



ICRC



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Global Alliance for the Missing

Background

Tens of thousands of persons go missing every year in armed conflicts, other situations of violence, in the context of migration, disasters and other emergencies. This not only represents a humanitarian tragedy for families but can also have long lasting effects on efforts to rebuild trust and address grievances in societies and undermine peace building efforts and development prospects.

Preventing and responding to cases of missing persons requires political will, adequate and effective legal and institutional frameworks, cooperation between states and with other actors, and partnerships to enhance knowledge and technical capacity. To this effect, Switzerland and the ICRC are launching a Global Alliance for the Missing. The purpose of the Alliance is to bring to bear the collective diplomatic, political and financial capacity and influence of states to improve the prevention of, and the response to, cases of separated and missing persons.

Objectives

Collectively, the Alliance will endeavor to:

- Raise awareness on the question of missing persons globally and regionally, including in its humanitarian and human rights dimensions and develop linkages with peacebuilding, conflict prevention and sustainable development agendas.
- Promote the implementation of global commitments relating to missing persons, such as UN Security Council Resolution 2474 (2019) on “Missing Persons in Armed Conflict”.
- Promote collaboration and share best practices, guidance and technical recommendations to improve the prevention of, and response to, cases of missing persons at national, regional and global levels.
- Ensure the Central Tracing Agency is adequately resourced and equipped to develop guidance, research, and innovative approaches as well as provide advice and support to States and other actors to prevent and respond to the Missing issue.

Practical information and next steps

States with experience and expertise on the Missing issue and/or who are interested in contributing to above-mentioned objectives can join the Alliance by sending a message to: gva_cta_office_mailbox@icrc.org.

The ICRC will play a secretariat role, coordinate the initial in-depth briefings, and make proposals to the members of the Alliance for their attention and potential action. Beginning in the autumn of 2021, the Alliance will organize two to three in-depth briefings per year and will share regular written communications on specific aspects of work, challenges, and innovative initiatives on missing persons in contexts affected by armed conflict, violence, disasters or along migration routes. In the first quarter of 2022, it will organize a thematic discussion for members to identify avenues of engagement for the Alliance. This will provide a common basis to structure the further work of the Alliance.

Global Alliance Q&A:

- **Who can join the Alliance?**

Any state interested in supporting efforts to prevent and resolve the missing persons issue can join the Alliance. Mindful of the objectives of the Alliance, the members will seek to engage in solutions-oriented discussions.

- **Does joining the Global Alliance entail financial commitments?**

No, states can engage in the Alliance through a variety of ways of their choosing ranging for example from mobilizing political support, providing expertise or technical capacities, or contributing to the resourcing of the CTA and its operations.

- **At what level should focal points be assigned for the Alliance and what is their role?**

We recommend designating two focal points, one at Geneva Permanent Mission level, the other at capital level. Focal points will:

- Deepen their knowledge of the missing persons issue and measures to address it. To this purpose the Alliance will organize a series of briefings commencing in autumn of 2021.
- Help to identify ways to make the issue of the missing more compelling and to better link it with broader agendas such as peacebuilding and development.
- Help to identify diplomatic opportunities/processes at regional and global level to raise awareness on the issue and coordinate/support diplomatic engagement around those opportunities. This includes mobilizing other states to join the Alliance.
- Stay abreast of tools/resources being developed and promote them at national, regional or global level.
- Bring other relevant interlocutors from their government, as needed, to contribute to the work of the Alliance;
- Where appropriate, support their government in integrating the question of missing persons in relevant bilateral and multilateral engagements, commitments and processes.