

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

FACTS AND FIGURES

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Confronting a nightmare. Disappearances in Mexico: Some essential figures

According to government figures, **26,121 people were reported missing or disappeared** in Mexico between December 2006 and December 2012, according to the information released by the Interior Ministry in February 2013. In 40 per cent of these cases a criminal enquiry was never opened.

Although the government data has serious shortcomings and does not give a comprehensive overview of all cases, it confirms a pattern of systematic disappearances and enforced disappearances largely ignored by the previous administration.

Amnesty International has documented **152 cases of individuals who were allegedly abducted by criminal gangs** or detained by public officials over the last six years and whose whereabouts remain unknown.

Of these cases, the organization believes there is compelling evidence to presume the **direct or indirect involvement of public officials in at least 85 cases**, constituting enforced disappearances under international law.

There have been **only two recorded convictions** for enforced disappearance in the federal justice system in the last six years, and none at state level.

Twelve investigators have been assigned to the newly established Unidad de investigación y búsqueda de personas desaparecidas (Unit for the Investigation and Search of Disappeared) persons in the Federal Attorney General's Office.

The criminal offence of enforced disappearance exists in the federal criminal code and 13 state level jurisdictions. **Nineteen Mexican states have not established the separate criminal offence of enforced disappearance.**

In 2012 the National Human Rights Commission had **2,126 cases of enforced disappearance under investigation** and had received information on **15,921 unidentified bodies** from public prosecutors offices around the country. It is not known how many of these remains may belong to the disappeared due to the lack of thorough forensic investigations.

In 2011, after a visit to Mexico, the **UN Working Group on Involuntary or Enforced Disappearances issued 34 recommendations** to address the crisis, but few of them have been implemented, such as ensuring the crime of enforced disappearance is established in all state and federal legislation in accordance with international law and standards.