



# JOINT PRESS RELEASE

THAILAND: UNTIL ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE IS A CRIME UNDER THAI LAW, WE ARE ALL AT RISK OF DISAPPEARING

**#ItCouldBeYou**



**MANUSHYA**

Empowering Communities | Advancing Social Justice



## Joint Press Release

### THAILAND: UNTIL ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE IS A CRIME UNDER THAI LAW, WE ARE ALL AT RISK OF DISAPPEARING **#ITCOULDBEYOU**

Help us push for the Enforced Disappearance Law to be passed so no one ever has to fall victim to an enforced disappearance again!

- Support our **#itcouldbeyou** campaign to mark the International Day of the Disappeared
- Back demands for the Thai government to enact an enforced disappearance law
- Join the panel debate, Clubhouse and engage in a series of our activities

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**Bangkok, August 27, 2021** - [Ninety-one](#) people have gone missing since 1980 in Thailand. The UN says they're victims of enforced disappearances. Not a single person has been brought to justice. That's because enforced disappearances are not a crime under Thai law.

Without a law to specifically make enforced disappearance a crime, extra-judicial actions and impunity for crimes by state officials will continue to create an environment where vulnerable individuals - political, environmental activists and witnesses to human rights violations - remain at risk.

To mark the International Day of the Disappeared (Aug 30) this year, the [Cross Cultural Foundation](#) and [Manushya Foundation](#) are launching a joint campaign **#itcouldbeyou** to pay tribute to the victims of enforced disappearance by raising awareness on the issue.

We also call on the government to step up its efforts to find out the fate of the disappeared, pay reparations and help bring closure to the families of the victims who deserve to know the truth.

Finally, the Thai government must fulfill its responsibility to the [UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances](#) by passing the law on enforced disappearance.

***"This Bill will open the first of the many doors towards the truth that the families have long yearned for, so that they will finally be able to live in peace,"*** Emilie Pradichit, Founder and Executive Director of Manushya Foundation.

***"Thai society has slowly woken up to the scandals and crimes committed by the state,"*** Pornpen Kongkachonkiet, Director of the Cross Cultural Foundation.

***"I urge all Thai citizens to speak out against rights abuses and oppression by our government and its agencies. We must not 'normalise' these as the action of those in power. To force someone to disappear just because they speak their mind is unforgivable and together we must compel authorities to end this practice,"*** she added.

The **#itcouldbeyou** campaign delivers the message that forced disappearance can happen to anyone regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity. The effect on families of the victims is devastating. The impact on society at large is to seed fear and silence debate.

With the increasing consolidation of power by this government, anyone can be perceived to be an ‘enemy of the state’ - and that puts them in danger.

The latest leaked ‘[watchlist](#)’ believed to be a government document shows even 15 year-old’s are being marked as threats to national security. Cutting across political allegiances, this campaign wants the public to ask “is this a society we want to live in?”

#### Key activities & specific actions:

- A Clubhouse panel debate - held with individuals from the ‘watchlist’ including politicians, lawyers, pro-democracy protesters, and press moderated by Pornpen Kongkachonkiet, Director of Cross Cultural Foundation, hosted by Active Citizen
- The ‘*If I disappeared*’ letter written by vulnerable categories of individuals to be posted on their social media leading up to the International Day of the Disappeared
- Interactive Facebook and IG face filters where everyone can become ‘the disappeared’ for a day.
- A series of activations by young influencers over social media.
- A video of the women left behind by enforced disappearances. A story of three women, a mother who sits on her front porch awaiting for her husband to return for the past 20 years; a Muslim wife who assumes the leadership role in the absence of her husband and sister of the last recorded victim fighting for justice so that her brother is the last to be disappeared.

Join the online conversation on **Twitter** using the hashtag **#itcouldbeyou** and following [@CrCF\\_Thailand](#), [@ManushyaFdn](#)

Join the campaign on **Instagram** by following [@manushyafoundation](#)

Download press kit [here](#)

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**For media enquiries regarding enforced disappearance and torture in custody cases,** please contact Pornpen Kongkachonkiet, Director of CrCF  
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