

Minister Luisa María Alcalde Luján

Ministry of Interior (Secretaría de Gobernación)

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Dear Minister,

I'm writing to express my concern for the impact that the Disappeared Persons Search Strategy could have on the search of the people disappeared and missing, especially on the tireless work of the collectives of family members of disappeared and missing people to find their loved ones. According to collectives and human rights organizations that accompany them, the National Search Strategy was neither consulted nor coordinated with the search collectives in the country, which has raised serious doubts about the way in which disappeared and missing persons are being counted. In fact, almost 80,000 people considered in August 2023 as disappeared and missing are ambiguously categorized in the December 2023 update.

In addition, recent changes in the National Search Commission (CNB by its Spanish acronym), the governmental agency in charge of searching the missing and disappeared people, have hindered the work to find the hundreds of thousands of missing and disappeared people in the country. The Mexican government's new strategy seems to be focusing on demonstrating that the disappearance situation in Mexico is improving and that there is not such a serious crisis, rather than on finding the disappeared and missing persons.

According to the UN International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, among other international documents, families of disappeared people have the right to truth and effective investigations, as well as to seek, receive and impart information, among other rights. This comprises the participation of victims, organizations and experts in search policies, including mechanisms that provide and collect data on disappeared people.

Therefore, I urge you to take all necessary measures to ensure truth and justice for the victims of disappearance in Mexico, including by guaranteeing transparency and participation of the relatives of the disappeared and missing people on the census preparation.

Yours sincerely,