



### **Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances**

#### Oral Statement

11<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Delivered by Andrew Smith, ARTICLE 19

Mr. President,

ARTICLE 19 welcomes the report of the Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances.

One year ago, the Human Rights Council adopted by [consensus resolution 33/2 on the Safety of Journalists](#), “condemning unequivocally” enforced disappearances of journalists and media workers, urging their “immediate and unconditional release”, and accountability for violations.

In Mexico, ARTICLE 19’s Mexico and Central America office this year recorded the 24<sup>th</sup> journalist forcibly disappeared since 2003.

Salvador Adame, director of *Chanel 6tv*, a local outlet of Michoacán State, was abducted on 18 May by unidentified individuals with heavily armed weaponry in Nueva Italia. Though the authorities claim his body and has since been recovered, this fact is contested by the family, and not corroborated by independent forensic DNA evidence.

Adame’s journalism focused on political issues; he investigated corruption and local authorities’ poor performance. He had previously been detained by local authorities, beaten, and had his equipment confiscated.

However, and as has become typical, the authorities have asserted that the attack was orchestrated by organised criminal elements, in response to the journalist’s alleged personal relationships with an unidentified gang member, rather than in retaliation to his work as a journalist.

The authorities’ failure to pursue lines of inquiry related to Adame’s work as a journalist, and any possible connections of public officials to the events, means that his disappearance is likely to become yet another case of impunity for attacks on journalists in Mexico.

ARTICLE 19 calls on the Mexican government to fully implement its commitments under HRC resolution 33/2 on the safety of journalists, including by instituting a clear plan to implement the “Actions for Freedom of Expression and for the Protection of Journalists and Defenders” announced by the President in May, the same month Adame disappeared.

For Adame’s family, there must be an independent forensic analysis of the recovered body to verify the authorities’ claimed identification, and there must be a full and effective investigation to his enforced disappearance, exploring any potential connection between this crime and his work as a journalist.

We also reiterate that civil society organisations must be free to work on these issues in Mexico without fear. We recall the Working Group’s [July 2017 joint statement](#) condemning unlawful use of spyware to subject such organisations to surveillance. We reiterate the call for transparent and independent investigations into these allegations.