, the women in Jammu and Kashmir have shown exemplary courage in fighting against injustice. Despite the institutionalized denial of justice, the women continue their unrelenting campaign to know the truth about their disappeared loved ones and the justice for those who have been killed or wronged by the State forces.

During the forum, it was also deliberated that APDP has most of its members either mothers or wives of the disappeared, who have kept the struggle against enforced disappearances alive in Jammu and Kashmir. APDP salutes all those women of Jammu and Kashmir who have struggled for justice despite being victimized. It is their resilience, which is the bedrock of the struggle for justice and empowerment for the women of Jammu and Kashmir. The empowerment of women in Kashmir cannot happen without creating conductions for justice. In addition, the members pledged to work against patriarchy and hence reduce the vulnerability of women and give no opportunity to the Indian state to use patriarchy as a tool of repression against Kashmiris. The members pledged to stand by the women who have sacrificed for resistance and suffer at the hands of the society. The program invited the attention of many people and they got apprised to the struggle of APDP.

3.5 LAOS

Unfortunately, international organizations no longer speak strongly on the disappearance of Sombath Somphone. Sombath's vision of sustainable development is only being promoted through the Sombath Initiative of the Focus of the Global South. The online presence of Sombath Initiative is still up through its website: <http://www.sombath.org/en/>

Laos remains a hostile country where democratic processes are hampered and organizing and implementing projects are virtually impossible. Although the Laos government somehow opened its economy, its grasp to its political position remains as steadfast as ever. AFAD Council members visited Laos in December 2016 during the commemoration of Sombath's disappearance.

3.6 NEPAL

The slow-paced and faulty transitional justice processes has not yielded any substantive result but heightened the obscurity and progression of peace process. Perpetrators in conflict-era cases continue to enjoy impunity.

The widely-known torture case in a UK Court has been decided in favor of the perpetrator, Col. Lama, contributing to the already widespread impunity in the country.

Advocacy Forum (AF), in collaboration with conflict victims and like-minded human rights organizations, carried out campaign against enforced disappearance at the national and international levels. It has repeatedly urged the authority concerned to amend the TRC Act in line with Supreme Court's (SC) verdict and international standard. Furthermore, it has created consorted pressure in protecting and promoting human rights and rule of law and IN ratifying the Convention and to make the world free from enforced disappearances. AF in different fora, at national and international levels, raised the issues of existing culture of impunity and demeaning human rights situation. AF held different meetings with embassies and diplomatic communities in Kathmandu so as to update the existing human rights situation, TJ process and prevailing impunity in Nepal.

On 19 January 2016, a group of human rights activists including AF met the chairperson (Anup Raj Sharma) of National Human Rights Commission in his office. The major issues discussed were: implementation of Court's verdict on conflict era cases, entrenching impunity in Nepal, safety and security concerns of conflict victims and overall human rights situation of Nepal. He responded that NH-RC is committed to human rights and rule of Law. He reiterated that NHRC has been recommending for the revision of TRC law without which it cannot prosecute the perpetrators of conflict period.

On 25 January 2016, a group of human rights organizations had a meeting with Upendra Kanta Aryal (Inspector General of Nepal Police) mainly focusing on the excessive use of force in Terai protest. They demanded that the convicted perpetrators should be arrested and put into prison as per law. In Nepal, the convicted perpetrators, protected by the political leadership, enjoy impunity, thus posing threats to the victims and their families.

Similarly on 27 January 2016, a group of human rights activists including AF paid a visit to Khadga Prasad Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal at PM's residence. The major issues were: implementation of court's verdict, revision of TRC law, excessive use of force in Terai protest, investigations of extra-judicial killings in Terai, black marketing during border blockade, criminalization of act of torture and enforced disappearance, ratification of Rome Statute and convention against enforced disappearance and many others. PM did not respond well and he refuted the charge of excessive use of force in Terai. He mentioned that it is the battle of sovereignty and nationality hence we should compromise on democracy and rule of law in Nepal. He opined that the government is committed to the revision of TRC act in line with SC's verdict and international standard.

On 18 January 2016, a sit-in protest program was organized by Common Victims Common Platform and human rights organizations including AF. The program was mainly attended by human rights activists, conflict victims, civil society leaders, international community, lawyers, students and media persons. The program was organized in front of PM residence Baluwatar. The police intervened in the peaceful protest program and manhandled the protesters. On 19 January, when the country was marking democracy day, police arrested and detained human rights activists who were later released on the same day.

12th Anniversary of Maina Sunwar's Killing

Kathmandu, 17 February 2016: Commemorating the 12th death anniversary of Maina Sunuwar, the participants stressed to ensure prosecution to the perpetrators involved and justice to the victims' family. On 17 February 2004, a 15-year old girl, Maina was illegally detained, brutally tortured and killed by the then Royal Nepalese Army and buried inside the compound of Panchkhal Army Barracks in Kavre district.

Participants, mainly the conflict victims, human rights lawyers, civil society leaders, relatives of Maina and representatives from national and international human rights organizations expressed solidarity on Devi's (Maina's Mother) relentless struggle for truth and justice.

Devi Sunuwar said, "It has been already 12 years that we are fighting for justice for our beloved daughter Maina Sunuwar. During the course, many subsequent governments changed but no one listened to our voice for justice. The government has formed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Commission on Enforced Disappearance. However, we have no trust on these unilaterally formed commissions that already completed their first year without doing any substantial work for conflict period victims. So, there seems no end to fight for justice."

In the program, speakers advocate Pushpa Raj Poudel and Govind Sharma "Bandi" who have in-depth knowledge of Maina Sunuwar case stated that the culture of impunity posed serious threats to democracy and the rule of law in Nepal. Likewise, Suman Adhikari, chairperson of Conflict Victims Common Platform (a loose network of conflict victims) demanded to amend the TRC Act in line with the verdict of the Supreme Court. He mentioned that the conflict victims have no confidence and trust in the TRC and CIEDP commissions. In addition, he criticized that the commissions are formed to protect the perpetrators rather providing justice to the conflict victims.

Expressing solidarity with Maina's family, the four organizations Conflict Victims' Society for Justice (CVSJ), Advocacy Forum (AF), International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and Maina Bal Bikas Samitee jointly organized the program and called on the government to implement the decision of the SC on the case and ensure justice to the victims.

Implementation Letter from Working Group on Enforced Disappearance

In March 2016, Advocacy Forum-Nepal received a letter from WGEID in relation to Rajendra Chaulagain and Amar Budhathoki which were considered at 108th session held at Rabat Morocco between 8 to February 2016 and transmitted to the government of Nepal on 7 March

2016. The Working Group expressed its hope that appropriate investigation be carried out to clarify the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared persons. No further information has been received till date.

SC Denies Clemency to Balkrishna Dhungel Case

In its landmark decision, the Supreme Court ordered the government not to grant pardon to Balkrishna Dhungel, a former lawmaker of CPN-Maoist for murdering Ujjan Kumar Shrestha of Okhaldhunga district in 1998 and reiterated to implement its past verdict that sentenced Dhungel life imprisonment and confiscation of property in the charge of murder.

Responding to the writ petitions filed in 2011 by Sabitri Shrestha, a sister of victim Ujjan Kumar Shrestha, the constitutional bench of Supreme Court headed by the Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha and Justices Sushila Karki, Baidhya Nath Upadhyay, Gopal Parajuli and Om Prakash Mishra has annulled the controversial decision of the government led by Baburam Bhattarai to recommend the President to grant pardon to Maoist leader Bal Krishna Dhungel, who was convicted by the Supreme Court for the murder of Ujjan Kumar Shrestha.

Kavre Court Ordered to Revive Maina's Case

Responding to the application filed by Devi Sunwar, the Kavre District Court, Dhulikhel on 12 January 2016 issued an order to revive the case of Maina, who was arrested and arbitrarily killed on 17 February, 2004 by the then RNA . Devi Sunwar, victim's mother filed an application seeking revival of the case and punishment to the alleged perpetrators: Colonel Babi Khatri, Sunil Prasad Adhikari, Niranjana Basnet and Amit Pun. The case had been adjourned at Kavre District Court for the last 2 years.

Devi Sunwar commented, "I believe that the case will be proceeded without further delay and perpetrators will be punished for their crimes." Advocacy Forum-Nepal has been representing the victim's family and working on the case since the day of Maina's arrest.

Court Convicted Army Lieutenant being involved in Torture and Ordered Departmental Against the Accused and Compensation to the Survivor

On 16 March 2016, Bardiya District Court issued an order to compensate 14 year old juvenile, who was subjected to torture in Narsingha Gan of Nepal Army custody. The court has ordered the government to provide NPR 50,000 as compensation to victim, making perpetrator to pay personally NPR 2,000 and ordered the Government of Nepal to take departmental action against the perpetrators, Lieutenant Kavindra Thapa and Lance Corporal (Pyuth) Man Bahadur Khadka.

In the morning of 2 October 2011, Padam Bahadur Khadka including other 6 juveniles were arrested by army men deployed from Banjariya Check post under Narsingha Gan of Nepal Army on the allegation of killing a Chittal (spotted deer). According to the victims, they were then taken to the army post, where Post Head, Second Lieutenant Kavindra Thapa threatened and verbally abused them for poaching spotted deer while soldier Man Bahadur Khadka tortured them by beating with sticks, punching with fists, keeping them in abnormal position

for a long period of time, forcing to stand upside down on their hands against a tree and beating indiscriminately on different parts of the body.

Advocacy Forum-Nepal investigated the case, assisted them for their medical treatment and filing the case under the Torture Compensation Act of Nepal. Earlier, the Bardiya District Court had quashed the case referring that the case falls under the jurisdiction of Court Martial. AF had assisted victims to challenge the decision of the District Court Bardiya in the Appellate Court Nepalgunj. On 24 March 2013, Appellate Court, Nepalgunj had quashed the decision of District Court Bardiya referring the case to Court Martial.

After court decision Padam responded, "With the court decision I felt that I have received justice, though partially. I am eagerly awaiting it to translate into practice. I have spent large amount of money for my treatment in hospitals from Bardiya to Nepalgunj to Kathmandu. On several occasions, I was threatened by the perpetrators and I was displaced from my original place. I even had to file application at District Administration Office seeking security. As a result of torture and ill-treatment, I am still suffering from physical and mental problems."

Although Nepal is a party to Convention Against Torture and Nepal's Constitution prohibits torture, in the absence of enabling legislation criminalizing torture, there is no criminal accountability in the cases of torture. The only available remedy is the compensation and the departmental action under the Torture Compensation Act.

However, not a single perpetrator has been prosecuted linked to the conflict era cases. The verdict of the Supreme Court is unimplemented and perpetrators are scot free from the punishment as they are safeguarded by the political leadership. It validates that the perpetrators are backed by state and how impunity is institutionalized in Nepal.

AF, together with other human rights organizations including CVSJ held a number of local, regional and national level programs and consultations meetings in order to mount pressure for the amendment of the TRC Act that abides the verdict of Supreme Court and fulfills international obligations. Moreover, the victims are informed about the complaint registration process and series of formal and informal meetings were conducted to discuss on the ongoing TJ process. AF and CVSJ supported victims of conflict to register their complaints despite that they have faith that they will get truth and justice.

Likewise, AF in collaboration with conflict victims, carried out its campaign against enforced disappearance at national and international levels. Furthermore, AF briefed the human rights situation and TJ process to different embassies in Kathmandu. Basically, meetings were held between AF and US Embassy, German Embassy, UK Embassy, Swiss Embassy and Finish Embassy based in Kathmandu.

Arjun Lama Event

On 28 April 2016, AF, in collaboration with other human rights organizations, organized commemoration and discussion program of his 11th year of killings. The program was organized in the village from where he was abducted and later killed by the Maoists in 2005.

The program was attended by senior human rights activists, victims' leaders, family members, local political leaders and community people. Around 200 people attended the program. It was financially supported by AF. The speakers of the program reiterated that the alleged perpetrators (who are the Maoist leaders) be punished without any delay as per law. The case is sub-judice at Supreme Court of Nepal in which AF provides legal assistance.

International Truth Day Observed

With an aim to observe the UN International Day for Right to Truth on Gross Human Rights Violations, in March 2016, Victims and human rights community organized a protest program in front of Prime Minister's official residence in Baluwatar demanding truth and justice in relation to conflict era cases. Around 200 people were protesting holding play cards, banner and chanting slogans. The protest program was intervened by the police and victims leaders and civil society members including AF staff (advocate Pushpa Poudel) were arrested and later released.

Protest against 9 Point Agreement:

On 5 May, the ruling parties CPN-ULM and Maoist signed a Memorandum of Understanding which undermines the transitional justice and human rights. Protesting against the agreement, conflict victims, human rights organizations and civil society and including others staged protests in front of PM's residence Baluwatar.

June 26 Event:

As in previous year, AF- Nepal organized an event on the occasion of International Day in Support of Victims of Torture in Kathmandu and some 8 districts of Nepal where AF has been carrying out its program. Since its establishment, AF has been visiting government detention facilities and has been interviewing the detainees whether they are having minimum rights as envisaged in national and international laws. AF launched torture report which shows that torture prevails and continues in Nepal as in previous year which is 17% plus.

International Week of the Disappeared Observed:

AF together with CVSJ conducted a solidarity event and discussion program in Kathmandu and Banke, Nepalgunj, western part of Nepal. On May 27, a solidarity event was organized at AF office in Kathmandu. Bikash Basnet welcomed and briefed on the importance of the day whereas Janak Raut briefed about the ongoing TJ process in Nepal and conditions of victims in Nepal. Similarly, a discussion program was organized on 25 May 2016. The program was mainly attended by conflict victims, human rights activists, advocates, media persons and authorities concerned. The victims reiterated their demands that they wanted to know the truth about their dear ones and the punishment to the perpetrators. They added that the present commissions have no vision and will power, hence they failed to address their core concerns.

International Justice Day Observed

As in previous year, AF together with other human rights organizations and victims groups, organized an event to commemorate International Justice Day 2016 on 17 July 2016 in Kathmandu. The discussion program entitled “Uncertainty of Transitional Justice Process” mainly focused on the problems in the TJ mechanisms and major concerns endured by conflict victims. The program was attended by the conflict victims, human rights organizations, lawyers, National Human Rights Commissions, media personal, civil society leaders and other concerned authorities. Altogether, 100 persons participated in the discussion program. Many participants suggested the need for the revision of the TRC Act in line with SC’s verdict and wider consultation with the conflict victims while making any crucial steps for both commissions. Furthermore, they also suggested to enact laws that criminalize torture and disappearances which are required to punish to the perpetrators involved even if the commissions recommend for prosecuting the involved perpetrators.

International Day of the Disappeared

On the occasion of International Day of the Disappeared 2016, the AF in collaboration with CVSJ-Nepal organized different activities in different parts of Nepal. The programs were organized in Morang, Dhanusha, Nepalgunj, Pokhara, Udayapur, Kanchanpur, Rupendehi and Kathmandu. A series of programs i.e Candle lightning, discussion program, submission of memorandum to the authorities, rally and media briefings were jointly organized by national and international human rights organizations. The event remained the best occasion to pay tribute to the disappeared persons and express solidarity with the victims’ families. Moreover, it was the day to bring the issue of conflict victims especially the disappeared to the fore and draw attention of the concerned authorities. Participants criticized the working modality of both commissions and expressed their anger and suspicion. The issues of discussions revolved around the on-going TJ process, the plight of conflict victims especially of the disappeared persons and their families, their quest for truth and justice, day to day difficulties that have been endured by victims and security concerns at local context. The participants demanded to amend the TRC law, criminalize the act of disappearance and ratify the International Convention on Enforced Disappearances. Discussion program, submission of memorandum to the Chief District Officer, rally and candle lighting program were conducted on this day. Altogether, more than 300 participants attended the event and expressed their solidarity on demands of conflict victims.

Regional Level HR and Transitional Justice Program

In September 2016, AF organized five regional level workshop on the “Role and Responsibilities of Stakeholders in Transitional Justice Process.” The programs were organized in Biratnagar, Dhanusha, Nepalgunj, Kapilvastu and Mahendranagar. The programs aimed to bring together national and provincial level stakeholders to identify common concerns and challenges in promoting and protecting human rights as Nepal’s Transitional Justice (TJ) process moves forward. The program will also move beyond the identification of these challenges towards developing commitments from duty-bearing stakeholders in line with their international human rights obligations. Altogether, more than 300 participants attended the programs and actively took part in the discussion program.

Nanda Prasad Adhikari Event

AF coordinated and organized the 2nd death anniversary of Nanda Prasad Adhikari who breathed his last on 22 September 2014 in Kathmandu. In memory of Nanda Prasad Adhikari, a candle lighting event was organized in front of Bir Hospital where he took his last breath. Her better half Gangamaya Adhikari was on hunger strike demanding punishment to the murderers of her son Krishna Prasad Adhikari. Altogether 70 persons attended the event and expressed their solidarity on Gangamaya's demand. The program was addressed by Gangamaya and other senior human rights activists and demanded to implement the court's verdict in relation to the Krishna Adhiakri case and to punish the perpetrator. There has been significant progress on the court process on the case. However, the court's decision to advance the trial remanding the accused is still unimplemented.

On 6 June 2004, Krishna Prasad Adhikari, a resident of Fujel village of Gorkha District, was murdered in Chitwan District by Maoist cadres. Krishna Prasad was visiting his grandparents after having taken the SLC examinations, and he was abducted from Bakullahar Chowk by men who came on a motorcycle. Witnesses said that the victim was first tortured by Maoist cadre, with unconfirmed reports that he was dragged by a rope tied to the motorcycle. Later, the beaten up Krishna Prasad was brought back to Bakullahar Chowk, tied to a tree trunk and killed with three gunshots.

3.7 PAKISTAN

The newly-constituted "military justice" is in clear violation of its legal obligations and political commitments to respect the right to life, the right to a fair trial, and the independence and impartiality of the judiciary. 100 cases of enforced disappearance have been documented by DHR in 2016, making up a total 2,355 documented ED cases.

Press Release on the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance

DHR sent a Press Release to all media regarding the worst condition of the commission of inquiry on Enforced Disappearance. In which examples of cases were given. Chairperson emphasized that the DHR is cooperating with this commission since last 6 years but still, this commission is continuously occupying the space of the courts and making the aggrieved families suffer endlessly.

Visit to Bacha Khan University

DHR team visited to the Bacha Khan University Charsadda Pakistan to show solidarity with the students and teachers who also visited the Martyr's home to meet their families. They were aggrieved but at the same time, passionate to stand up for human rights and education no matter what. DHR conducted a press conference at Press Club Charsada. A briefing was given to the media persons.

Press Release on the Arrest of Human Rights Defenders in Nepal

DHR Pakistan strongly condemned the arrest of Human Rights Defender by Nepal Police in Kathmandu on the occasion of 66th National Democracy Day.. DHR urged the Government of Nepal to respond immediately to the call of the International Human Rights groups and AFAD by releasing Bikash Basnet and Janak Bahadur Raut and all the other fellow activists immediately.

DHR meetings with the UN in Geneva

DHR Chairperson Amina Masood Janjua was invited to attend the 109th session of the UN WGEID. She also met Ms. Andrea Georgette, the Director of Southeast Asia, Asia Desk of the FIDH. She was also able to meet the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders Mr. Michael Forst.

Activities during the Commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared

DHR conducted a number of activities during the commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared. DHR visited the families and they also held press conferences. There were also seminars and solidarity actions for human rights victims in Bangladesh.

11 years of disappearance of Masood

A protest rally was held in front of Islamabad Press club on the completion of the 11 years of Masood Janjua's enforced Disappearance. DHR demanded the immediate release of Masood Janjua and all the disappeared till 30th August 2016 and if the demand is not granted, it would initiate a country wide campaign starting from Khyber to Gwadar.

Commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared

A protest demonstration organized by DHR and HRCP was an attempt to highlight the most burning issue of the "Disappeared" on the International Day of the Disappeared. Former Senator Mr. Afrasayab Khattak presided the Conference. Senator Mr. Farhat ullah Baber, Gen-Sec of Islamabad Bar Mr. Malik Waqas, Mr. Raja Zukernain SC bar Mr. Tahira Abdullah and Ms. Amina Janjua were among the speakers.

Amina Masood Janjua's guested at a talk show on Waqt channel regarding the International Day of the Disappeared, "Apna Apna Gareban".

Hurriyat Meeting

DHR conducted a session in All Parties Hurriyat Conference office in Islamabad. Amina Masood vowed to support the cause of Kashmir and give every sacrifice to win freedom for our Kashmiri sisters and brothers. She mentioned that it was heartbreaking to hear from Hurriyat leaders about various atrocities being carried out upon innocent Kashmiris, in Indian occupied Kashmir, especially the horrifying effects of pellet guns, illegal arrests, torture, and maltreatment on women and children.

Efforts on the Illegal Detention of Khurram Parvez

DHR issued a Press Release on emergency basis about the illegal arrest of Kashmiri Human Rights Defender from his home in the Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir. DHR strongly condemned the arrest of Khurram Parvaiz in occupied Kashmir. DHR also conducted a rally and candlelight vigil together with the families of the disappeared. Civil society groups also joined the protest. DHR Chairperson Amina Masood was also interviewed in the Neo TV, a major media outlet in Pakistan, to share her opinion about the arrest of Khurram Parvez.



DHR, families of the disappeared and other civil society groups join the candle vigil and rally to campaign for the release of Khurram Parvez.

AFAD and DHR visit to Sri Lanka



AFAD Campaign Officer Sara La Rocca and DHR Chairperson Amina Masood campaigned for the release of Khurram Parvez during the National Day of the Disappeared in Sri Lanka.

AFAD and DHR visited the Families of the Disappeared (FOD) in Sri Lanka. They went to the Monument for the Disappeared -Against Every Single Disappearance. It was created by Chandragupta Thenuwara under the guidance and initiative of Kalape Api and Asian Human Rights Commission.

The second meeting with Brito Fernando and members of Families of Disappeared (FOD) organization was during the commemoration on 27th Oct 2016. It was a very good gathering of victims of Enforced Disappearance arrived from North East West and South of the Country to commemorate the memory of their disappeared loved ones. Many Human Rights groups from Korea, AFAD delegation from Pakistan and Manila, local organizations like, South Asia for Human Rights, Asian Human Rights Commission, Right to Life, Families of the Disappeared (FOD) participated.

Book Launch of “Grief Untold”



DHR launches its first research report entitled “Grief Untold” at the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad. Human rights experts and advocates join the launching.

Commemoration of International Human Rights Day



Members of the DHR gather in a public demonstration on Human Rights Day.

3.8 SOUTH KOREA

NKHR submitted fifty-four abduction cases to the UN WGEID until December 2015. Among 28 cases, one case is still not confirmed by WGEID. Furthermore, twenty-six cases still have not been heard by WGEID. Only fifty percent of the fifty-four cases received an answer, and the status of the remaining twenty-seven cases needs to be confirmed. More specifically, fifteen cases were submitted to the WGEID in 2014 and ten cases were submitted in 2015. NKHR will address WGEID regarding the remaining cases from 2013 to 2015 that have not received a response.

NKHR had a meeting with the South Korean member of the WGEID, Prof. Baek-Tae-Ung in Hawaii in April. The NKHR submitted the status of replies and requested the Group's consideration of other submitted cases. NKHR also submitted the AFAD's statement regarding the possible negative changes in the WGEID's mandate.

A public campaign in commemoration of the International Week of the Disappeared took place from May 27th to May 29th, 2016 in Seoul. NKHR had a booth at Seoul's 2016 Reunification Expo. NKHR's booth focused on enforced disappearances and provided information about the situations and victims of enforced disappearance. In addition, NKHR distributed both Korean and English versions of AFAD's statement on enforced disappearances. Furthermore, participants were given the opportunity to raise awareness for North Korean victims of enforced disappearances. These participants also boosted awareness of enforced disappearances throughout Asia.

On 29 June, 2016, Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR) participated in a seminar co-organized by the Federation of Families of Victims and Republic of Korea National Assembly member Tae-Kyung HA, and sponsored by the Ministry of Unification. University of Hawaii Professor and member of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), Tae-Ung Baek, announced potential solutions for the abductees' cases.



Raising Awareness of the Situation of Enforced Disappearances in Korea

In August of 2016, NKHR produced and released videos in commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared. These videos conveyed the situation of enforced disappearances in Korea by sharing stories of victims such as one about Hwang Won. On December 11th, 1969, Hwang Won was a passenger on a Korean Air flight when he was taken by North Korea. His story is told by his son Hwang In Chul. For 47 years, this sudden and shocking event continues to bring grief to the family as they continue to question what happened to their father and his life.

In addition, NKHR released AFAD's official statement regarding the current status and information of involuntary disappearances. This statement was presented during the 2016 commemoration of the International Day of the Disappeared in both Korean and English on NKHR's social networking platforms.

In October, NKHR published a letter from the relatives of abductees who have been missing their family members for decades. The situation of abductees who went missing after the Korean War was portrayed by stories shared by four different families through the form of written letters.

Activities in Support of the Release of Khurram Parvez, AFAD Chairperson

On October 12th, NKHR submitted two letters requesting the immediate release of Khuram Parvez to both the South Korean government and Indian embassies. In response, the South Korean government replied that it is difficult to intervene in the affairs of

another country. The Indian embassy requested further information about NKHR's activities, but made no further reply.

Conducting Reports for Submission to the WGEID

In order to submit a formal petition to WGEID, NKHR began conducting interviews with the family members of the victims of enforced disappearance. In September, NKHR recorded the testimonies of two abductees' family members residing in Incheon, South Korea. In October, the family members of five abductees were interviewed in the South Korean Gangwon-do and Gyeongsang-do provinces, in the cities of Sokcho, Kohjin, Ulsan, and Busan.

Five hundred and sixteen abductee family members have grown old waiting to hear news of the whereabouts of their loved ones; NKHR recorded the voices of some of these family members making pleas for information about the abductees' whereabouts, and for their release. Furthermore, in an effort to provide the abductees' family members with any information or clues as to the whereabouts of their loved ones, NKHR conducted research and compiled updates of the family members' status. NKHR has visited about 54 families in order to gather new testimonies and information of their current circumstances. In addition, NKHR is planning to meet with ten families of abductees within this year.

NKHR's piece in *The Voice*, AFAD's Bi-annual publication

In November, NKHR submitted a contribution to *The Voice* on the issue of the abduction of South Koreans by North Korea. The article provides insights into the lives of the abduction victims and includes their messages to the outside world. In addition, it features many letters from the abductees to their families in the South informing them of their survival and their letters to the South Korean president asking for help. Also included are the letters from victims' family members to their loved ones. The family members, many of whom are unsure whether or not their loved ones are even alive, write with the hopes that the abductees will eventually have the chance to read their letters.

Bringing international attention to the sorrow of separated families, and their longing for reunion with their abducted family members, contribute to the call for an urgent resolution to the abduction issue.

10 Cases Submitted to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)

On 14 December 2016, NKHR submitted 10 cases to the WGEID, a product of interviews conducted between the months of June and November with the families of the following abductees. Each of the following abductees is believed to have been abducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea:

1. Jong-mu Do - Jong-mu Do's abduction occurred on 5 June 1970 when he was aboard the South Korean navy vessel *I-2* in the Yellow Sea (West Sea). To confirm

- details on the case, NKHR conducted an interview with Jong-mu Do's older brother.
2. Hyo-Geun Yang - Hyo-Geun Yang was abducted on 22 January 1966 while fishing on the vessel *Gilyong-ho*, in the open waters of the Yellow Sea, about 90 nautical miles away from Gyeokryeolbiyeol Island, South Korea. NKHR conducted an interview with Hyo-Geun Yang's son.
 3. Hong-gyun Kim - On 23 May 1968, Hong-gyun Kim was abducted aboard the vessel *Daeseong-ho*, which was abducted near the Daejin Port, in the vicinity of the Military Demarcation Line, Republic of Korea. Hong-gyun Kim's older sister was interviewed by NKHR regarding the case.
 4. Sang-jun Kim - The abduction of Sang-jun Kim occurred near the East Sea Fishery Boundary Line while he was fishing on board the South Korean vessel *Haeyang-ho*, which was captured by North Korean vessels on 3 November 1967. Sang-jun Kim's older brother contributed information on the case during an interview with NKHR.
 5. Yeong-jun Choi - Yeong-jun Choi was abducted while he was aboard the vessel *Myeongdeok-ho* in the East Sea, 20 November 1965. To assist with the case, Yeong-jun Choi's sister participated in an interview with NKHR.
 6. Seong-bok Choi - On 10 July 1968, Seong-bok Choi was abducted while aboard the vessel *Manbok* near the East Sea Fishery Boundary Line by the coast of Daejin, Goseong-gun, Gangwon Province, Republic of Korea. NKHR's interview with Seong-bok Choi contributed to the case's completion.
 7. Jong-yun Lee - The abduction of Captain Jong-yun Lee occurred while he was aboard the vessel *Boseung 2* in the Western Sea, near South Korea's Baekryeong Island on 20 March 1964. His daughter participated in an interview with NKHR on behalf of her father's case.
 8. Tae-gil Park - Tae-gil Park was abducted when he was aboard the vessel *Boseung 2* in the West Sea, near Baekryeong Island, South Korea on 20 March 1964. His son was interviewed by NKHR for further details on the case.
 9. Young-uk Kim - On 8 June 1968, Young-uk Kim was abducted when he was aboard the vessel *Poongnyeon* near the vicinity of the Fishery Boundary Line in Goseong-gun, South Korea. His brother was interviewed by NKHR regarding the case.
 10. Eung-kwon Kim - The abduction of Eung-won Kim occurred when he was aboard the vessel *Sinyang-ho* in the East Sea, South Korea, near the Fishery Boundary Line on 2 July 1968. Eung-kwon Kim's brother Eung-cheol Kim provided testimony to NKHR.

To date, NKHR has submitted a total of 64 abduction cases to WGEID. Upon submission of our most recent 10 cases, NKHR asked for clarification regarding previously submitted cases which had not yet received a response. The WGEID swiftly responded that these cases had been confirmed as received by the WGEID, and save the ten most recent cases and four others, which are still under review, all have now been submitted for response to the appropriate North Korean authorities.

UN Advocacy and Support

On December 14, the UN Human Rights Office in Seoul released “Torn Apart,” their initial report on the “human rights dimension of the involuntary separation of Korean families,” which has a strong focus on abductions and enforced disappearances. NKHR staff was instrumental in the preparation of this report and actively participated in the launch of the report. NKHR will continue to provide follow-up comments and assistance as the report is refined and translated into Korean.

Update on the international community’s response to the political situation in North Korea

On December 19, 2016, the Third Committee of the Seventy-first session of the UN General Assembly adopted Agenda item 68 (c,) “Situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.” This resolution reaffirmed previous resolutions condemning North Korea’s dire human rights situation and expressed strong concerns regarding the lack of accountability for human rights violations in the DPRK. In addition, the resolution called for referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to establish legal grounds for holding the state and the leadership accountable for the numerous crimes against humanity which includes the forced abductions of, according to Ministry of Unification estimates, 516 South Korean citizens.

Of particular relevance to the abduction issue, the resolution “underscores its very serious concern at the systematic abduction, denial of repatriation and subsequent enforced disappearance of persons, including those from other countries, on a large scale and as a matter of State policy.” In the lines following, the resolution calls upon the DPRK’s government to urgently resolve these issues.

NKHR will continue to strongly urge the DPRK to officially acknowledge the abductions and to develop detailed and realistic measures for the identification and release of victims.

3.9 SRI LANKA

Meetings with International Agencies

In January 2016, FOD held meetings and discussions with the office of the UN Peace Building Fund (UNPB), EU delegation in Sri Lanka and with the Public Interest Advocacy Center. In February, they met with Mr. David Moore, Vice President for Legal Affairs of the International Center for not-for – Profit Law. They also had a follow up discussion with the UNPB and with the Swiss Embassy. When the UN HRC High Commissioner visited the country, FOD also took the chance to meet with him.

Meetings with Government Offices

On January 12, FOD had a discussion with Foreign Minister on the Transitional Justice Program of the government. In February, they also met with the President together with other civil society organizations. Finally, the discussed harassments of the Intelligence Officers on the family members of the disappeared with the Governor of the East in Trinco.



Families flock to the office of the Governor of the East in Trinco to discuss harassment perpetrated by intelligence officers.

OTHER ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSIONS



FOD Chairperson Brito Fernando addressing the audience in a gathering to discuss the constitutional reforms in Negombo.

Brito also delivered several speeches and presentations during a forum on disappearance in Colombo and in a meeting with Sirasa TV. Eight (8) discussions were held with various funding organizations and research organizations during the first quarter. The organizations include: Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Open Forum, Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust and Search for Common Ground

OTHER CAMPAIGNS

FOD also took part in the campaign in front of the Police station in the Free Trade Zone on every 1st of every month in demanding the justice for the slain worker and the other workers who were beaten up and shot at by Police in 2011.



Members of the FOD join the campaign protest in front of the Police Station in the Free Trade Zone.

OTHER ORGANIZING WORK

FOD was mainly focusing on the East, especially in Ampara and Batticaloa districts in building up the organization. Eastern province had disappearances since 1990 and mass abductions and killings took place. Even though some of these incidents were reported in the Presidential commission reports yet no action had been taken on those. Disappearances mostly had taken place since 1980 s and the peak was 1990. Not a single discussion ever had taken place in Ampara district on disappearances. Majority of family members had not heard the word Geneva, the discussions at UN or the promises made by the SL Government on TJ. FOD decided to focus and start our work from Ampara then to the other two districts in Eastern province.



In photo: Meeting of FOD and families in the Ampara and Batticaloa district.

3.10 TIMOR-LESTE

Of the 4,000 cases of “Stolen Children” reported by The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in Timor Leste (CAVR), only 40 have been found, and this is mostly through the initiative of CSOs in Indonesia and Timor.

The Timorese government has generally dispensed goodwill to human rights organizations like HAK. However, this tends to shift whenever HAK raises critiques against human rights violations being committed by the State. In these instances, HAK becomes subject to harassment by security forces.

From the beginning of 2016, HAK and partners continued to consolidate the victims’ families through meetings. The aim was to support each other and to ensure regular communication in terms of abridging the activities or works on searching for the victims of ED. HAK took the central role in maintaining the communication in the level of the working team of families’ reunion. At the same time, HAK also coordinated with the members of the Victims’ Association to visit the victims’ families in rural areas. HAK also did approximation in identifying the families who lost their family members through family discussions and personal interviews.

From April to May, HAK focused in bridging between the victims' families and the media persons to commemorate the day of massacre during the April (massacre in Liquica on 5th -6th April 1999, massacre in Cailaco, Bobonaro district 10th April 1999 and massacre in Carasacalao's Residence on 17th April 1999 in Dili). The main activities include (1) lobbying with several government agencies and relevant departments, organizing and cooperating with the UN Human Rights Adviser in Dili, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Ombudsman.

From August to September, historical events of Timorese people are commemorated. The massacre that happened on August 30, 1999 was commemorated. Other events include massacres on 25th September 1999 where a big number of pro Indonesian militia or paramilitary force assaulted and killed Catholic Charity Workers in Lautem; Api-kuru river, massacre in Suai church on 6th September 1999, resulted to more than two hundred deaths including three Catholic priests, and massacre in Maliana which resulted in more than 80 deaths from 8 to 9th of September 1999.

On August 30, 2016, HAK and other organizations commemorated the International Day of the Disappeared. The objective of the commemoration was to reflect and to preserve the memory of all the crimes against humanity that were committed during the 24 years of Indonesian military occupation. This form of reflection contextualizes the history of suffering in Timor-Leste.

The event was participated in by about 200 people, which consists of university students, victims and the victims' families who are based in Dili.

During the same day, AJAR Timor-Leste and one of the members of the working team for Family-Reunion of victims of Enforced Disappearances launched a policy paper on searching for stolen children. Director of AJAR Timor-Leste, Mr. Jose Luis de Oliveira presented on behalf of the working team of Family-Reunion of victims of enforced disappearances. The media persons in the capital Dili also came to cover the event. Documentation was then released in mainstream media.

From October to November, HAK and the partners of the Family-Reunion Team did the preparations for the second reunion of the stolen children with their biological families. During the preparation phase, HAK organized and then delivered a briefing on the guidelines of the use of psychosocial intervention before, during, and after every reunion-family.

All the efforts were realized during the Family-Reunion which hosted 13 victims from 6 districts; Baucau, Ermera, Lospalos, Manatuto, Same, and Viqueque. HAK and the members of the working team published a press release before the victims came back to Timor-Leste after spending many years "living" in Indonesia without communication with their biological families in Timor-Leste.

December

In early December, HAK and partners organized a commemoration of the Indonesian military invasion of Timor-Leste (7th December 1975 – 7th December 2016). Approximately 2,000 people participated in the commemoration.

3. REGIONAL RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION PROGRAM

The Research and Documentation Program of AFAD is funded by the Oak Foundation (completed in March 2016) and by the Women’s World Day of Prayer (WWDP).

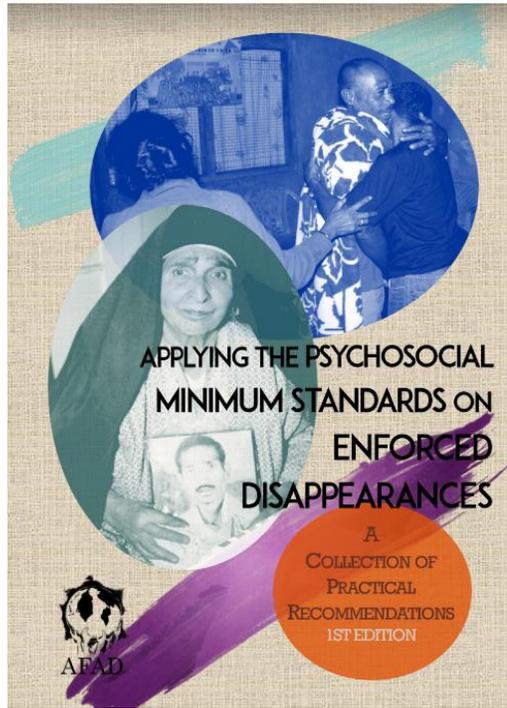
1. The Research and Documentation Officer supported the research project “The Grief Untold” which is a publication done in partnership with AFAD member-organization in Pakistan, the Defence for Human Rights (DHR).
2. **Documentation of Cases.** Despite lack of funding for local research and documentation staffers, documentation of new cases and updating of old cases continues in some organizations. As of December 2016, there are a total of 728 events in the AFAD regional database, with more than 860 victims.

3. ED events per country:

Country	ED Events
Bangladesh	135
Pakistan	107
Kashmir	79
Indonesia	62
Nepal	74
Philippines	28
Sri Lanka	47
Thailand	41
Timor-Leste	6

4. Project with the Women’s World Day of Prayer on Popularizing the Minimum Standards for Psychosocial Support to Victims of Enforced Disappearance

The project was implemented with KontraS, IKOHI and HAK, with the assistance of *Liga Guatemalteca de Higiene Mental*. Activities include workshops in Jakarta and Dili and the production of a primer on applying the Minimum Standards in Asia.

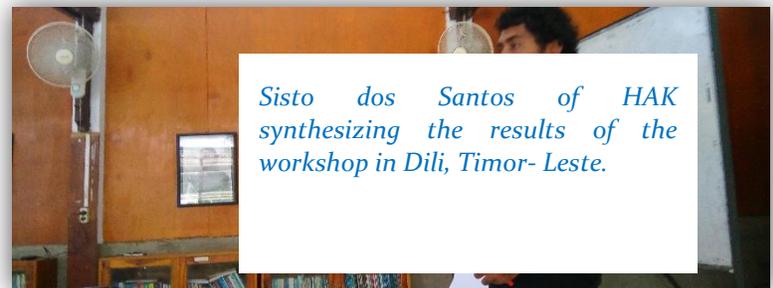


In photo: Cover Photo of the Primer on the Psychosocial Minimum Standards on Enforced Disappearances. The full document may be accessed through the link:

<http://www.afad-online.org/resources/publications/319-applying-the-psychosocial-minimum-standards-on-enforced-disappearances>



In photo: Participants from Komnas HAM, HR and victims' organization during the workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia.



Lessons learned from the workshops:

1. The Minimum Standards provide good guidance to the intervenors in search and reunification of victims. However, because of differences that each cultural and societal context has, the most essential principles that intervenors must adhere to are: 1) the holistic nature of psychosocial work, and 2) the victims as the primary consideration and actors in the interventions.

2. In the Jakarta workshop, the participants highlighted the role of religion in helping families cope with grief. Hence, religious institutions must be engaged.
3. They likewise emphasized the crucial role of the National Human Rights Institution, especially in terms of providing the necessary documents for the victims' access to health services.
4. In the Timor workshop, the need for providing psychosocial accompaniment for the "stolen children" was most resonant. Participants talked about hand-holding the victims as they get re-familiarized to their old surroundings, families and customs.
5. The participants also talked about the importance of coordination with all the stakeholders in the search and reunification of the victims, including national government and local community leaders. They also underscored the need to guarantee communication lines between: family and stolen child, family and organization, and stolen child and organization.

4. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Mid-Year Assessment (July 2016)

The AFAD Secretariat, together with members of the Executive Council, went to Baguio City in the Philippines to conduct the Mid-Year Assessment of implementation of activities and planning for the remaining months of year 2016.



AFAD Secretariat doing a solidarity act for fellow human rights defenders in Kashmir.

Council Meeting (December 2016)

The AFAD Council held its annual meeting in Udon Thani, Thailand last December 2016 to assess the implementation of projects, to examine the human rights situation in each country and in the region in general and to plan the activities and strategies for year 2017 and beyond.



Council members and AFAD Secretariat holding the photos of Jonas Burgos, disappeared activist in the Philippines.

III. CONCLUSION

In 2016, enforced disappearances continued to occur exponentially in countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh as one of the various forms of human rights violations. The year was also a witness to the continuing absence of justice for conflict victims in Nepal and to the intense political turmoil in Kashmir, resulting in, among other devastating effects in people's lives, the arrest and arbitrary detention of AFAD Chairperson, Khurram

Parvez. Southeast Asian countries had their own share of the intensifying human rights violations. The Philippines witnessed an unprecedented number of drug-related extrajudicial killings, the burial of the dictator Marcos in the heroes' cemetery, the threat of the restoration of the death penalty and the lowering of age of criminal responsibility from 15 to nine. This does not include the undocumented drug-related enforced disappearances which are re-victimizing some families of the disappeared in different communities. In a supposedly democratic government of Indonesia's President Joko Widodo, impunity loomed with the absence of justice for the assassinated human rights defender and former AFAD Chairperson, Munir. Worse still, perpetrators of human rights violations were promoted to higher positions. As in many other Asian countries, the whereabouts of South Korea's abductees remain unknown despite national and international pressure, leaving many elderly persons still hoping against hope for their loved ones to return. In Laos, 4 years after the disappearance of Sombath Somphone, nothing is known about the fate and whereabouts of one of Southeast Asia's prominent development workers.

Against this backdrop of the continuing and unresolved enforced disappearances in the context of war against terrorism, war on drugs, return of authoritarian rule, AFAD remains a vibrant federation in the Asian region. Organizationally, an additional member-organization, a long-time partner and originally a founding member, the Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearances (FIND) was added to the Federation, thus strengthening the presence of the Federation in its base country. It was, however, affected by the arbitrary arrest and detention of its chairperson who was blocked by the Indian Government from participating in the 33rd session of the UN Human Rights Council. Despite this, AFAD, with its international network, the International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED), where it serves as its focal point, successfully brought the Release Khurram Campaign to a successful end with the court's quashing of the case and the victorious release of Khurram on 30 November 2016.

The reports of the member-organizations attest to the continuing research, documentation, campaign, lobby, public information and direct assistance work in various countries. The new set of reunified stolen children with their biological parents in Timor-Leste and AFAD's project to popularize the Psychosocial Minimum Standards on Enforced Disappearances were other breakthroughs principally by the AFAD member-organizations in both Timor-Leste and Indonesia with the support of AFAD and the *Liga Guatemalteca de Higiene Mental*. Amidst the continuing impunity in the rest of the countries, including Timor-Leste and Indonesia, these significant inroads in the search for truth and justice are humanly gratifying success and therefore, worth AFAD's self-commendation. Its sustainability is very important in order continue the never-ending search for truth and justice.

The Federation's regional documentation work faced major challenges in resources in view of the withdrawal from AFAD of major funders, such as OAK Foundation and OSI which were both supporting this fundamental aspect of AFAD's work. Nevertheless, documentation was maintained at the regional level and still continued in some countries

which enabled them to submit cases and general allegations to the UN WGEID. An effort to write a brief regional situation to update what had been published in the past was started towards the end of the year.

Except for the popularization of the Psychosocial Minimum Standards on Enforced Disappearances in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, the work of empowerment and direct assistance to the families of the disappeared were, in general, taken care of by member-organizations. The Federation did not have enough resources to assist in this aspect of work, which could have supported much towards AFAD's strengthening, considering that the families of the disappeared should play a central role in the struggle against enforced disappearances and against impunity. This matter needs to be looked into principally at the country level with the support of AFAD. This could go a long way towards the sustainability of AFAD's work in view of the fact that enforced disappearance is a long-drawn struggle and the perpetrators have all the powers at their disposal to continue committing disappearances in the midst of prevailing impunity.

Despite the AFAD's member-organizations' insistence to have their governments sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, there has been no additional signatory from any of the governments of AFAD member organizations. The ratification of Sri Lanka in the context of the change of government and the establishment of the Office of Missing Persons was welcome news. AFAD could confidently claim that during all these years, it contributed to the international pressure of getting Sri Lanka's signature in 2015 and ratification in 2016. Since its establishment, AFAD has consistently conducted lobbying efforts in the country on matters related to enforced disappearances. After the Convention's adoption in 2006, it stepped up its lobbying efforts at the national, regional and international levels.

Already on its sixth year as focal point of the ICAED, AFAD continued to coordinate efforts towards the universal ratification and implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Convention). It managed to conduct monthly skype meetings with the Steering Committee members. Activities included the writing of joint statements during commemorative events; participation in the 10th anniversary of the Convention, the mapping of the status of the Convention's signature and ratification and writing of lobbying and thank you letters to specific governments which signed and/or ratified the Convention or which still needed to sign and ratify it. Attempts to meet with Geneva-based member-organizations were made in April and September, however, only AFAD, FIACAT and the Asian Human Rights Commission were consistently present. Coordination with the UN CED during meetings in Geneva was attempted and the submission of its annual report to the UN CED was also accomplished. The publication of the Primer on the Convention, published in both English and Spanish was a major effort.

It is significant to note the major contributions of several member-organizations of ICAED to the Release Khurram Campaign. Organizations and individuals from Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Chile, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Georgia,

Hong Kong, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Spain and Venezuela contributed in different ways to the successful campaign for the release of Khurram. This is a very important proof of the power of international solidarity.

Much remains to be done. The leadership of AFAD tried its best, amidst constraints in resources and geographical distance, to coordinate the collective work of AFAD in responding to the cause of the disappeared and their families. Yet, in view of the fact that member-organizations and leaders are also engrossed in daily challenges in their respective countries, managing the whole Federation both by the Council and the Executive Council, being a huge responsibility, was confronted with several challenges in terms of presence in electronic meetings and compliance in reporting. The Council was convened at the end of the year to review its work and plan for 2017, with the electronic presence of its Chairperson, who was still unable to travel. The meeting was meaningfully culminated with the 4th anniversary of the disappearance of Sombath Somphone in a school that he established within his own city of Vientiane, Laos.

Funding, as earlier mentioned, was a major challenge in view of the termination and non-renewal of the projects from NED, OSI and OAK Foundation. But this did not deter AFAD from continuing its work and from looking for other possibilities to sustain support.

At the very end of the year, on the 6^{8th} anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, AFAD received the much-deserved Asia Human Rights and Democracy Award given by the Taiwan Democracy Foundation. Its Secretary-General received the award from Her Excellency President Tsai Ing Wen of the Republic of Taiwan on December 10, 2016.



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