



OLIVIER DE FROUVILLE

FRANCE'S CANDIDATE
TO THE COMMITTEE
ON ENFORCED
DISAPPEARANCES

Elections in New York on 25 June 2019

Olivier de Frouville, Professor of Public Law and human rights advocate

A leading academic career in the area of human rights

Olivier de Frouville has an in-depth knowledge of human rights, to which he has dedicated his academic career. A Professor of Public Law in leading French universities, Director of the Paris Research Centre for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, member of the Institut universitaire de France, he is the author of numerous publications and has participated in multiple conferences and seminars, helping to spread a culture of human rights and international law in France and abroad.

Practical experience in international mechanisms to protect fundamental rights

For more than 20 years, Olivier de Frouville has put his skills to work in international mechanisms to protect human rights. Since 2009, he has been France's designated expert working in the Human Dimension Mechanism of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). As a member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, he was responsible for monitoring the implementation by the States Parties of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966. He represented the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) as part of the United Nations working group responsible for negotiating and drafting a declaration for the protection of human rights defenders. As a Member of the French National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH), he has helped to uphold and implement human rights and international humanitarian law in France.

A specialist in enforced disappearances

For many years, Olivier de Frouville has been fully dedicated to combatting enforced disappearances, an area in which he is a recognized expert. As a FIDH representative, he was involved in drafting the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. He was also member, Vice-Chairperson and Chair-Rapporteur of the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. In that capacity, he was responsible for response procedures to the urgent appeals from victims' families and made several field visits. He has written several academic articles and books on enforced disappearances in international law, including on the work of the Working Group and the Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

Recent publications

Working out a Working Group: a View from a Former Working Group Member, 2017.

A 20 años de la adopción de la Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Protección de todas las Personas contra la Desapariciones Forzadas, 2014.

La complémentarité entre le Groupe de travail et le Comité des disparitions forcées, 2013.

La Convention sur les disparitions forcées. Les enjeux d'une mise en œuvre universelle et effective, 2013.

La Convention des Nations unies pour la protection de toutes les personnes contre les disparitions forcées: les enjeux juridiques d'une négociation exemplaire, 2006.

France's commitment in the fight against enforced disappear- ances

France has been strongly committed to tackling disappearances for the past 25 years.

It was behind the initiative of General Assembly resolution 33/173 of 20 December 1978 on Disappeared Persons and resolution 47/133 of 18 December 1992 adopting the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

France also chaired the working group which the Human Rights Council charged with drawing up a draft legally-binding instrument, the work of which led to the General Assembly's adoption on 20 December 2006 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

In recognition of France's role, the General Assembly decided that the Convention would be opened for signature in Paris on 6 February 2007.

France signed the Convention on the day of its opening for signature and ratified it on 23 September 2008. Furthermore, it attached to its ratification a declaration recognizing the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to receive and consider communications from individuals (Article 31) and from States (Article 32). Only 21 of the 59 States Parties to the Convention recognized that the Committee had this dual competence.

In collaboration with Argentina, France is taking active steps with the aim of universalizing the Convention. To this end, it regularly organizes events to promote the Convention.

“ During the four-year term, I want to serve the Committee and the Convention by pursuing two main objectives: sustaining the achievements of the Committee’s first years of operation and increasing its influence to further strengthen the fight against enforced disappearance.

Far from being a regional or sectoral issue, enforced disappearance is a global issue which affects all States. It is essential to combat enforced disappearance, so the Convention must be universally accepted as soon as possible.

Since the Committee was set up, much work has been completed both procedurally and normatively. The Committee now has well-established practices and lines of decision. The Convention’s impact on the States Parties must now be increased, i.e. by ensuring that the Convention is an operational tool for each State Party, with clear objectives and targeted actions. This can be achieved by constructive dialogue and monitoring specific areas in order to promote improvements in legislation and practices. This also means promoting more decisive action on urgent appeals and searching for disappeared persons in collaboration with the relevant States. The Committee must also work closely with associations for the families of disappeared persons and civil society so that the Committee can continue to listen to their requests and concerns. Close attention must also be paid to the specific impact of enforced disappearances on women, but also children, in line with the other competent bodies.

The Committee is part of a broader institutional environment: the committee system, which requires close coordination and harmonization of procedures, but also the rest of the United Nations system and regional organizations. Similarly, we must maintain active co-operation with the ICRC, which in many countries plays a major role for disappeared persons and their loved ones.

My candidacy thus follows on from the remarkable work carried out by the current French Committee member, Emmanuel Decaux, combining professionalism, energy, expertise, a sense of responsibility and a constant desire for dialogue with all stakeholders.”

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