

**Mandates of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances**

Ref.: AL ARE 6/2025

(Please use this reference in your reply)

5 November 2025

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 60/8 and 54/14.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning **allegations of arrest, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment of Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly (Retd), a national of India residing in the United Arab Emirates.**

Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly (Retd) is an Indian national and former United Nations Peacekeeper who was deployed in Lebanon as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Despite repeated diplomatic efforts, his fate and whereabouts reportedly remained concealed for eight months. At present, he continues to be held without charge at Al Wathba Detention Center, Abu Dhabi.

According to the information received:

Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly (Retd) is an Indian national and former United Nations Peacekeeper, residing in the United Arab Emirates since November 2016.

On 6 September 2024, Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly (Retd) was reportedly abducted in Dubai from the parking area of the Mall of the Emirates by two men in dishdashas, the traditional robes worn by men of the Arabian Peninsula, claiming to be "Dubai Police." Mr. Jaitly was subsequently subjected to enforced disappearance and held in secret detention between September 2024 and until May 2025, when the Emirati authorities informed the Embassy of India of his detention.

For more than eight months, the Emirati authorities reportedly refused to acknowledge the arrest of Mr. Jaitly and disclose his fate and whereabouts, despite the inquiries conducted by persons associated with him and by the Indian consular authorities in the United Arab Emirates. It is reported that during this time, the Embassy of India sent three *Notes Verbales* on the matter, none of which were answered, and Mr. Jaitly was denied access to legal counsel and contact with his family.

In May 2025, the Emirati authorities informed the Embassy of India that Mr. Jaitly was held on unspecified "national security" grounds at Al Wathba Detention Center, in Abu Dhabi.

It is reported that no charges have been disclosed and there is no evidence that any charges have been filed against him.

While the fate and whereabouts of Mr. Jaitly have now been confirmed, he reportedly remains without legal representation and access to family visits. Only three limited consular visits have reportedly been permitted since May 2025, which have all been heavily monitored.

During the first consular visit, Mr. Jaitly was described as “uncooperative,” although this was his first conversation with anyone in nearly a year and was reportedly visibly distressed. It is reported that he requested access to a military attaché, which was denied. During the second consular visit, Mr. Jaitly was reportedly unable or unwilling to provide information on the nature of the investigations against him, although it is suspected it could have been due to duress under surveillance. He reportedly requested a video call with a person associated with him, but the call went unanswered. The third consular visit took place on 14 August 2025. Mr. Jaitly reportedly stated that no matter how much he was investigated, he had not done anything wrong and there would be no findings against him. He reportedly took the opportunity to request consular help for other detainees in the detention center.

It is further reported that persons associated with Mr. Jaitly have requested the consular authorities to register their number with the prison authorities, to facilitate calls with Mr. Jaitly. However, this has allegedly not taken place yet.

Efforts to secure legal assistance for Mr. Jaitly have reportedly failed, as most practitioners decline involvement until prosecution begins, and after a year without charge or trial Mr. Jaitly remains in a legal vacuum. It is reported that due to regional legal practices, lawyers either claim they cannot act at this stage or demand high sums in escrow to lobby outside formal channels, an inaccessible route with no genuine guarantees for Mr. Jaitly.

It is reported that in September 2025, Mr. Jaitly managed to call a long-standing friend and stated he feels he is suffering from cognitive impairment setting in due to detention and pleaded for help. His enforced disappearance, his prolonged secret detention, lack of access to counsel and family, and present condition would suggest possibly torture or ill-treatment, underscoring the urgent need for independent medical evaluation, medical and psychological support, and protective intervention.

While we do not wish to prejudge the accuracy of these allegations, we are particularly concerned of the reported arrest, enforced disappearance, torture and ill-treatment of Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly. We would like to stress that the failure to acknowledge deprivation of liberty by State agents and refusal to acknowledge detention constitute an enforced disappearance.

If confirmed, these allegations could amount to violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular of articles 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 19 and the Convention against Torture to which the UAE acceded on 19 July 2012. These articles guarantee the State’s protection without discrimination, the right to life, the prohibition

of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, inherent dignity of the human persons, right to liberty and security of person, the right to recognition as a person before the law, the right to a fair and public hearing, the right to be presumed innocent until proved otherwise and the right to freedom of opinion and expression respectively. We also note the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of enforced disappearances and torture, which are *jus cogens* rules. Enforced disappearance constitutes, among others, a grave threat to life.

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide information on the factual and legal grounds for the arrest and detention of Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly and whether any charges have been pressed against him. Kindly also inform on his current state of health, his conditions of detention and measures taken to ensure that he can communicate with, and be visited by, his family, counsel and any other person of his choice. Please also indicate how his conditions are compatible with the Mandela Rules (UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners).
3. Please provide information on the measures taken by your Excellency's Government to carry out an investigation into the abovementioned allegations regarding the enforced disappearance of Mr. Jaitly. If no investigation has taken place, please explain why and how this is compatible with international human rights law and standards.
4. Please explain how Mr. Jaitly's detention, any charges that may have been brought against him and the corresponding judicial proceedings are compatible with the UAE's human rights obligations.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken to prevent any irreparable harm to the life and personal integrity of Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly, to halt the alleged violations and prevent their re-occurrence and in the event that the investigations support or suggest the allegations to be correct, to ensure the accountability of any person responsible of the alleged violations.

This communication and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

Further, we would like to inform your Excellency's Government that after having transmitted the information contained in the present communication to the Government, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention may also transmit the case through its regular procedure in order to render an opinion on whether the deprivation of liberty was arbitrary or not. The present communication in no way prejudices any opinion the Working Group may render. The Government is required to respond separately to the present communication and the regular procedure.

Please be informed that a copy of this letter has been also sent to India.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Gabriella Citroni  
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Matthew Gillett  
Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

## Annex

### Reference to international human rights law

In connection with above alleged facts and concerns, we would first like to refer your Excellency's Government to the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance of 1992, which establishes that no circumstances whatsoever may be invoked to justify enforced disappearance (art. 7). In particular, it states that no State shall practice, permit or tolerate enforced disappearances (art. 2) and that each State shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent and terminate acts of enforced disappearance in any territory under its jurisdiction (art. 3).

The Declaration underscores that accurate information on the detention of individuals and their place or places of detention, including transfers, shall be made promptly available to their family members, their counsel (art. 10(2)),<sup>7</sup> and that states should take any lawful and appropriate action to bring to justice persons presumed to be responsible for acts of enforced disappearance (art. 14). Article 9 of the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, guarantees the right to judicial remedy, while article 10 provides that any person deprived of liberty shall be held in an officially recognized place of detention and, that an official up-to-date register of all persons deprived of their liberty shall be maintained in every place of detention.

When the State detains an individual, it is held to a heightened level of diligence in protecting that individual's rights. We would therefore like to draw your attention to the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1988, in which principle 1 provides that All persons under any form of detention or imprisonment shall be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person. We would like to remind your Excellency's Government of the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as an international norm of jus cogens, and as reflected inter alia, in Human Rights Council Resolution 25/13 and General Assembly Resolution 68/156. In this context, we would also like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to paragraph 1 of General Assembly Resolution 68/156, which "[c]ondemns all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including through intimidation, which are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever and can thus never be justified, and calls upon all States to implement fully the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". We also draw your Excellency's Government's attention to paragraph 7b of Human Rights Council Resolution 16/23, which urges States "(t)o take persistent, determined and effective measures to have all allegations of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment investigated promptly, effectively and impartially by an independent, competent domestic authority, as well as whenever there is reasonable ground to believe that such an act has been committed; to hold persons who encourage, order, tolerate or perpetrate such acts responsible, to have them brought to justice and punished in a manner commensurate with the gravity of the offence, including the officials in charge of the place of detention

where the prohibited act is found to have been committed; and to take note, in this respect, of the Principles on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the updated set of principles for the protection of human rights through action to combat impunity as a useful tool in efforts to prevent and combat torture.”