

Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Ref.: AL USA 14/2026

(Please use this reference in your reply)

18 May 2026

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers; Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 53/12, 54/14, 52/20 and 53/9.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning allegations that the U.S. Executive Branch has sought to obstruct access by lawyers to their immigrant clients and punish immigration lawyers whose views or actions, or the views of their clients may not align with the Government's deportation and immigration priorities. These executive measures may amount to interference with the independence and work of the legal profession, which undermines the fairness of, and public trust in, the justice system.

We are specifically concerned about the impact of actions by the Executive Branch on the immigration law practice of Ms. Louis Carhart, Mr. Kevin Herrera, Mr. Clay Jackson, Ms. Katrina Kilgren, Mr. Andrew Lattarulo, Mr. Amir Makled, Ms. Khiabett Osuna, Ms. Jennifer Peyton, Mr. Joshua Schroeder, Ms. Elisabeth Sethi, and Ms. Jacqueline Spreadbury.

Special Procedures mandate-holders have expressed their concern to your Excellency's Government on 17 February 2025, 6 May 2025, and 12 December 2025 over what appears to be an organized, deliberate effort to harass and punish legal professionals, law firms, legal organizations, and associations of lawyers in retaliation for their legal work ([AL USA 7/2025](#), [AL U.S.A 15/2025](#), and [AL USA 39/2025](#), respectively). Recalling that international law and standards protect the independent functioning of the legal profession, we regret that we have not received any reply to these letters yet.

We remain gravely concerned about threats to the independence of the legal profession and the work of immigration lawyers. These concerns have deepened in light of the new developments referred to below.

According to the information received:

Context

Since the beginning of his second presidential term in January 2025, the Administration of President Donald J. Trump, acting through the Department of

Justice (“DOJ”), and the Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”), has undertaken actions that appear to seek to punish lawyers and legal services organizations solely for either their professional activities related to immigration, or because of a perception that, in undertaking their professional activities, these organizations may be opposed to the Government’s deportation and immigration priorities.

According to the information received, DHS has significantly obstructed attorney-client communications, which are necessary to legal representation. In some cases, this obstruction has been physical: DHS has barred lawyers from entering detention centres despite valid paperwork. In other cases, lawyers have been unable to locate or communicate with their clients due to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (“ICE”) deficient detainee locator system, which routinely lacks updated detainee information. The Executive Branch has also sought to interfere with the legal profession by summarily terminating its contracts with legal organizations providing assistance to asylum seekers and immigrants, particularly immigrant detainees; by imposing punishment on attorneys representing immigrants, including disciplinary action against lawyers for filing lawsuits advancing the rights of immigrants that were deemed “frivolous”; and by creating economic barriers for those seeking to enter the legal profession as immigrant rights’ attorneys, including by restricting loan forgiveness for attorneys the Executive Branch accuses of “aiding or abetting” violations of immigration law. The information indicates that the DHS, particularly ICE, has also sought to interfere with individual attorney-client relationships by denying attorneys and clients access to each other, calling for sanctions or reportedly “blacklisting” attorneys for their advocacy, seizing devices containing sensitive and privileged information, and other punitive measures.

These interferences occur in a context in which immigrant communities are increasingly targeted through escalating and expedited deportations and limits on immigration. These limits have been implemented by dismantling or seeking to terminate programs allowing U.S. citizens to sponsor family members’ visas,¹ restricting refugee admissions,² attempting to end the Temporary Protected Status (“TPS”) and humanitarian parole programs for nationals of most countries previously designated for TPS, “re-reviewing” previously approved immigration permissions,³ and pursuing an announced goal of deporting one million immigrants annually.

The information suggests that DHS and ICE officers’ presence has increased at immigrants’ interviews with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”). Immigrants have been reportedly detained when they appeared at their scheduled USCIS interviews during their lawful and regular pursuit of citizenship, permanent residency, and asylum. Some reports have also noted that DHS has continued arresting people in or near immigration courts. The detention of clients at USCIS interviews not only undermines established immigration procedures and harms principles of due process but also puts

¹ Proclamation No. 10998, 90 Fed. Reg. 59717 (Dec. 19, 2025).

² Exec. Order No. 14163, 90 Fed. Reg. 8459 (Jan. 30, 2025).

³ USCIS Policy Memorandum 602-0192, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (Dec. 2, 2025).

attorneys in the position of advising clients on unpredictable situations in which clients could be punished for not attending scheduled appointments or indefinitely detained in inhumane conditions or, in certain instances, subjected to enforced disappearance or exposed to the risk of being subjected to enforced disappearance upon deportation.

Barriers to attorney-client communication

The information suggests that as the Government expands the detention of immigrants in pursuit of increased deportation, it has failed to ensure adequate infrastructure to protect immigrants' rights or allow lawyers to locate and communicate with their clients. This has so weakened attorneys' ability to represent clients effectively that many see it as "impossible." Reports suggest that ICE's website for its online detainee locator system is rarely updated and holds inaccurate information about immigrant detainees' whereabouts, making it very difficult to establish contact and, at times, placing them in a situation of enforced disappearance. Although ICE's website and its field officers tell attorneys and family members to call ICE field offices for such information, field office phone lines are often unmonitored or do not have voicemail boxes. According to the information, when attorneys have raised this issue, they have been told that their clients can call them from within the facilities. In many cases, this has not been possible.

The information received explains that when attorneys have attempted to speak with clients by traveling to detention centres, they have faced significant challenges. These challenges include being made to wait outside of facilities for hours, being incorrectly told their clients are not present, and even being physically harmed by crowd control weapons. In many cases, these challenges have persisted despite the lawyers having fulfilled the legal criteria for representation by filing a "Notice of Entry of Appearance of Attorney or Accredited Representative" ("G-28 Form"). Even when attorneys can meet with their detained clients, their time together is allegedly very limited and often does not take place in confidential settings.

Reports suggest that in numerous instances, DHS has interrogated, transferred, and even deported clients without them being allowed the opportunity to speak with their retained attorneys. The lack of access to legal representation has led to clients suffering prolonged incommunicado detention in inhumane conditions and even being deported to countries in which their lives are at risk, including the danger of being subjected to enforced disappearances. In many such cases, lawyers have been unable to pursue legal relief on behalf of their clients, in part due to the requirement that habeas corpus petitions must be filed in the district where a detainee is held at the time of filing. When such information is withheld or inaccurate, the consequences can be dire. Reports suggest that this pattern is so extensive and systemic as to demonstrate a deliberate attempt to deprive immigrants of legal representation, and to keep lawyers from their clients.

Interference with the legal profession

The information demonstrates that the current administration has interfered with the legal profession by (1) summarily cancelling contracts and communications with legal organizations that aid detainees, (2) mandating stricter punishment and use of sanctions against immigrant rights' attorneys, and (3) creating economic barriers of entry for immigrant rights' attorneys.

(1) Contract cancellations: In January 2025, the DOJ ordered federally-funded Legal Orientation Providers to terminate all legal access programs administered by the Executive Office for Immigration Review, including the Legal Orientation Program, the Immigration Court Helpdesk, the Family Group Legal Orientation Program, and the Counsel for Children Initiative.⁴ The nonprofit organizations that were contractors under these programs were engaged to explain basic rights and court procedures to unrepresented people and facilitate referrals to pro bono lawyers. The termination of these programs removed a primary pathway for many detainees to learn their rights and access legal assistance.

Organizations reportedly have had to divert significant resources to reconstruct access to legal assistance and orientation to detained immigrants. The contract cancellations have reportedly obstructed representation of individuals transferred to, or at risk of transfer to, Guantánamo Bay, where there is no system for attorney access – e.g., no visitation procedures, no confidential calls, and no reliable method to confirm the identity of those transferred or detained at Guantánamo Bay.

(2) Punishment and sanctions of lawyers: In March 2025, President Trump issued a memorandum titled “Preventing Abuses of the Legal System and the Federal Court.”⁵ The memo asserts, without providing any basis, that immigration attorneys and pro bono law firms “frequently coach clients” to conceal material facts or misrepresent circumstances in asylum claims, “all in an attempt to circumvent immigration policies enacted to protect [U.S.] national security and deceive the immigration authorities and courts into granting them undeserved relief.” It also directs the Attorney General and DHS to impose sanctions, seek stricter oversight, and pursue other disciplinary measures against attorneys and firms for alleged misconduct, including “filing frivolous litigation or engaging in fraudulent practices” and violating the rules of professional conduct. These directives appear to seek the imposition of punishment and sanctions on lawyers for merely fulfilling their legal obligations to their clients.

In the context of these presidential directives, the DOJ has reportedly used a variety of measures against immigration lawyers. Reportedly, the DOJ moved for sanctions against at least one attorney, Mr. Joshua Schroeder. The DOJ's alleged that Mr. Schroeder had acted “in bad faith, unreasonably and vexatiously” by asserting that his client faced deportation under the Alien Enemies Act and by persisting in that course of action after the DOJ had

⁴ [AL USA 39/2025](#).

⁵ Press Release, White House, *Prev, Preventing Abuses of the Legal System and the Federal Court* (March 22, 2025); [AL U.S.A 15/2025](#).

clarified that the deportation sought was based on “ordinary” immigration law. Separately, the DOJ has reportedly “blacklisted” some immigration lawyers. Reported “blacklisting” practices include ICE counsel or officers failing to respond to attorneys’ emails and phone calls, refusing to confer with attorneys despite judges’ orders in ongoing cases, denying uncontroversial motions without explanation, and appealing routine rulings. Reportedly, some “blacklisted” attorneys have gotten off the blacklist by “apologizing.”

In the same context, DOJ has promulgated a federal rule that may create additional legal barriers for immigrant rights’ lawyers in representing their clients. On 6 February 2026, the DOJ issued an interim final rule (“IFR”). Effective as of 9 March 2026, the IFR, *inter alia*, codifies a presumption of summary dismissal for all appeals of any decision issued on or after 9 March 2026 unless a majority of permanent Board of Immigration Appeals members vote within ten days to accept the case for review; reduces the 30-day appeal deadline for an Immigration Judge’s decision to only ten days unless an exception applies (ten-day deadline); and imposes an automatic waiver for any issues not raised in the Notice of Appeal (waiver provision). In other words, the IFR shortens appeal deadlines and increases the possibility of summary dismissal of cases.

While the Executive Branch has the right to promulgate new federal rules aimed at legitimate objectives and while this regulation is being contested in federal court, the IFR appears to be part of a pattern of measures aimed at materially limiting lawyers’ ability to represent their clients.⁶ The judge overseeing the federal court case stated that “under the IFR, an individual subject to an adverse decision from an Immigration Judge has ten days (except in certain asylum cases) to obtain counsel (if not already represented), to arrange for payment of the \$1030 filing fee or to request a waiver, to identify all appellate issues (often without the benefit of a written decision), and to prepare and file a notice of appeal—all on pain of waiving any issue not raised in the Notice of Appeal and thereby defeating any opportunity for further administrative and (perhaps) judicial review.”⁷ The IFR thus undermines the ability of immigrant rights’ lawyers to communicate with clients, assess the record, and provide effective representation to clients.

(3) Economic barriers for immigration lawyers: The current Administration has reportedly implemented economic barriers that appear aimed at dissuading law students and lawyers from practicing immigration law as part of their legal practice. For instance, in July 2025, President Trump signed the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act,” which makes significant changes to law student loans and repayment plans.⁸ Effective on 1 July 2026, the law will eliminate the Grad PLUS loans and capped federal borrowing for professional programs, which includes law school programs, at \$50,000/year and \$200,000 total. Aspiring lawyers without independent means must now seek private loans in order to attend law school, increasing the cost of a legal education substantially and

⁶ See *Amica Center for Immigrant Rights, et al. v. Executive Office for Immigration Review, et al.*, Case 1:26-cv-00696 (DDC 2026).

⁷ *Id.* at 55.

⁸ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1/text>.

limiting new lawyers' ability to enter low-paying professions such as public interest law.⁹

In this context, the Executive Branch also allegedly targeted those who work in immigration law through limits to loan forgiveness programs. For years, immigration lawyers have relied on federal loan forgiveness to allow them to work for legal services organizations that cannot afford to pay prevailing salaries for lawyers, making loan servicing nearly impossible without assistance. New regulations take aim at this economic model. On 30 October 2025, the US Department of Education released a final rule amending the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.¹⁰ Effective on 1 July 2026, the rule will empower the Department of Education to disqualify employers from the PSLF program that are deemed to have a "substantial illegal purpose."¹¹ The Executive Branch has included "aiding or abetting" the violation of federal immigration laws as one example of a "substantial illegal purpose" that will make employees who represent immigrants ineligible for loan forgiveness. As discussed above, the Executive Branch has made clear its unsubstantiated view that immigration lawyers as a class are engaged in putatively unlawful activities.

Detention facilities

The information received shows that the Trump administration impaired immigration lawyers' ability to communicate with and represent their clients by strategically using and expanding certain overcrowded detention facilities across the United States that are ill-suited to house detainees and geographically difficult for attorneys to access, especially without any reliable mechanism to locate or contact their clients.

Reports suggest that there has been a disproportionate trend of domestic transfers of detainees to Southern states, where 14 of the 20 largest ICE detention facilities stretch across Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. These 20 facilities hold 59 percent of ICE's detainees, and the 14 facilities in the Southern states appear to be favoured by the Executive Branch because they provide a specific advantage: a jurisdiction where judicial decisions have, significantly more often than in other jurisdictions, allowed the Executive Branch's deportation policies to stand. This jurisdiction is also home to facilities that are often located in remote, deserted areas, forcing attorneys to drive for hours for a chance to speak with their clients.

According to the information, the current Administration has justified its expansion of immigration detention facilities and choice of facilities for detainee transfer on the basis of the "lack of capacity" of existing facilities. For instance, a 29 January 2025 executive memorandum ordered the expansion of the Migrants Operations Center at Guantánamo Bay "to provide additional detention space...."¹² Reports suggest that this rationale is created by the

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program, 90 Fed. Reg. 48966 (Oct. 31, 2025); Restoring Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Presidential Actions, The White House (Mar. 7, 2025).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² Memorandum on Expanding Migrant Operations Center at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay to Full Capacity, 30 Daily.Comp.Pres.Doc. (Jan. 28, 2025).

Executive branch itself, as transfers are made to the same few centralized facilities, causing overcrowding in key areas and providing a pretext to send detainees to places like “Alligator Alcatraz,” Fort Bliss, and Guantánamo Bay, where immigrants face obstacles in contacting their lawyers.

The information suggests that many of these detention facilities operate under inhumane physical conditions that impede attorneys’ access to their clients and hinder their ability to document abuse or seek emergency and other legal relief. The following facilities are illustrative examples.

Broadview Facility

In September 2025, DHS launched “Operation Midway Blitz,” arresting more than 3,300 people in the greater Chicago area. Though the stated goal was to target “gang members, rapists, kidnappers, and drug traffickers,” most of the arrested individuals reportedly had no criminal record. Many of them were also pursuing asylum and other forms of legal relief or were U.S. citizens protesting immigration officers’ actions. Many of those arrested were brought to a facility in the Chicago suburb of Broadview, Illinois (“Broadview facility”).

The Broadview Facility is reportedly designed to serve as a “holding” or “processing” facility where detainees are held for only a few hours at a time. However, since “Operation Midway Blitz,” it has reportedly held individuals for days at a time. A recent class action lawsuit has alleged that the facility has been overcrowded and that those detained have had to sleep on plastic chairs or a dirty concrete floor; have been denied sufficient food and water; lack adequate medical care, including prescription medication for pre-existing conditions; have had to use a toilet in a public space and lack showers altogether; and are subject to degrading and abusive treatment by immigration officers.¹³

The information received suggests that many detainees at the Broadview facility had been denied the right to legal counsel. Those who had lawyers were not given the opportunity to speak with them, and those who did not have an attorney were not allowed to contact anyone to seek legal representation. Attorneys also had little to no success reaching existing or potential clients with phone calls because the phone line was unmonitored and had no voicemail box. Those who physically visited the facility have been reportedly turned away or physically harmed by crowd control weapons.

This denial of access continued despite a federal judge’s order in early November 2025 requiring the improvement of such conditions at the Broadview facility. The order specifically included a requirement that immigration officials allow detainees to call attorneys in a confidential space at no cost and that they be provided with a list of pro bono attorneys in both English and Spanish. The order also prohibited immigration officers from misrepresenting documents provided to detainees to sign. Illinois officials who were allowed to tour the facility in late December 2025 reportedly expressed concerns about a continued lack of access to legal counsel, privacy, and medical care.

¹³ Compl., *Moreno Gonzalez, et al. v. Noem, et al.*, No. 25-cv-13323, (N.D. Ill. 10/30/25).

Oregon facilities

Reports indicate similar issues of overcrowding, inhumane conditions and lack of attorney-client access at the ICE facilities in Oregon. Detainees are reportedly taken to one of three ICE field offices in Portland, Medford, and Eugene, where they are then transferred out of Oregon with little warning and minimal opportunity to consult counsel. Immigration detention in Oregon reportedly increased by 550% in October 2025 as compared to previous months.

The information suggests a worsening pattern of restricted and inconsistent lawyer access to clients: visits that were previously permitted are now denied, delayed for hours, sharply limited in duration (ranging between 60 seconds to 30 minutes), and conducted in settings that do not protect confidentiality. The ICE facility in Eugene, which previously accepted attorney visits upon presentation of a valid G-28 Form, did not accept such visits. Immigration lawyers have also been impeded by the lack of or inaccurate information in ICE's online detainee locator system.

Attorneys in Oregon are reportedly given conflicting explanations for their clients' detention, are prevented from exchanging critical documents, and are given no clear policy governing attorney visitation, which is often left to the discretion of individual officers. In one case, a client was taken out of the back door of the Portland facility and was transferred out of state while their attorney was waiting in the lobby to speak with them. In a different case, an attorney was told that her prospective client denied her visit, when the individual had in fact requested to speak with an attorney.

Guantánamo Bay

Since 4 February 2025, the Trump administration began transferring detainees to Guantánamo Bay, which is a U.S. military detention facility in Cuba known for holding alleged terrorist suspects often without charge during the "War on Terror." The facility in Guantánamo Bay, designed for alleged combatants, has reportedly held immigrant detainees "incommunicado, without access to attorneys, family or the outside world",¹⁴ thus placing them outside the protection of the law and in a situation that can be qualified as enforced disappearance.

Although the Trump administration has publicized photographs and videos of detainees being transferred to the facility, it has consistently refused to provide immigration lawyers with basic information, including detainees' identities, legal status, location, or means of communication. Attorneys whose clients were moved to Guantánamo reportedly have only been told that their clients were in transit or no longer at their previous facility, effectively making their clients "disappear[] into a black box."¹⁵ Immigration lawyers also reportedly received no notice of these transfers and were unable to locate their clients in

¹⁴ Complaint at ¶ 2, *Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center v. Dept. of Homeland Security*, No. 1:25-cv-00418 (D.D.C. Feb. 12, 2025).

¹⁵ *Id.* ¶ 5.

Guantánamo Bay through ICE’s online detainee locator system. This denial of access and information reportedly made it impossible for attorneys to verify the legal basis or duration of their clients’ confinement, ensure their clients’ appearance at court ordered proceedings, or raise claims arising from the inhumane conditions at Guantánamo Bay, including the lack of food, water, space, sanitation, and medical supplies.

“Alligator Alcatraz”

Since 3 July 2025, the Trump administration began transferring immigrant detainees to “Alligator Alcatraz,” a Florida detention facility in the middle of the Everglades, a national park. Reports indicate that the facility is overcrowded, unsanitary, and lacking basic health and safety measures. Detainees are held in 300 square foot cages shared by 32 people inside plastic sheeted tents that flood during storms. Frequent power outages have left detainees with no light or ventilation in extreme heat and cold weather. Toilets routinely clog, overflowing with human waste, and the tents are overrun with mosquitos and other insects, including maggots sometimes present in food.

Reportedly, attorneys have been unable to reliably locate their clients at “Alligator Alcatraz,” preventing them from providing even basic legal representation. ICE’s online detainee locator system allegedly provides no information or redirects attorneys to call a different centre, which likewise provides no information. Florida’s Department of Corrections inmate locator also provides no information and does not even list the facility. “Alligator Alcatraz” reportedly has no publicly available phone number, no functioning email address, and no process for scheduling calls or visits. Calls and emails sent to ICE Miami Field Office reportedly have been left unanswered or undelivered.

When immigration attorneys attempt to visit their clients in person, they are reportedly stopped at armed checkpoints and barred from entering entirely. If they are not physically turned away, immigration lawyers are reportedly told to complete forms onsite and wait days for a response, or to obtain approval from Florida’s Department of Corrections without any clear explanation of how to do so.

Interference with immigration attorneys – limited or no access to clients

The information demonstrates a pattern of interference with immigration lawyers’ access to their clients. The reported pattern includes inaccurate or insufficient information about attorneys’ clients in ICE’s online detainee locator system; unanswered phone calls and emails to detention centres and ICE field offices, often without voicemail options; and inaccurate or incomplete information provided by ICE personnel. It also reportedly includes the transfer of detainees to other detention centres despite attorneys’ requests to meet with their clients, the denial of lawyers’ entry to detention centres despite valid representation documents, and other systematic barriers to access. The following individual cases are illustrative examples of this pattern.

Case of Ms. Louise Carhart

On 16 June 2025, Ms. Louise Carhart learned that ICE had detained one of her clients at the Broadview ICE facility outside of Chicago. Allegedly, when she attempted to confirm this information, the information she received from ICE's online detainee locator system was either insufficient or inaccurate. At first, the system confirmed that her client was in ICE custody but did not provide information as to where he was detained. Ms. Carhart attempted several calls to the ICE's Chicago field office, but each of the calls between 16 and 20 June 2025 was unanswered or forwarded to a voicemail box. Ms. Carhart and the client's family were unable to reach the client during the entire duration of the client's detention at the Broadview facility. Reportedly, on the day of the client's transfer out of the Broadview facility, the ICE's online detainee locator system incorrectly showed that the client was being held at Clay County Detention Center in Manchester, Kentucky, although the client was in fact sent to the Campbell County Detention Center in Kentucky.

Reportedly, Ms. Carhart's impeded access to confirm the location of and contact her client undermined her ability to represent her client. For instance, Ms. Carhart could not obtain her client's signature on legal documents or file for bond, resulting in her client being detained for nine days before Ms. Carhart could even begin to seek legal relief.

Case of Mr. Kevin Herrera

Mr. Kevin Herrera has reportedly faced consistent impeded access to his clients, which resulted in pressure being placed on his clients to sign legally binding paperwork without the advice of counsel. For instance, on 12 September 2025, one of Mr. Herrera's clients was reportedly detained without a warrant on a commercial street in Chicago. His client did not appear in ICE's online detainee locator system. Despite being unable to locate his client, Mr. Herrera attempted to access his client at the Broadview facility, since many detainees were known to have been taken to this facility. Mr. Herrera's efforts to knock on the door of the facility and to communicate with officers walking into the facility were ignored. Without other recourse and in an attempt to clarify his client's fate and whereabouts, Mr. Herrera held a press conference with his client's family, friends, elected representatives, organizers from Latino Union, faith leaders, and members of the press. After this press conference, Mr. Herrera's client was able to call his wife. Although Mr. Herrera was able to speak briefly with his client during that phone call, an immigration officer was sitting next to his client during the phone call and told him to end the call upon learning the client was speaking with his attorney. Reportedly because the officers heard his client speaking to Mr. Herrera, the client was forced to sign paperwork in English that he did not understand, despite insisting that he did not want to sign anything without his lawyer. The client believed initially that he was pressured to sign voluntary departure paperwork, but he later learned that the final paperwork was an acknowledgement of transfer. That same day, the client was transferred out of state to a facility in Michigan on a full bus, having been placed on it at the last minute.

Mr. Herrera also had another client who was detained at the Broadview facility. Reportedly, this client had a valid work permit and received prosecutorial discretion deferring any potential immigration enforcement by U.S. authorities. Mr. Herrera attempted to provide this paperwork to the officers to demonstrate his client's legal status and proof of representation, but the facility officers refused to take them. Officers reportedly coerced his client into signing voluntary departure paperwork by threatening indefinite detention at the facility in inhumane conditions.

Mr. Herrera's inability to access his clients prevented him from counselling them on their legal options and pressured the clients to sign legally binding paperwork without his advice. Additionally, the detention reportedly accelerated client's court proceedings, with one of the client's court appearances being moved from one year away to one month. This undermined Mr. Herrera's ability and valuable time to prepare for emergency legal filings and upcoming hearings.

Case of Ms. Jennifer Peyton

Ms. Jennifer Peyton has represented several clients who have been detained at Broadview facility, which she describes as currently operating as a "black hole." These clients include individuals who were detained at their USCIS interviews despite their pending asylum applications. Ms. Peyton reportedly was unable to locate and communicate with her clients while they were detained at the Broadview facility. For instance, one of Ms. Peyton's clients was detained before their scheduled asylum interview based on a warrant for an administrative arrest. Despite having filed notice that she represented this client, she was not contacted to coordinate her client's arrest or placement into detention. When Ms. Peyton asked one of the arresting officers whether Ms. Peyton could call her client or conduct a legal visit at the Broadview facility, the officer denied her request, saying that the client could instead call her from the facility. Despite this assurance, the client was reportedly unable to call Ms. Peyton while he was held at the facility. This pattern continued with her other clients who were detained at the Broadview facility.

Ms. Peyton could not confirm two of her clients' presence at the Broadview facility. The ICE online detainee locator system did not provide any information about their location but said to contact the field office. Because the field office's phone number is not monitored and has no voicemail mechanism, Ms. Peyton could not verify their location through ICE's online detainee locator system.

This denial of access reportedly created serious repercussions for her clients. One client was deported before being able to talk to Ms. Peyton or signing any documents stipulating to the deportation, despite having a pending asylum application and eligibility for cancellation of removal. With another client, Ms. Peyton had only one day to speak to her client before his bond hearing despite the client being detained for almost two weeks.

Case of Ms. Khiabett Osuna

On 15 August 2025, Ms. Khiabett Osuna escorted one of her clients to an USCIS interview for adjustment of status. Ms. Osuna and her client were told that the USCIS would be unable to make a decision on the client's case because the officer was too busy. They were directed to speak with ICE in the basement of the building. ICE officers in the basement stated that the client's application for adjustment of status was denied; no reasons for the denial and no formal written decision was provided. ICE officers then immediately detained the elderly client who had multiple health conditions that require medication.

Ms. Osuna reportedly faced multiple obstacles contacting her client in detention. Although the ICE officers who detained her client informed Ms. Osuna that the client would be in the Broadview facility, her client's information never appeared in the ICE's online detainee locator system for the first month of her detainment. After monitoring the system for several days, Ms. Osuna sent multiple emails to ICE to inquire about her client's whereabouts. She eventually was notified that her client was now being detained in Kentucky. Since she could not access her client, Ms. Osuna could not receive her client's signature for her notice of appeal form. Because the client was held in an unknown location, her lawyer and family were unable to ensure she had her medication, endangering her life.

Case of Ms. Jacqueline Spreadbury

Jacqueline Spreadbury, a National Lawyers' Guild volunteer attorney in Chicago, reportedly went to the Broadview facility on 27 September 2025 to meet with two clients who were arrested while protesting the inhumane treatment of migrants. At the time, a protest was in process outside the facility. Around 6 p.m., she and a colleague, with their hands up, approached federal agents in full riot gear. She presented multiple forms of identification and informed the agents that she was an attorney there to speak with her clients within the facility. The officers initially ignored her and then shook their heads "no" when she invoked her clients' constitutional right to an attorney. After media reportedly began filming, an officer who declined to identify himself, asked her for her clients' names and then told her she could not see them. She reportedly offered to speak by phone and provided her contact information; the officer reportedly said he would see what he could do but never returned.

While she waited, officers reportedly began to spray tear gas into the crowd without warning or dispersal orders, boxing her in as they blocked the sidewalk. When another officer asked her why she was there, he laughed at her request for access and told her it would not happen. After roughly 90 minutes, during which officers continued to use tear gas and pepper balls on protestors and press, she tried a secondary entrance, again identifying herself as counsel and citing the prolonged denial of access; officers told her "[t]hat ain't happening right now, come back in an hour" and warned of a coming "big manoeuvre" that would prevent anyone from helping her.

According to the information, when she returned to the facility an hour later, she was told that “nobody is going in there.” Around 11 p.m., she learned that one of the clients she had been trying to reach since 6 p.m. had been hospitalized earlier that day, and that another had been interviewed by a federal officer without counsel while she stood outside seeking access. By the time she reached the hospital, the hospitalized client had been transferred. The remaining clients were not released until after 2 a.m., without the opportunity to speak with a lawyer while held at the Broadview Facility.

One week later, Ms. Spreadbury reportedly went to a DHS field office in Lombard, Illinois, and was again denied in-person access to her clients who had been detained for protesting immigration enforcement. Officers initially directed her to the ICE detainee locator phone number, which was not helpful because her clients are U.S. citizens. After pressing for information via the building’s intercom, she was eventually told that seven of her nine clients were being held there, with no information on the other two clients. She was allowed brief phone calls with the detained clients; DHS officers reportedly pressured one client to hang up.

Case of Ms. Katrina Kilgren

According to the information received, during a one-year period, attorney Katrina Kilgren was repeatedly denied access to existing and prospective clients in the ICE field office in Eugene, Oregon. She was able to visit only one individual and was otherwise denied entry, with guards repeatedly telling her, “not this week.” She reportedly was also barred from accompanying clients to scheduled appointments despite providing the required forms to confirm that she represented specific clients. On one occasion, she was denied entry even after notifying the ICE Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer (“SDDO”) that she was present to represent her client at his appointment. The SDDO reportedly stated no attorney would be allowed past the lobby for “just” an appointment and would allow accompaniment only at specific proceedings, without clarifying what qualified. On another occasion, a security officer reportedly told Ms. Kilgren she would be considered to be trespassing if she did not leave immediately and prevented the client from bringing a signed representation form to the appointment.

Her clients reportedly informed her that they could not contact anyone outside of the Eugene Facility while detained and could only do so after transfer. One client reportedly requested multiple times to speak with his attorney but was unable to do so until he was transferred to another facility in Washington.

According to the information received, Ms. Kilgren was repeatedly denied access to speak with potential clients. In early November 2025, she was allowed into the lobby once ICE had moved people out of the building into a vehicle, when she was told that nobody was detained at the facility. When she asked to provide legal services to potential detainees, she was told that attorneys would be allowed access only if the supervising officer “has time” and transportation would not be delayed for detainees to speak with counsel. The supervising

officer reportedly told her that detainees at Eugene Facility did not have rights – including specifically the right to an attorney.

This denial of access likely resulted in interrogations of her clients without counsel, foreclosed challenges to potentially unlawful detentions at the Eugene Facility and denied her clients timely information about their rights and possible defences to deportation.

Case of Ms. Elisabeth Sethi

According to the information received, Elisabeth Sethi, an Oregon-based attorney hired on 28 October 2025 to represent a client held at Northwest ICE Processing Center (“NWIPC”) in Washington, faced significant difficulties accessing her client. Despite immediate attempts to call her client, the earliest slot she could secure was six days after she was engaged, by which time the client had been transferred to the Florence Correction Center in Arizona. After the transfer, she continued to face barriers to scheduling, despite calling the Center multiple times per day between 31 October and 5 November 2025. The staff reportedly told her to schedule online, but the online scheduling system reportedly showed scheduling as unavailable for her client.

On 5 November 2025, she reportedly learned her client had an immigration court hearing set for 7 November 2025. After contacting the Center again, she was finally given a video appointment on 6 November.

The delay reportedly impaired her representation at the hearing, as her client was not fully informed about relief options and Ms. Sethi was unable to verify DHS facts and allegations until the day of the court appearance. The delay also undermined her efforts to obtain the client’s release on bond: on 4 November 2025, she filed for a motion for bond redetermination with the Tacoma Immigration Court while the client was still at NWIPC and had a hearing scheduled for 4 November 2025. However, the bond hearing was cancelled when her client was transferred to Arizona.

Attacks and harassment against immigration lawyers

The information details numerous instances in which lawyers were attacked and harassed for their exercise of the legal profession. Lawyers also reportedly had their devices searched and confiscated, exposing privileged information to government discovery. Law enforcement officers have reportedly attempted to intimidate pro bono lawyers in apparent attempts to intimidate and “chill” their representation of immigrant clients. The following cases are illustrative examples of this pattern.

Case of Mr. Joshua Schroeder

According to the information received, Joshua Schroeder, a California-based attorney, reportedly faced sanctions for zealous advocacy for a client involved in the class action habeas corpus litigation in *Arevalo Millan v. Trump*. Although Mr. Schroeder and his client won a preliminary injunction and his client was

separately granted asylum, the client was reportedly not released from detention despite government assurances to the court. ICE officers reportedly offered the client \$1,000 to accept deportation without conferring with counsel. Reportedly, after initially rejecting the offer, the client destroyed his asylum paperwork, believing it would secure him conditional release to gather his family and belongings before departing. It did not. His client reportedly was removed to Venezuela, where he fears persecution.

In a separate case, Mr. Schroeder secured a court ruling prohibiting the removal of one of his clients from the United States. Reportedly, despite this order, the client was flown to the U.S. territory of Guam without prior notice, despite his involvement in the class action litigation. Mr. Schroeder only learned about this removal when his client was able to call him from Guam. Mr. Schroeder reportedly filed a new petition in federal court in Guam seeking to halt any removal and sought assurances from the government attorney that any removal would be to Laos, which is his client's country of origin. The government attorney reportedly refused to give that assurance. The federal court reportedly dismissed Mr. Schroeder's petition, and despite his appeal to that dismissal, his client was reportedly deported to Laos.

In response to this advocacy, the DOJ reportedly asked a federal judge to impose sanctions on the basis that Mr. Schroeder was acting "in bad faith, unreasonably and vexatiously," and asserted that Mr. Schroeder had falsely claimed his client faced deportation under the Alien Enemies Act after DOJ allegedly clarified that it was proceeding under "ordinary" immigration law. Reportedly, White House spokesperson stated that these sanctions were "essential to deter future attorneys from bringing baseless actions to the court." Then-DOJ Chief of Staff posted a link to a Politico article on X captioned "In case you were wondering, representing a client pro bono is NOT a defense to lying to the court or engaging in vexatious litigation." Mr. Schroeder reportedly views these sanctions not only as a personal attack on his zealous advocacy, but also as an effort to deter other lawyers from providing pro bono representation to immigrants.

Case of Mr. Andrew Lattarulo

According to the information, Andrew Lattarulo is a Massachusetts-based immigration attorney whose firm represents thousands of clients involved in immigration-related proceedings. In September 2025, Mr. Lattarulo was detained at Boston Logan International Airport by federal agents upon return from Aruba. Reportedly, he was given no reason for the detention and was told it was "standard procedure," despite no other passengers being approached. The agents reportedly identified themselves only by identification number and told Mr. Lattarulo's brother, who began recording, that he could not film.

Although Mr. Lattarulo identified himself, showed his bar card, and warned that his business phone contained privileged and confidential client communications, agents reportedly insisted on seizing it, saying that they would physically remove it if he did not hand it over. Agents reportedly did not search his bags or his person. Mr. Lattarulo's device was seized following public statements he made about the allegedly illegal practices of immigration

enforcement agents. After the seizure, he was reportedly locked out of his social media accounts for about a week. Since the encounter, Mr. Lattarulo no longer carries devices with client information while travelling internationally.

Case of Mr. Amir Makled

According to the information, Amir Makled, a Michigan-based attorney who represented University of Michigan students arrested during a demonstration in support of human rights in Palestine, was returning from a family vacation in April 2025, when he was detained at the Detroit Metro Airport in Michigan for almost two hours by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”). Reportedly, CBP agents made clear that they knew Mr. Makled was an attorney representing University of Michigan students and demanded to search his device, which he initially refused because it contained privileged and confidential client information.

When the agents reportedly threatened to confiscate his phone unless he allowed a search, Mr. Makled permitted them to view only his contact list. Agents reportedly then questioned Mr. Makled about clients on that list – *e.g.*, how he knew them, what he knew about them, and what they did. He refused to answer these questions, asserting attorney-client privilege. Since the incident, Mr. Makled reportedly fears that his name will be flagged for future border searches when he travels internationally and thus does not travel with devices that contain client information.

Case of Mr. Clay Jackson

According to the information, attorney Clay Jackson provided pro bono immigration advice to a mixed-status family in his Texas neighbourhood about their rights when interacting with immigration enforcement officers in early March 2025. Two days later, two plain-clothes officers reportedly came to his home, verified his identity, then told him, “We have information to suggest that you are obstructing an ongoing immigration investigation.” When Mr. Jackson asked for their names, badge numbers, and agency, they reportedly refused to provide this information. After they asked to come inside and began to look over his shoulder into his home, Mr. Jackson shut the door and said he was calling his lawyer. Reportedly, Mr. Jackson discovered that his Ring camera was not filming and his Wi-Fi had been shut off during the interaction.

Since this interaction, Mr. Jackson reportedly contacted a journalist about these events and left his job as in-house attorney the day the resulting article was published. Reportedly, he has feared ongoing surveillance. When working in West Texas, he reportedly noticed two to three border patrol trucks tailing him on rural roads on multiple occasions and believes his license plate might have been flagged. He now travels with a phone containing no confidential information and has turned off device biometrics in anticipation of searches when re-entering the country.

Without wishing to prejudice the accuracy of the above-mentioned allegations, we wish to express our deep concern about what appears to be an organized, deliberate

effort to impede, harass and punish lawyers for their work to protect the human rights of immigrants in the United States. International law and standards protect the independent functioning of the legal profession and the right of those facing legal proceedings concerning their rights to access a lawyer.

This pattern of interference in the legal profession arises in the context of the U.S. President's direction to target and sanction lawyers engaged in what he labelled as "frivolous, unreasonable, or vexatious litigation" against the U.S. Government. This characterization denigrates immigration lawyers and organizations working on immigration and asylum cases for their legal work. Punishing lawyers solely on the basis of their professional activities, or because of a perception that their political views may not align with the Government's deportation priorities, amounts to a direct attack on the independence of the legal profession.

We are further concerned that summarily ending contracts and communications with legal organizations that aid detainees, requiring stricter punishment and oversight over immigrant rights' attorneys, and creating fiscal barriers to entering the legal profession as immigrant rights' attorneys appear to be aimed at dissuading and interfering with attorneys' work that the Executive Branch finds contrary to its deportation and immigration policies. Denying attorneys access to communicate with clients, providing inadequate infrastructure for attorneys to locate their clients, calling for sanctions or "blacklisting" attorneys for their legal work and seizing devices containing sensitive and privileged information appears to constitute a coordinated effort to intimidate the legal profession and to directly interfere with lawyers' professional duties and work. Such obstructions contribute to a chilling effect, discouraging lawyers from engaging in certain types of cases, particularly those related to the human rights of immigrants.

We recall that mandate holders have already expressed serious concern ([AL U.S.A 15/2025](#), [AL USA 19/2024](#), and [USA 39/2025](#)) at reports that, lawyers, judges and prosecutors in the country are facing harassment and intimidation from public officials in the U.S. administration and lack of protection from similar comments from members of the general public that go beyond the accepted limits of freedom of expression under international human rights law. Some of these statements by Government officials may amount to interference in the independence of the judiciary and improper interference in the legal profession. Politicians and public officials "play an important role in shaping the media agenda, public debate and opinion and that, as a result, ethical behavior and attitudes on their part, including in their public communications, are essential for promoting the rule of law, the protection of human rights, and for ensuring public trust in democratic systems of governance¹⁶". The exercise of the rights provided for under article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) carries with it special duties and responsibilities; in this instance, those duties include respect of the rights or reputations of others.

If confirmed, these allegations described would amount to a serious breach of a number of international human rights norms and standards. These standards provide that lawyers must be able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interferences and require the State to

¹⁶ [2021 Joint Declaration on Politicians and Public Officials and Freedom of Expression](#)

take all appropriate measures to guarantee that lawyers are not threatened with disciplinary or other sanctions for actions taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards, and ethics. Thus, the described allegations would likely amount to violations to the right to legal representation under international law and consequently the right to due process of detained immigrants. These actions also appear aimed to punish and delegitimize lawyers for their professional work, and to chill advocacy for human rights. We take note with serious concern that there is strong evidence of a broad pattern of interference in immigrant rights' lawyers' ability to exercise their profession. The penalization for zealous advocacy, the search and seizure of attorney devices with privileged information, and law enforcement intimidation for pro bono work likely amount to attempts to intimidate and "chill" the legal profession in its work to represent immigrant clients. This pattern appears to be so extensive and systemic as to demonstrate a deliberate attempt to deprive immigrants of legal representation, and to keep lawyers from their clients.

In addition, these actions harm the rights of the detainees who are clients of these lawyers. The ability to seek and receive counsel in cases affecting one's rights under law is guaranteed by article 14 of ICCPR. The ability to challenge the basis of detention is guaranteed by article 9 of the ICCPR. Some transfers of detainees without notice to counsel or family appear to satisfy the core elements of enforced disappearance under international law, as the detainees' fate and whereabouts were unknown, placing the detainees outside the reach of legal representation and social networks. Moreover, in many cases, the lack of access to lawyers exposes immigrants deprived of their liberty to the risk of being subjected to enforced disappearance upon deportation.

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 steps taken by the relevant authorities to investigate the allegations concerning the cases of Ms. Louise Carhart; Mr. Kevin Herrera; Mr. Clay Jackson; Ms. Katrina Kilgren; Mr. Andrew Lattarulo; Mr. Amir Makled; Ms. Khiabett Osuna; Ms. Jennifer Peyton; Mr. Joshua Schroeder; Ms. Elisabeth Sethi; and Ms. Jacqueline Spreadbury. In case no investigations have been undertaken, please provide information about the reasons for this decision.
3. Please describe what measures have been implemented to ensure that immigration lawyers can effectively continue their work in the United States without interference, harassment, or reprisal.

4. Please describe what measures have been implemented to ensure that immigration lawyers in the United States can operate in an enabling environment and carry out their legitimate activities without fear of harassment, violence or sanctions of any kind.
5. Please provide information on what measures have been put in place to ensure that detainees are not subjected to temporary forced disappearance nor arbitrary detention. Specifically, please explain how lawyers and family members can obtain up to date and timely information about detainees' fate and whereabouts.

This communication, and any response received from your Excellency's Government, will be made public via the communications reporting [website](#) at the 60 days mark. Should Your Excellency's Government respond within 60 days, both the communication and the response, may be published before the 60 days mark. The communications and responses will also be made available in the subsequent periodic report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

While awaiting a reply, we urge that all necessary interim measures be taken 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(s) responsible for the alleged violations.

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

Margaret Satterthwaite
Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

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

Gehad Madi
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

Siobhán Mullally
Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Annex

Reference to international human rights law

In connection with above alleged facts and concerns, we would like to draw the attention of your Excellency's Government to the relevant international norms and standards that are applicable to the issues brought forth by the situation described above. In particular, we would like to highlight the relevant provision of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ("ICCPR"), which the United States of America ratified on the 8 June 1992, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reflects customary international law.

As it relates the right to a fair trial, article 14(1) of the ICCPR sets out a general guarantee of equality before courts and tribunals and the right of every person to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. In addition, article 14 of the ICCPR encompasses the right of access to the courts in cases of determination of criminal charges and rights and obligations in a suit at law. Access to administration of justice must effectively be guaranteed in all such cases to ensure that no individual is deprived, in procedural terms, of his/her right to claim justice; and provides a set of procedural guarantees that must be made available to all persons, including the right of accused persons to have access to, and communicate with, a counsel of their own choosing.

We would further like to refer your Excellency's Government to the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Havana (Cuba) from 27 August to 7 September 1990.

Principle 16 requires Governments to take all appropriate measures to ensure that lawyers are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference, and to prevent that lawyers be threatened with prosecution or administrative, economic or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Principle 17 provides that where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities.

Principle 18 provides that lawyers must not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions.

Principle 20 establishes that lawyers must enjoy civil and penal immunity for relevant statements made in good faith in written or oral pleadings or in their professional appearances before a court, tribunal or other legal or administrative authority.

Principle 23 provides that lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional

restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization. In exercising these rights, lawyers shall always conduct themselves in accordance with the law and the recognized standards and ethics of the legal profession.

Principle 27 provides that charges or complaints made against lawyers in their professional capacity shall be processed expeditiously and fairly under appropriate procedures. Lawyers shall have the right to a fair hearing, including the right to be assisted by a lawyer of their choice.

We would like to further remind your Excellency's Government that putting detainees completely outside the protection of the law, incommunicado detention, is *prima facie* arbitrary and violates the right to habeas corpus, as well as the right to be recognized as a person before the law (article 16 of the ICCPR). In this respect, we recall that, in accordance with article 9(4) of the ICCPR, anyone deprived of his or her liberty shall be entitled to challenge the legality of such detention before a court or judicial authority; this is a self-standing human right, the absence of which constitutes a human rights violation (A/HRC/30/37).

Lastly, we recall that enforced disappearance is prohibited under customary international law and this norm cannot be derogated under any circumstances. We further recall that enforced disappearance violate the right to personal liberty and personal security and constitute "a unique and integrated series of acts and omissions representing a grave threat to life" (CCPR/C/GC/36, paras. 57 and 58). The prohibition of enforced disappearance and the corresponding obligation to investigate have attained the status of *jus cogens*.

We wish to remind Your Excellency's Government that articles 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the 1992 Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances, establish that no State shall expel, return (*refouler*) or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds to believe that he would be in danger of enforced disappearance, the right to a prompt and effective judicial remedy, the right to be held in an officially recognized place of detention, that all persons deprived of liberty must be released in a manner permitting reliable verification that they have actually been released and that each State shall establish rules under its national law indicating those officials authorized to order deprivation of liberty.

In addition, we wish to reiterate the joint statement of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on so-called "short-term" enforced disappearances, which affirms that duration is not a constitutive element of enforced disappearance under international human rights law. Regardless of the duration of an enforced disappearance, it produces serious harm and consequences for the disappeared and their families and also presents practical challenges as regards seeking protection as well as defence of their rights

We also refer to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on standards and public policies for an effective investigation of enforced disappearances (A/HRC/45/13/Add.3) which highlights the need for investigations into enforced disappearances to be conducted until the fate of the disappeared person is clarified (paragraph 33), as well as the need for family members to have access to

information during and at all stages of the investigation in order to effectively guarantee their right to the truth (paragraph 60).

We recall that the failure to provide information on the fate and whereabouts of persons detained by the government and the attitude of official indifference of authorities in the face of the relatives' suffering may amount to a form of ill-treatment, in breach of articles 6, 7, and 9, read alone and in conjunction, with article 2 (3) of the ICCPR. In addition, the impossibility to obtain the mortal remains of a loved one and to perform the last rituals and mourn amounts to a violation of the right to privacy and family life enshrined in article 17 of the ICCPR.