Organization: Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada
Item: Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances
Date: 20 September 2022
Speaker: Catherine Morris

Oral Statement to the 51st Session of the UN Human Rights Council from Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada (LRWC), the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI), and Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L), NGOs in special consultative status

China: Widespread pattern of enforced disappearances including of lawyers and human rights defenders

Thailand: Ratify and implement the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance without further delay

Mr. President,

Lawyers’ Rights Watch Canada, the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute, and Lawyers for Lawyers are alarmed by the scale of enforced disappearances in many countries.\(^1\)

In light of Thailand’s numerous enforced disappearances, including of human rights defenders and lawyer Somchai Neelapaijit, we welcome Thailand’s adoption of legislation on torture and enforced disappearance. We call on Thailand to address remaining shortcomings in the law and to implement it promptly in full compliance with international law and standards. We look forward to Thailand’s promised ratification of the Convention on Enforced Disappearance without further delay.

We are dismayed by China’s continued refusal to cooperate with the mechanisms of the Human Rights Council in the face of allegations of numerous enforced disappearances\(^2\) in Xinjiang and Tibet, and the systematic practice of Residential Surveillance in a Designated Location\(^3\) to which numerous defenders including lawyers are subjected.\(^4\) We urge China, a member of this Council, to immediately accept the Working Group’s 2013 request for an invitation for a country visit. We call on the Council to create an independent mechanism to thoroughly and promptly investigate allegations of gross, widespread and systematic human rights violations in China reported by dozens of Special Procedures mandate holders\(^5\) and the OHCHR.\(^6\)

Thank you.


