



International Day of the Disappeared
Open letter to the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister of Lebanon

Dear Mr. President, General Michel Aoun,

Dear Mr. Prime Minister Saad Hariri,

As every year on August 30, the whole world remembers the victims of enforced disappearance, this abominable crime that subtracts the victim from the protection of the law and places his/her family in an unbearable situation of expectation and uncertainty. Unfortunately, the practice of enforced disappearance was widespread in Lebanon during the civil war and thereafter.

The Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH), pursuing the struggle of SOLIDA-France in this area, is urging you today to act without delay and to take the necessary measures to bring the answers expected for so many years by the families of the disappeared.

This drama - that has reportedly affected 17,000 people in Lebanon - has lasted for too long and the discovery, a few days ago, of the remains of the soldiers kidnapped by Daesh has only revived the pain of the families who are still without news of their loved ones.

As you know, hundreds of families continue to live in the hope of knowing the fate of their disappeared and seeing them return alive for those who were reportedly taken to Syria and whose number is believed to exceed 600.

This letter is not to explain a situation that you already know perfectly but to ask you to act immediately by putting on the agenda of the next Council of Ministers the following two subjects:

- Promulgation of the decree¹ establishing the National Independent Commission for the Victims of Enforced Disappearances and the Disappeared, previously presented to the Council of Ministers by the Minister of Justice Chakib Qortaboui in 2012.
- Ratification of the "International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance", signed by Lebanon in 2006, still awaiting ratification.

Lebanon has to do everything possible to provide answers to the families of the victims and to try to save those who are reportedly still alive in the Syrian jails.

Sincerely yours,

On behalf of CLDH,
Wadih Al Asmar
President
Beirut, 30 August 2017

¹ <https://www.justice.gov.lb/index.php/page-details/13/2>