
WORK PLAN

“Special Follow-Up Mechanism to the Ayotzinapa Case”

I. Introduction

In order to implement the Special Follow-Up Mechanism, the Inter-American Commission will seek to carry out the following work plan, following the terms established in Precautionary Measure Resolution 42/16, issued on July 29, 2016. The Commission believes it is important to publicly release its work plan for the coming months, given the relevance of this case; the need for its work to be based on the principles of independence and autonomy in the exercise of its mandate; and the importance of ensuring that the family members, petitioners, and State authorities have every opportunity to provide information and have access to the information that is gathered in the follow-up process.

The Inter-American Commission will implement this Follow-Up Mechanism with the understanding that the obligation to determine the whereabouts or fate of the beneficiaries of the precautionary measure falls to the State.

The Special Follow-Up Mechanism will be guided by the principles of transparency, the central importance of the situation of the relatives of the 43 missing individuals, and the follow-up to the work done by the Inter-Disciplinary Group of Independent Experts. The mechanism will be made up of and coordinated by the Rapporteur for Mexico, with the assistance of technical staff of the IACHR Executive Secretariat, without prejudice to possible support from other disciplines. This work plan will be subject to any changes deemed appropriate, in accordance with any needs that may be identified to meet its objectives.

II. Background

On October 3, 2014, the IACHR requested that the State adopt precautionary measures in favor of 43 students from the “Raúl Isidro Burgos” rural school in Mexico. In accordance with Article 25 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure, the Commission requested that the State of Mexico: a) Adopt the necessary measures to determine the status and whereabouts of the 43 students identified, in order to protect their rights to life and personal integrity; b) Adopt the necessary measures to protect the life and personal integrity of the injured students identified in the proceeding, who had reportedly been admitted to a hospital; c) Consult with the beneficiaries and their representatives on the measures to be adopted; and d) Report on the steps taken to investigate the facts that led to the adoption of the precautionary measure.

Under an agreement signed in November 2014 by the IACHR, the State, and representatives of the beneficiaries of these precautionary measures, the Inter-Disciplinary Group of Independent Experts was created to provide technical follow-up assistance on this case and help draw up plans to search for the missing students alive; undertake a technical analysis of the lines of investigation to determine criminal liabilities; perform a technical analysis of the Plan for Integral Attention to the Victims; and issue

recommendations designed to strengthen the State's institutional capacity to search for and locate disappeared persons and investigate cases of forced disappearance, among other related issues.

On September 6, 2015, the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts issued its first report, titled "Ayotzinapa Report: Research and initial conclusions of the disappearances and homicides of the *normalistas* from Ayotzinapa." On April 24, 2016, the Interdisciplinary Group issued a second report, titled "II Ayotzinapa Report: Progress and new conclusions about the investigation, search, and attention to the victims."

On July 29, 2016, the IACHR issued Resolution 42/16 by which it decided to implement a special mechanism to follow up on the precautionary measures that had been granted (PM 409/14) and, in that framework, the recommendations made by the Inter-Disciplinary Group in its two reports that grew directly out of the precautionary measure.¹

III. Objectives

Bearing in mind Precautionary Measure Resolutions 28/14, dated October 3, 2014, and 42/16, dated July 29, 2016, the general and specific objectives of the Special Follow-Up Mechanism will be as follows:

A. General Objectives

To provide follow-up to the precautionary measures granted (PM 409/14) and, in that framework, to the recommendations made by the Inter-Disciplinary Group of Independent Experts in its two reports that grew directly out of the precautionary measure.

B. Specific Objectives

1. Monitor the progress of the investigation.
2. Provide advisory assistance and support to the process to search for the disappeared.
3. Ensure that comprehensive attention is given to the victims and their relatives.
4. Promote any structural measures that may be appropriate to resolve this matter and ensure that such an event does not happen again.

IV. Methodology

The Inter-American Commission believes it is extremely important that the relatives of the 43 missing students and their representatives be heard, and that their concerns be addressed by the State authorities. The IACHR believes that the follow-up to the precautionary measures is an essential part of supporting this process.

¹ Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts, "Informe Ayotzinapa II: "Avances y nuevas conclusiones sobre la investigación, búsqueda y atención a las víctimas" [in Spanish only]; and "Ayotzinapa Report: Research and initial conclusions of the disappearances and homicides of the *normalistas* from Ayotzinapa." Available at the following link: <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/activities/giei.asp>.

Leaving in place all areas of the IACHR's jurisdiction under the American Convention and other applicable human rights instruments that are binding on Mexico, the Follow-Up Mechanism will implement the following procedures:

1. Visits to Mexico

Pursuant to the public precautionary measure resolutions issued by the Commission, the Follow-Up Mechanism will include two types of visits for verification and information-gathering: 1) official visits; and ii) technical visits. These visits will be carried out in coordination with the State.

The official visits will be led by the Coordinator of the Follow-Up Mechanism and Rapporteur for Mexico, who will be accompanied by the technical staff assigned by the IACHR Executive Secretariat. The visits will be carried out for the number of days the Follow-Up Mechanism sees fit for the purposes it deems appropriate. Press conferences may also be held, pursuant to Resolution 42/16.

The technical visits, for their part, will be carried out by staff of the Executive Secretariat, in order to compile any information and documentation that may be needed to meet the mechanism's objectives. When applicable, these staff members may be accompanied by specialists from other disciplines.

The following activities may be carried out during these visits:

- a. Meet with the relatives of the 43 missing students and other victims, as well as their representatives.
- b. Hold meetings with other international bodies and with civil society organizations and other relevant organizations to shed light on the case.
- c. Hold high-level meetings with representatives of State institutions.
- d. Where applicable, hold roundtables for dialogue among institutions.
- e. Hold working meetings to work out agreements regarding the precautionary measures that gave rise to this matter.
- f. Have timely and unrestricted access to all documentary information connected with the case.
- g. Carry out any activity that may be necessary to meet the objectives of this Follow-Up Mechanism.

2. Additional Technical Contributions

To meet the objectives of the Follow-Up Mechanism, the IACHR will be able to receive the support of specialists from other disciplines.

3. Requests for Information

The IACHR will be able to submit any requests for information it deems necessary to meet the objectives of the Follow-Up Mechanism. Any information received will be forwarded to the other party.

4. Working Meetings on Precautionary Measures

Mindful of the principle of the central importance of the victims and family members, in the context of its official visits and regular sessions the IACHR will hold private working meetings with the relatives of the disappeared, their representatives, and State authorities, in follow-up to the precautionary measures granted. These meetings will be chaired by the Rapporteur for Mexico and Coordinator of the Follow-Up Mechanism. Where appropriate, these meetings can focus on a specific issue.

5. Public Hearings during IACHR Sessions

In keeping with its sphere of authority, the IACHR may convene public hearings on the objectives of the Follow-Up Mechanism.

6. Issuance of Specific Reports, Press Releases, etc.

The IACHR may issue preliminary observations, reports, and/or press releases as it deems appropriate.

7. Follow-Up Meetings on the Precautionary Measures

The IACHR may issue resolutions in follow-up to the precautionary measures in question.

V. Tentative Schedule of Activities

Here is the initial schedule of activities, which could change depending on the needs of the Follow-Up Mechanism and in coordination with the State. In addition, the technical team may carry out additional visits depending on the Follow-Up Mechanism's objectives.

Tentative Schedule		
1.	First Official Visit	November 9-12, 2016
2.	First Technical Visit	January 2017
3.	Second Technical Visit	February 2017
4.	Public Hearing	March 2017 – 161 st session
5.	Working Meeting on the Precautionary Measure	March 2017 – 161 st session
6.	Second Official Visit	April 2017
7.	Third Technical Visit	May 2017
8.	Public Hearing	June 2016 – 163 rd session
9.	Working Meeting on the Precautionary Measure	June 2016 – 163 rd session
10.	Third Official Visit	July 2017
11.	Fourth Technical Visit	September 2017
12.	Public Hearing	October 2017 – 164 th session
13.	Working Meeting on the Precautionary Measure	October 2017 – 164 th session
14.	Fourth Official Visit	November 2017