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Enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis: the importance of language for humanitarian assistance

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Mónica
One, the dates, like the names, are the most important. The name above the caliber of the bullets.

Two, sit in front of a monitor. Find the red news of all the newspapers online. Keep the memory of those who have died.

Three, count innocents and culprits, hitmen, children, military, civilians, majors, migrants, sellers, kidnappers, policemen.

Count them all.

Name them all to say: this body could be mine.

The body of one of mine.

So as not to forget that all unnamed bodies are our lost bodies.

My name is Antigone Gonzalez and I search among the dead for my brother’s corpse.

"Instructions for Counting the Dead" (fragment).

Sara Uribe, contemporary Mexican poet.
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Abstract

Between 2006 and 2018, enforced disappearances in Mexico soared exponentially. This has resulted in copious human losses and caused serious disruption to the functioning of the entire Mexican society. Today, this phenomenon seems to reflect the definition of what a humanitarian crisis constitutes, as established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which explains it as the occurrence of one or several events causing serious disturbances in a country or region, as well as human, material, or otherwise substantial losses, exceeding the coping mechanisms of the affected population. However, enforced disappearances in Mexico had not been extensively characterized as a humanitarian crisis until relatively recently. This paper explores whether labeling this problem as a humanitarian crisis has the potential to facilitate the access of humanitarian actors to it. This is done through a lexical analysis of web-based written information produced by four main stakeholders communicating on enforced disappearances in Mexico. The concepts of metalanguage (the potential of language to designate and change itself) and politics of language (the circular interplay between language and politics) are applied to the execution and interpretation of this analysis. The findings of this work show that labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis does facilitate the access of humanitarian actors to the problem. It follows that the label humanitarian crisis is an important factor for the materialization of humanitarian assistance aimed at the families of victims of enforced disappearances in Mexico and that language has the potential to foster a humanitarian approach to problems which may benefit from it.

Keywords

Humanitarian assistance, humanitarian crisis, human rights, enforced disappearances, Mexico, language, metalanguage, politics of language, effective communication, epistemic community.
1. **Introduction**

1.1. **Research statement**

The research problem addressed in this paper is the importance of language as a factor for humanitarian assistance. Specifically, this work deals with the question of whether labeling enforced disappearances that occurred in Mexico between 2006 and 2018 as a humanitarian crisis has the potential to facilitate access of humanitarian actors to this problem. The thesis supporting this question is that the concepts of metalanguage (the potential of language to designate and change itself) and politics of language (the circular interplay between language and politics) can be applied to facilitate a humanitarian approach to contexts which may benefit from it. This thesis is drawn from two historic events: the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the peace process that took place between 2012 and 2016 in Colombia, both of which are characterized by linguistic changes intertwined with politics of language conducive to a humanitarian approach to a situation necessitating it. On the basis of these considerations, the hypothesis of this paper is that labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis is a metalingual operation linked to politics of language, which may promote a humanitarian approach and, thus, facilitate access of humanitarian actors to this problem. In keeping with these ideas, the research set down in the following pages has three main objectives:

1) Analyze the language used by four main stakeholders to the phenomenon of enforced disappearances that occurred in Mexico between 2006 and 2018, when communicating on this matter;

2) Analyze the external factors influencing how these four main stakeholders use language when communicating on enforced disappearances that occurred in Mexico between 2006 and 2018;

3) Based on 1 and 2, analyze the potential of labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis, in terms of humanitarian actors’ access to this problem.

1.2. **Context**

Enforced disappearance of persons was part of the control techniques used by the Mexican government from 1964 to 1982, during which the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) held uninterrupted power—as it had since 1929 and did until 2000. During this period, the PRI-ruled administrations under the mandate of former presidents of Mexico Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo were directly involved in the enforced disappearance of persons in the country, among other displays of authoritarianism which clamped down on diverse insurgent movements (Sierra Guzmán, 2012, p. 182-195). In Mexico, the practice of
enforced disappearance began indeed as a means for political repression — reminiscent of Latin American dictatorships in the 70s and 80s—; however, the phenomenon has gradually transitioned into what can be now deemed a “wider mechanism of social control, land plundering and holding sway over migration flows” (Robledo Silvestre, 2016, p. 103).

According to data collected by the Executive Secretariat of the Mexican National Public Security System, roughly 40,000 people have been reported as disappeared in Mexico from 1968 to date, with most of the disappearances taking place between 2006 and 2018. The Secretariat’s databases also show that disappearances in the country soared as of 2006 and the uptrend has remained strong ever since (Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, n.d.). This increase in the number of disappearances overlaps with the beginning of the Drug War initiated in January 2007 by Felipe Calderón, president of Mexico from 2006 to 2012, who openly assumed that this endeavor would cost “time, economic resources and even human lives” (Calderón, 2007, December 20). Disappearances reported during Calderón’s term were often characterized by criminalization of the victims, a trait that would also constitute part of the discourse around enforced disappearances during the following presidential term, under the mandate of Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018) (Mastrogiovanni, 2014, p. 29-30).

In 2016, the then Subsecretary of Human Rights, Roberto Campa, implied that victims of enforced disappearance in Mexico had links to the organized crime and stated that the main challenge in putting a halt to this problem was to “break the impunity chain” as some believe that “by disappearing people, they [can] disappear crimes as well” (Milenio, 2016, March 29). As Robledo Silvestre has pointed out (2015, p. 102), this prescriptive discourse tends to normalize enforced disappearances as the natural result of illegal activities between criminals, thus hindering an objective characterization of the phenomenon. Such misleading representations have been challenged by relatives of the victims and debunked by academics, at least in specific contexts where quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate that not only most victims of disappearance have no links with the organized crime whatsoever, but that their disappearances have often been carried out by agents of the Mexican State (Observatorio sobre Desaparición e Impunidad, 2017, pp. 22-39).

The involvement of the Mexican government in enforced disappearances has been best documented in what now is widely known as the “Ayotzinapa case”—which is used as part of the case study in this paper. On September 26th, 2014, students from a teacher training college in Guerrero, in the Southwest of Mexico, commandeered five buses and headed to Mexico City for a public demonstration. On the night between September 26th and 27th, 43 of them went
missing along the way and were presumably killed in and around the town of Iguala. Reportedly, no human remains have ever been found, but the mass killing of these students was variously denounced and blamed on drug cartels, high-ranking officials in the Mexican military and government, and corrupt local authorities. The aftereffect of this event was an international media crisis, marked by questionable explanations and inconclusive investigations on the part of the Mexican authorities (NPR, 2018, October 21). Recent forensic reconstructions of the event have evidenced that different agents of the Mexican State, among them federal security forces, did in fact directly contribute to the disappearance of the students (Forensic Architecture, 2011-2021).

During its 15th session, held from November 5th to 16th, 2018, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) applied, for the first time with the delegation from Mexico, a follow-up procedure to monitor several requests for urgent action received between June 1st and November 8th, 2018. The authors of these requests, as reported by the CED, frequently posited allegations about “Mexican authorities in charge of search and investigation having a direct or indirect involvement in the events and the [consequent] blocking of due procedures” (CED, 2018, November 30, p. 3). Earlier that year, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published an online press release stating that “there are strong grounds to believe that some of the people detained in Mexico during the early stages of the investigation into the disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa in 2014 were arbitrarily detained and tortured, and that these serious violations were in turn inadequately investigated and even covered up” (OHCHR, 2018, March 15).

Article 2 of the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) states that an act of enforced disappearance is carried out by “by agents of the State or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the State” (2006, December 20). This document was ratified by Mexico in 2008, yet the typification of enforced disappearance in Mexican legislation — both at the federal and local level — is missing basic elements of the crime as stated by the Convention. For instance, Mexican legal instruments do not foresee the perpetration of this crime by external agents working under consent of the governmental apparatus; only specific public servants are deemed potential perpetrators or acquiescing agents. The language used by Mexican law to define enforced disappearance is, thus, inadequate: an acquiescing State is not only a fundamental element of enforced disappearance as defined by the Convention, but also a salient trait of concrete commissions of said crime in Mexico, like the Ayotzinapa case.
This particular typification of the crime has an immediate impact at a general discoursive level, as it implies that the State is to be regarded as the pursuer of specific public servants acting outside their authority but not a potential accomplice of these or other agents—which would automatically jeopardize the role of the Mexican State in terms of governance and responsibility to protect (R2P)\(^1\) (General Assembly, 2005, October 24, p. 30). From a more pragmatic point of view, this limitation also represents an obstacle in pursuing all the intellectual authors, perpetrators and accomplices involved. Additionally, this has the potential to impact the appraisal of the problem on the part of the international community, insofar as it frames enforced disappearances as the result of a national security problem caused by hostile parties, rather than a crisis which has exceeded and compromised governmental capacities. The effects of language on politics and vice versa are made clear by this example: in using specific words, actors mobilize their political objectives and define their stakes in a given matter. In some cases, this may result in promoting or thwarting relevant approaches to issues, such as the humanitarian one. Enforced disappearances in Mexico seem to be a case in point of this.

There is currently no explicit consensus among the international humanitarian community on what defines a humanitarian crisis; however, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), in its capacity as a formally established forum for global humanitarian coordination, explains it as the occurrence of one or several events causing serious disturbances in a country or region, as well as human, material, or otherwise substantial losses, exceeding the coping mechanisms of the affected population (IASC, 2015)\(^2\). One of the aims of this paper is to show that enforced disappearances in Mexico seem to fit this definition: they are, in fact, a series of violent events characterized by copious human losses, which have caused and continue to cause serious disruption to the functioning of the entire society. They certainly exceed all societal coping mechanisms in the country. This phenomenon, nevertheless, had not been extensively labeled as a humanitarian crisis until relatively recently, a few months prior to the writing of this paper.

On February 4\(^{th}\), 2019, the newly appointed Mexican Subsecretary of Human Rights, Migration and Population, Alejandro Encinas, made a public announcement regarding a new plan for the implementation of the national federal legislation on enforced disappearance, in which he stated that enforced disappearances in Mexico constitute a humanitarian crisis and, as such, require

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\(^1\) R2P is here understood as per the original definition established by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which states that each Member State has the responsibility to “protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (General Assembly, 2005, p. 31). Interventionist readings of this definition, such as the one posed by Gareth Evans (2008), are not being considered, as they do not affect the central concept of R2P referred to by the author of this paper.

\(^2\) This paragraph paraphrases the definition provided by the IASC. For the full definition and more on the decision to use it, please refer to the conceptual framework in section 2 of this paper.
interdisciplinary measures, for which international technical assistance would be sought (Gobierno de México, 2019, February 4 [video file]). This announcement took place less than 4 months after Encinas, during a transitional period between presidential administrations, gave an interview in which he claimed that Mexico is currently immersed in a “very deep process of decomposition and deterioration of institutional life, which manifests in [a] humanitarian and human rights crisis [with] nearly 40,000 disappeared persons.” (SinEmbargo TV, 2018, October 11).

However, the term humanitarian crisis is not abundantly found in texts on enforced disappearances in Mexico — neither from Mexican nor from international sources. In fact, Encina’s statements constitute, as per the findings of this research, the first documented governmental initiative to extensively label enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis, and one unprecedently put forth by a high-ranking official of the executive branch of the Mexican government. Encina’s statements have drawn the attention of national and international media, as well as the international community (Roldán, 2018, December 5). The question, then, arises: does labeling enforced disappearances that occurred in Mexico between 2006 and 2018 as a humanitarian crisis have the potential to facilitate access of humanitarian actors to this problem? As hereinafter proposed, it does.

1.3. Structure of this paper

The rest of section 1 offers a brief overview of the historical, political and social backdrop against which enforced disappearances in Mexico occur. As such, this overview does not intend to exhaust all the available contextual information but to situate the phenomenon at issue in a relevant manner. Section 2 introduces the conceptual framework of this research and seeks to weave together, through interlinked definitions and examples, the four main concepts to this paper, namely: metalanguage, politics of language, humanitarian crisis and enforced disappearances. Section 3 presents a state of the field of study that builds on two historic events characterized by enabling a humanitarian approach through language, namely: the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the peace process that took place between 2012 and 2016 in Colombia. This section also summarily presents an evolution of the discourse and language surrounding enforced disappearances in Mexico. Section 4 presents, through a lexical analysis, empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis has the potential to facilitate access of humanitarian actors to the problem. Section 5 interprets this evidence by contextualizing it and factoring in the input from members of the international humanitarian community in Mexico. Finally, section 6 presents a final word, including
conclusions drawn, some limitations stemming from the approach adopted here and other possible angles from which to address the research question.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Metalanguage

Conceptualizing language as a tool for signification rather than a closed system of symbols blurs the putative boundaries between linguistics and other disciplines dealing with social communication. Roman Jakobson, a renown Russian linguist and literary theorist, pioneered these ideas in the field of structural linguistics with his sixfold typology of the speech event and its corresponding functions (Waught and Monville-Burston, 1990, p. 16), which can be graphically explained as per the below diagram:

![Diagram of Jakobson's sixfold typology of the speech event.](image)

Figure 1. Roman Jakobson’s sixfold typology of the speech event.

Communication, as per Jakobson’s typology, can only ensue when all these components are present, particularly the linguistic code shared by addressee, without which the message cannot be effectively transmitted\(^1\). This linguistic code is composed by words, which, if questionable or unclear, can usually be substituted for others, available in the same inventory, or even a symbolic code. The latter takes place in scientific disciplines such as mathematics; the former is likely to happen in definitions, paraphrases or translations (Waught and Monville-Burston, 1990, p. 33). The metalingual function of language in Jakobson’s typology, thus, refers to the simultaneous role of language as a code and object coded. That is to say, two persons can talk in English (language as code) about English (language as object) by defining it through different, yet equivalent words in English (metalanguage or alternate code).

The metalingual function has an underlying potential to resignify the object referred to. Correspondence in the meaning connects a metalanguage with a given preceding language,

\(^1\) In outline, the other two components of Jakobson’s typology of the speech event refer to the reality conveyed by the message (context) and the vehicle transmitting this message (contact), which can go from the space between both ends of a face-to-face message to a physical tool (Waught and Monville-Burston, 1990, p. 69-79).
albeit within the limits of a particular signification system. This occurs on a regular basis, in everyday speech events. When addressee or addressee in a speech event need to make certain that they are using the same linguistic code, their speech event focuses on language itself and, thus, performs a metalingual function. This would be the case of a conversation between two persons in which one of them uses the jargonized term **BBC effect**, while the other is not familiar with it. The second person would then go on to ask a question along the lines of: “What do you mean by **BBC effect**?”, to which her interlocutor would answer: “I mean *media impact*” or something of the like⁴. This metalingual operation, indeed, makes the linguistic code broadly accessible and ensures effective transmission of the message.

It follows that metalanguage, as any language understood as a sum of spoken or written speech events, can operate explicitly (through actual words) or implicitly (through the acknowledgement of these words), depending on which circumstances addressee find themselves under. However, metalanguage does not only operate synchronically between individuals, as it can also bring together collective actors sharing an interest in communicating on a given matter, yet lacking a common linguistic code to effectively do so. This work propounds that metalanguage can pave the way for an understanding between different fields of knowledge and social stances, and, in that sense, become a communicational binder, although not a neutral one. Language, as pointed out by Anton Pelinka, “is not and cannot be just a neutral indicator —because language does not only indicate, it also mobilizes politically” (Pelinka, 2007, p. 137).

### 2.2. Politics of language

While necessarily an output of political systems, language is also an input. This means that politics can influence language, but language is also capable of influencing politics. From the perspective of political science, language can describe politics but also become a driving force for political change, inasmuch as it can be instrumentalized with specific purposes (Pelinka, 2007, p. 130). This mutual exertion of influence is true of any political matter —and, effectually, any human matter. To talk about politics of language is to conceptualize language as a ubiquitous political factor: a determinant in, from and for politics. The relation between language and politics is, in consequence, not necessarily marked by a clear-cut dualism and, in fact, both components are often merged. Lexical choices made by decision-makers, authorities or stakeholders shape the devising and implementation of policy and, in turn, policy influences

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⁴ The **BBC effect** (also known as **CNN effect**) refers specifically to the way modern mass media disseminate information “more widely and to bigger audiences than ever before” (Hoffman and Weiss, 2017, p. 60).
the lexical repertoire used in constructing the account of a particular political issue, which ultimately reflects and impacts power relations between all stakeholders involved.

In this sense, the gist of the concept is captured by Minear, Scott and Weiss (1996), who seek to analyze communications between stakeholders of humanitarian, man-made crises. According to them, said stakeholders form a “triangle of crisis” — governments, humanitarian organizations and news media —, characterized by an intense and circumfluent interplay in terms of communication. Apropos to this, it is pertinent to add that, largely owing to the ever-evolving technological revolution experienced in the past few decades and the consequent momentum gained by social media since the 2000s, civil society is increasingly playing a leading role as an active communicator in crises throughout the world and, therefore, a “square” is perhaps more adequate to account for the interaction between stakeholders of contemporary crises. A case in point of this emergence was recently documented in the United Kingdom, where civil society confronted the lexical choices of traditional communicators in the wake of the refugee crisis of 2015.

Indeed, when the crisis began, both the terms *refugees* and *migrants* were often used without distinction by the general public when referring to the sizable number of people fleeing from violence to Europe and other parts of the world. In mid-2015, Theresa May — at the time Home Secretary of the United Kingdom — added to this confusion by referring to asylum seekers as *economic migrants*, who had to be returned to Africa in order to thwart the illegal practices of criminals profiting from their situation, such as human smugglers and traffickers (Prince, 2015, May 13). These statements and the political connotations they entailed were contested by certain media who favored the term *refugees* over *migrants*, as they deemed this more humane and accurate when referring to those populations (Malone, 2015, August 20). The BBC attracted especial attention in this regard, when opting for what it considered a neutral usage of the term *migrants*, which ultimately resulted in its audience formally requesting that the crisis be referred to as a *refugee crisis* rather than a *migrant crisis* (Munro, 2015, August 21). In the meanwhile — and as other actors strove towards finding a common denominator (Carling, 2015, September 3) —, the humanitarian sector faced pressure to establish a clear divide between both terms on the grounds of political and mandate-related matters (Petersen, 2016, December 8).

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5 This example was first used by Vesna Lazović (2017, pp. 200-201), in a paper on the potential of language to influence attitudes and feelings towards refugees amid the 2015 refugee crisis. The sources of her work have also been reviewed, in order to have a closer look at the dynamics between those communicating on the matter. The speed of reactions within the guild of media (Jonathan Munro, from BBC, defending the use of the word *migrants*, one day after Barry Malone, from Al Jazeera, advocates for the use of *refugees* instead) is noteworthy.
In keeping with the above considerations and examples, politics of language are regarded in this paper as a quasi-symbiotic process, where not only definitions, but entire semantic fields fluctuate—oftentimes, with tangible political effects. Such a fluctuation occurs on account of the fact that, frequently, different factors, fields and agents must be weighed when signifying a given reality, which is commonly reflected on all-encompassing terms like, for instance, the overarching *humanitarian crisis*.

2.3. Humanitarian crisis

As mentioned before, there is currently no explicit consensus among the international humanitarian community on the definition of a humanitarian crisis; however, for the purposes of this paper, the definition provided in 2015 by the IASC will be the one used. This definition characterizes a humanitarian crisis as “[…] a singular event or a series of events in a country or region that cause serious disruption to the functioning of a society, resulting in human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of affected people to cope using their own resources. A crisis may be further classified according to its speed of onset (sudden or slow), its length (protracted) or cause (natural or man-made hazard or armed conflict)” (IASC, 2015, p. 3). This decision was made on the grounds that the IASC represents the longest-standing and highest-level consortium for global humanitarian coordination, drawing together diverse humanitarian entities and aiming at a coherent global humanitarian action (IASC, n.d.).

It bears mentioning that, however recent this definition is, the term *humanitarian crisis* had already been used by the IASC eleven years previously, as part of the definition of *complex emergencies*, explained as “[…] a) a humanitarian crisis which occurs in a country, region, or society where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from civil conflict and/or foreign aggression; b) a humanitarian crisis which requires an international response which goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency; c) a humanitarian crisis where the IASC assesses that it requires intensive and extensive political and management coordination” (IASC, 1994, November 30). The term *complex emergencies* has been used by humanitarian actors like the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA, 2018) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC, n.d.), although neither of them defines the term *humanitarian crisis*.

It would seem that the IASC initially deemed the term *humanitarian crisis* as a self-contained label and, later on, acknowledged the need to further clarify it. The definition provided in 2015, nevertheless, is open to interpretation, allowing for a diversity of events to fall within the compass of such a label. Furthermore, contrary to what happens with *complex emergencies*, this definition does not explicitly address matters related to governance or any “considerable
breakdown of authority”, specific liable parties or whether a humanitarian crisis requires “international response” or “intensive and extensive political management coordination”. Labeling a given situation as a humanitarian crisis could seem, in view of this, of little or no avail. However, if the language being used to denote said given situation is proving insufficient to appraise and signify reality, labels like humanitarian crisis may come in handy. The present paper takes as its starting point that, given the particular circumstances under which they occur, enforced disappearances in Mexico are a case in point of such a scenario.

It should be noted that, for the purposes of this paper, the term humanitarian crisis will frequently be used in Spanish, as crisis humanitaria, due to the fact that the sources used in the data analysis section are all in that language.

2.4. Enforced disappearance

Enforced disappearance is defined by the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances of the OHCHR as a crime committed: “[…] in a way which clearly distinguishes it from related offences such as enforced deprivation of liberty, abduction, kidnapping, incommunicado detention, etc. The following three cumulative minimum elements should be contained in any definition: (a) Deprivation of liberty against the will of the person concerned; (b) Involvement of government officials, at least indirectly by acquiescence; (c) Refusal to disclose the fate and whereabouts of the person concerned” (Working Group on Enforced Disappearances, n.d.). These elements are, accordingly, present in the definition included in article 2 of the ICPPED and is accepted by those Member States of the United Nations who have ratified the document. Among these Member States is Mexico, who ratified the Convention on March 18th, 2008.

Nevertheless, the typification of enforced disappearance in the Mexican legal instruments lacks basic elements of the crime, such as the refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty of the victims, the concealment of their fate or whereabouts and —very importantly in the case of Mexico— the possibility of attributing perpetrating agency to actors other than specific public servants (Código Penal Federal, 2016, art. 215-A). On November 17th, 2017, the Mexican Congress enacted a federal law on enforced disappearances, the Ley General en Materia de Desaparición Forzada de Personas, Desaparición Cometida por Particulares y del Sistema Nacional de Búsqueda de Personas, but its typification of the crime is also incomplete. At the time of writing, only 6 out the 32 federal entities in Mexico have passed their own law on enforced disappearance, namely: Chiapas, Coahuila, Mexico City, Morelos, Nuevo León and Querétaro; however, these documents also typify the crime deficiently. Additionally, those states which have not passed a specific law tend to frame acts of enforced disappearance within
other legal definitions such as kidnapping, homicide and deprivation of liberty (Silvestre Robledo, 2016, p.105).

Since the definitions of enforced disappearance provided by the Mexican legislation omit some of the basic elements constituting the crime, this work uses the term *enforced disappearance* as defined by the ICPPED. This decision is made taking into account the universal scope and applicability of the Convention— which supersedes that of other international treaties, such as the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons (1994, June 9), which was also ratified by the Mexican State in May 2001 (OAS, n.d.).

As with *humanitarian crisis*, the term *enforced disappearance* will frequently be used in Spanish, as *desaparición forzada*. All other terms related, such as *desapariciones forzadas, desaparecido(s)* and *desaparecida(s)* are also interpreted as per the definition of *enforced disappearance* provided by the Convention, unless otherwise indicated.

3. State of the field of study

3.1. Genocide: a name for the crime

The legacy of Raphael Lemkin and his endeavor to define and name what today is widely known as genocide constitutes an example of the potential of metalanguage and politics of language to facilitate the understanding and dissemination of a complex issue with humanitarian implications. In 1920, Raphael Lemkin found himself puzzled at the lack of a legal typification for acts of mass murder and extermination. His perplexity, together with his own experience as a Pole of Jewish descent during the Holocaust and, later on, a refugee, would eventually result in a career in law and a personal crusade to define, condemn and prevent what he initially designated as *actes de barbarie*\(^6\) (crimes of barbarity). According to Lemkin “these offenses target not only human rights but also, and above all, they undermine the foundations of social order itself” (Lemkin, 1933, p. 5). Later on, he honed these ideas and introduced the term *genocide* in lieu of its predecessor, *crime of barbarity* (Lemkin, 1944, p. 91). Lemkin, who also had an academic background in linguistics, coined the term himself by combining the Greek word γένος or genos (race or nation) and the Latin suffix -caedō (to kill). He purposefully coded the concept he had in mind as a one-word, striking label, likely to draw attention to his political message: genocide had to be recognized as an offense akin to crimes against humanity and, as such, punishable by virtue of international law.

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\(^6\) This term, according to his biographer, John Cooper, was borrowed by Lemkin from the Romanian international lawyer Vespasian Pella (Cooper, 2008, p. 19).
In late 1944, Lemkin began an intense public relations campaign to disseminate his views, which soon earned his work a place in renowned academic journals and newspapers from his country of asylum, the United States. In early 1946, while enjoying considerable reputation among media, academia and governmental agencies in this country, he put into action an advocacy strategy aimed at pressuring the newly formed United Nations into sponsoring a treaty which typified and banned genocide under international law. The universal applicability of the term *genocide*, along with the timelessness imbuing the language of Lemkin’s statements on the matter contributed to his winning over very diverse supporters among the international community. Finally, at the 179th plenary meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in December 9th, 1948, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was adopted, becoming the first human rights treaty of the United Nations and, also, the first international treaty to define the crime of genocide. Later on, genocide would be declared an internationally prosecutable crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998, July 17) and by numerous national jurisdictions also (The Law Library of Congress, 2016).

Thanks to Lemkin’s efforts, genocides throughout Modern History are not deemed isolated events denominated on an *ad hoc* basis, but rather concrete manifestations of a particular phenomenon forming part of the current epistemological horizon of humankind. The use of a tailor-made term allows for reflection of the concept it conveys, facilitates its translation into law enforcement and, eventually, defines the extent of humanitarian involvement required. Furthermore, when it comes to genocide, the discourse of governmental and supra-governmental entities often stimulates that of other stakeholders, which, in turn, has the potential to influence power relations, as well as official language and policy on the matter. This is proof that one same linguistic code is shared among all actors communicating on this topic. Indeed, the nominal existence of the crime and its enshrinement in an international treaty are not sufficient to prevent genocide from occurring; however, the imprint of the term *genocide* cannot be overlooked: by virtue of its inclusion in the linguistic code of human rights, the concept of genocide is now incorporated into the consciousness of modernity.

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7 A case in point being the Armenian Genocide, from which a tide of controversy has risen since Turkey applied for membership of the European Union in December 2004. Words and actions in this regard go back and forth, from the European Union accepting on condition that the current Turkish Government recognizes the genocide committed against the Armenians between 1915 and 1917, to the Armenian diaspora strongly lobbying their host governments and international organizations in defense of their cause (Burdy, 2005).
3.2. Peace process in Colombia: from La Violencia to a non-international armed conflict

The peace process in Colombia constitutes a rather transparent example of how metalanguage and politics of language are fundamental for humanitarian access. In November 2016, the Colombian government and the Marxist-Leninist insurgent group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) signed a historic peace treaty. The conflict between the two had been the longest-standing in Latin America, spanning more than 50 years. During that time, over a quarter million people were killed and millions displaced as a result of armed violence. The root of this conflict is a civil war that took place between 1948 and 1958, known as La Violencia (The Violence), which produced a chasm between conservatives and liberals. In order to stabilize the country, an agreement, called Frente Nacional (National Front), was approved by plebiscite in 1957. This agreement allowed for the establishment of a coalition government, in which the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party would be able to alternate in power every four presidential terms. However, some of the leftist guerrilla forces which were active during La Violencia established in the mountains, carried on a low-level insurgency and, eventually, developed a leftist armed force, the FARC (Paul, Clarke, Grill and Dunigan, 2013).

Since its creation in 1964, the FARC fought against the Colombian government making use of guerrilla warfare, while also taking part in drug trafficking to fund its operations (Seatzu, 2016, p. 4). After nearly four years of negotiations, on June 23rd, 2016, a ceasefire was signed between both parties to the conflict. Later that same year, on the 24th of November, a peace treaty was signed. One of the main points of this treaty, which strove for peace through mutual political recognition and accountability, was to incorporate the FARC into the Colombian government through representation in the Senate and lower chamber of the Congress. In return, the insurgent group committed to disarm, form a legitimate political party, cut ties with drug trafficking and address human rights abuses committed over the previous decades —particularly those related to the disappearance of people (Acuerdo Final, 2017, p. 80 and following).

From the perspective of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the language used in this treaty represented a breakthrough, as it gave the conflict the status of a non-international armed conflict (NIAC), in accordance to Protocol II additional to the Geneva Conventions. Indeed, as per IHL, the two main conditions that define a non-international armed conflict were being met by the situation in Colombia, namely, high-intensity violence and sufficient organization of the parties (Protocol II, 1977, art. 1). It has been pointed out that, in effect, after Colombia ratified Protocol II in 1995, its national legislation has repeatedly mentioned IHL and used the label conflicto armado, Spanish for armed conflict (Machado and Otálora Lozano, 2012, p. 70). This trend seems to have peaked in 2011 with the promulgation of Law 1448, which officially
recognizes the existence of a non-international armed conflict in Colombia, thus providing enough grounds to consider the FARC a non-State armed actor bound by international law (Ley 1448, 2011, art.3).

Before the administration of former president Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), the official discourse of the Colombian government had not yielded to considerations of this nature. Álvaro Uribe, president of Colombia from 2002 to 2010, unswervingly refused to concede any political legitimacy to the FARC and described its members as terroristas (terrorists), with whom cooperation was inadmissible. Uribe maintained that “peace is not made by those who call the terrorists ‘angels’ in order to connive with them [but by] those who face with severity, in the name of the State, the actions of terrorists.” (El Tiempo, 2006, May 6). This stance, while popular among some segments of the Colombian society and other governments on the American continent8, was not conducive to peace negotiations. Without due official acknowledgement of the FARC as a non-State armed actor, proper applicability of IHL and humanitarian access to the armed conflict in Colombia were blocked.

The humanitarian language contained in Colombian legal instruments issued after 1995 —and especially in Law 1448— was a first step in overcoming this blockage: a humanitarian resignification of the context required the use of a befitting linguistic code. However, in order for effective communication to take place, this metalingual operation had to be shared by all stakeholders to the conflict. From the point of view of metalanguage and politics of language, this was the objective of the negotiation process that culminated in a peace treaty between the Colombian government and the FARC. Furthermore, upon adoption of this humanitarian linguistic code, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) became especially involved as a communicator on the situation in Colombia. From then on, its activities in this sense have been sustained —as can be attested by its numerous reports, articles and press releases and declarations on the matter.

That is not to say that the treaty put a definitive end to hostilities. In early 2019, the ICRC stated that five non-international armed conflicts are ongoing in Colombia, four of which have taken place between the government and a non-State armed actor, while the fifth one has arisen between two different non-State armed actors (ICRC, 2019, January 30). The stances on this new moment of the Colombian history are diverging: the ICRC defends that any labels different from non-international armed conflict are not suited to define these armed clashes and that “words and rules must be respected” (Castrillón, 2019, February 10); meanwhile, agents of the

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8 Especially by the United States, which, by virtue of the so-called “Plan Colombia”, was allowed to fight the drug cartels on Colombian soil (Seatzu, 2016, p. 5).
Colombian government deny the existence of any such conflict and opt for ascribing these confrontations to terrorism, stating that this is a “scientific stance, a stance based on facts” (Bolaños, 2019, February 10).

Whatever the case may be, the active involvement of a stakeholder such as the ICRC in communications of this nature would have not been possible without the discursive shift resulting from the introduction of a humanitarian linguistic code, brought about by ratification of Protocol II. Furthermore, this type of involvement is important for the ICRC beyond language and discourse, as it facilitates and legitimizes the materialization of humanitarian assistance in situations which, like the Colombian peace process, may benefit from it. In Colombia, this has been key for the engagement of the ICRC in terms of, for instance, supporting the clarification of whereabouts of persons who went missing as a result of the Colombian conflict and assessing the needs of their families (ICRC, 2017, p. 541). This ultimately contributes, from a humanitarian perspective, to the implementation of multidisciplinary responses to the problem of the missing in that country.

3.3. Enforced disappearances in Mexico: a snapshot

The Ayotzinapa case was quickly considered closed by the Executive branch of the Mexican government during the administration of former president Enrique Peña Nieto, under claims that detained members of a local drug cartel had confessed to killing the students and then incinerating their bodies at a garbage dump in the vicinity of the town of Iguala (PGR, 2016, pp. 135-140). During a press conference held several weeks after the incident, the then Attorney General, Jesús Murillo Karam, publicly showed videos of these taped confessions and set them forth as evidence that the disappearance of the 43 students had been the result of a security problem, in which corrupt local police members and low-ranking government officials had been involved. When probed by a reporter about it, Murillo Karam denied any participation—or omission—on the part of the military. On the whole, the language and discourse used by the former Attorney General described the disappearance of the students as a desaparición forzada, while actively avoiding any apportionment of liability to the Mexican State (Presidencia Enrique Peña Nieto, 2014, November 7). Shortly after, he would reaffirm the results of the investigation conducted by his office, denominating them a “historical truth” (Presidencia Enrique Peña Nieto, 2015, January 27).

This statement was soon challenged by the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI), established by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF), whose follow-up reports have consistently discredited the handling of the Ayotzinapa case on the part of the Mexican authorities, as well
as the results presented by former Attorney General Murillo Karam. The scientific evidence put forward in said reports invalidates the claim that the group of students was incinerated at the garbage dump near Iguala (GIEI, 2015, p. 25 and EAAF, 2016, p. 241) and supports the version in which the perpetrators acted in complicity with federal security forces (GIEI, 2015, p. 12-14). In a press release published immediately after presenting their first report, the EAAF stated that “the federal government [of Mexico] generated, in a hastily, intentional and revictimizing way, a ‘historical truth’ lacking sufficient and robust scientific evidence” (EAAF, 2016, February 9). This phrase, “historical truth”, has since become iconic of a different discourse around Ayotzinapa case, one in which the Government of Mexico is deemed not only liable for but also acquiescent to the disappearance of the 43 students.

Amidst a climate of distrust and while disappearances throughout Mexico kept soaring, this contestation of the official discourse stirred the public opinion and mustered an especially strong response among civil society —spearheaded by the relatives of the victims— for years to come. This response has been characterized by acknowledging that the pervasiveness of enforced disappearances throughout Mexico, the apparent inability of the authorities to provide a solution and the protraction of the problem amounting to the existence of a crisis. Several labels have been used to characterize the nature of said crisis, not only by civil society but also other stakeholders to this phenomenon, such as the Mexican government, humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as respectively the ICRC and Amnesty International (Quintana, 2018, August 30⁹) and the media. However, as previously mentioned, the declarations recently made by Subsecretary of Human Rights, Migration and Population, Alejandro Encinas, are, to the knowledge of the author, the first documented governmental initiative to extensively label enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis. Moreover, since October 2018, Encinas has consistently acknowledged that this situation is “the result of the absence or weakness of the State, and when a State reaches levels of precariousness, international cooperation is evidently very important” (Animal Político, 2018, December 5).

This seems to reveal a new discursive shift in the approach to enforced disappearances in Mexico, where —similarly to the example of the Colombian conflicto armado— a specific denotative definition already exists and is in use. The term enforced disappearance, which is set down in Customary IHL (ICRC, n.d., chapter 32, rule 98), the ICPPED and International Criminal Law (Rome Statute, 1998, p. 93, art. 7), has also been included in the Mexican

⁹ Amnesty International, additionally, has approached the characterization of this crisis from a gender perspective, as can be seen in the cited source.
legislation. Nevertheless, the typification of enforced disappearance is incomplete in Mexican legal instruments, which makes for a partial handling of the crime. Concretely, as the Mexican legislation fails to allocate any responsibility to the State, enforced disappearances in that country have been framed as a domestic security problem, rather than a crisis that exceeds and compromises the capacities of different governments in office. To the extent that the official discourse has presented such capacities as fully functional, there has been only a limited leeway for humanitarian actors to access the problem.

The language used by Alejandro Encinas when referring to enforced disappearances in Mexico—specifically, labeling it as a crisis humanitaria—not only challenges said discourse, but may also provide the cue for a humanitarian approach to the problem. As stated previously in the contextual framework and state of the field of study, metalanguage has the potential to resignify the object it refers to. The use of the label crisis humanitaria to characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico may define the possibilities for access of humanitarian actors to this problem. The general objective of the following section is to analyze the language used by four main stakeholders generating information on enforced disappearances in Mexico, so as to gather evidence to support this hypothesis.

4. Case study: Ayotzinapa and enforced disappearance in Mexico

4.1. Introduction to data analysis

Given the conditions under which it occurred—forcible deprivation of liberty and presumed killing of civilians perpetrated by agents of the State and acquiesced to by the governmental apparatus—, the Ayotzinapa case represents a paradigmatic example of enforced disappearance. It has also received significant media attention and, by virtue of this, become the flagship case of enforced disappearances in Mexico—although, by far, not the last one. At one with Mexican civil society, national and international human rights organizations have unreservedly condemned the acts of violence carried out during the night between September 26th and 27th, 2014, in Guerrero. Nevertheless, the humanitarian dimension of this specific event or enforced disappearances in Mexico as a whole does not seem to have had a pivotal role in the discourse of these or other actors characterizing it through language so far. In order to shed light upon this matter, this section is dedicated to analyzing online sources of information generated by four main stakeholders interfacing in the context of and communicating on enforced disappearances in Mexico.

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4.2. Description of data analysis

The four main stakeholders analyzed in this section are:

1) The Government of Mexico;
2) The humanitarian sector, represented by the national and international organizations in the country which have a mandate for or related to enforced disappearances: OHCHR, ICRC and the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH);11
3) National media, represented by the three most used native online news media in the country, according to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2018: Aristegui Noticias, El Universal Online and Animal Político;
4) The CSOs, represented by Movimiento por Nuestros Desaparecidos en México (MNDM)—an alliance bringing together over 35 collectives of relatives of disappeared persons in Mexico and over 40 affiliated organizations.

This list is based on the lessons learned from Minear, Scott and Weiss regarding the “crisis triangle” (1996, p. 2) and the considerations put forth in the conceptual framework in terms of participation of civil society in humanitarian action. The selection of entities comprised in multi-entity stakeholders (humanitarian sector and media) is intended to draw a balanced sample of the available information on enforced disappearances in Mexico and cast light on how the phenomenon is being characterized through language, presumably depending on the political interests of each stakeholder —further examined after the data analysis. The specific objectives of the data analysis section are to:

1) Provide lexical evidence that the Ayotzinapa case is not extensively characterized as forming part of a humanitarian crisis.
2) Provide lexical evidence that, in fact, enforced disappearances in Mexico are not extensively labeled as a humanitarian crisis —although the phenomenon has been labeled as other types of crisis.

11 Arguably, the nature of an organization like the ICRC differs from that of human rights organizations like the OHCHR or CNDH and, therefore, it is questionable whether these three actors should be considered as part of a unified humanitarian sector. However, organizational identities aside, the humanitarian imperative to alleviate suffering aims, ultimately, at restoring human rights unfulfilled through force of circumstances, inability of the relevant authorities or lack of will on the part of governments (Terry, 2002, p. 17). These three actors may not be entirely comparable in formal terms (mandate, structure and specific activities), but their scopes of action do overlap and they all share, ultimately, the humanitarian objective of alleviating the suffering of victims of enforced disappearance and their families in Mexico.
3) Provide lexical evidence that the labeling of enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis is more frequent after the declarations made in this regard by Encinas in October 11th, 2018.

This is done through a lexical analysis of online sources, namely, Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) embedded in official websites of the above-mentioned four main stakeholders. For the purposes of this analysis, all the words contained in these URLs are extracted and compiled as lexical corpora. The extraction, compilation and analysis of these lexical corpora is performed using the lexical analyzer Sketch Engine. All technical details related to the inclusion criteria used to filter, extract and compile these URLs, the description of the features of Sketch Engine used and the methodological limitations found are addressed in Annex 2 of this paper.

4.3. Data analysis

The first four lexical corpora analyzed are contained in URLs focused on the Ayotzinapa case; the last four, in URLs focused on enforced disappearance in Mexico as a broad phenomenon. The analysis performed on these eight corpora and the results obtained are summarized in the following three subsections.

4.3.1. Lexical corpora on Ayotzinapa case

The corpora focused on the Ayotzinapa case are composed by URLs published online between September 26th, 2014 (date at which the enforced disappearance of the 43 students took place) and March 3rd, 2019 (date at which the data collection for this research was carried out). These corpora have the following dimensions in number of words:

![Figure 2. Volume of corpora on Ayotzinapa case.](image)

In these corpora (1,175,324 words in total), the phrase *crisis humanitaria* is not used; however, the phenomenon of enforced disappearance in Mexico as a whole is occasionally labeled as what will be, hereinafter, called an “enforced disappearance-related crisis”; that is, with no other specific attributes apart from being broadly denominated or deemed a crisis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References to enforced disappearance</th>
<th>Percentage relative to size of respective corpus</th>
<th>Number of times labeled as enforced disappearance-related crisis</th>
<th>Percentage relative to references to enforced disappearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Mexico</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian sector</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>1758</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online news media</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>3,801</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Labeling of enforced disappearance as a general enforced disappearance-related crisis.

This general labeling and, in fact, any references to enforced disappearance occur the most, in absolute and relative numbers, in the corpus obtained from the CSOs, which is also the second smallest, accounting for less than 15% of the total amount of words compiled in this set of corpora. The presence of the same elements in the corpora from the Government of Mexico and the humanitarian sector is relatively low considering their volume (respectively, 42% and 39% of the total amount of words in the set). The low occurrence of references to enforced disappearance and the absence of general labeling in the corpus obtained from online news media sources was initially thought to result from a combination of the size of the corpus (5% of the total volume of the set) and the prevalence of audiovisual resources among the URLs extracted; however, on closer inspection, only three of these webpages featured an audiovisual element. Further analysis of this corpus shows that online news media simply seem to “prefer” alluding to the Ayotzinapa case by using the place name (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References to enforced disappearance</th>
<th>References to Ayotzinapa case</th>
<th>Percentage of references to Ayotzinapa case vs. references to enforced disappearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Mexico</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian sector</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>1758</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online news media</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>3,801</td>
<td>623</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. References to Ayotzinapa case in proportion to references to enforced disappearance.

4.3.2. Lexical corpora on enforced disappearance in Mexico

Comprising 406,323 words in total, the corpora focused on enforced disappearance in Mexico as a whole represent less than 35% of the volume of the corpora on the Ayotzinapa case. These corpora are composed by URLs published online between December 1st, 2006 (date at which Felipe Calderón took office as president of Mexico and the Drug War became a political priority for the Mexican government) and March 3rd, 2019. These corpora have the following dimensions in number of words:
In these corpora, *crisis humanitaria* labels enforced disappearance in Mexico on three occasions only; once in the corpus obtained from the Government of Mexico and twice in the one obtained from CSOs (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References to enforced disappearance</th>
<th>Percentage relative to size of respective corpus</th>
<th>Labeled as humanitarian crisis</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Mexico</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian sector</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>0.72%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online news media</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>1.07%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2234</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Labeling of enforced disappearance as a humanitarian crisis.

The labels in the corpus from CSOs are dated one month after the one in the corpus from the Government of Mexico. A translation to English of the three instances of the label *crisis humanitaria*\(^{12}\) can be seen in Table 4, below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text to left of label</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Text to right of label</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>disappeared, over 100 thousand clandestine mass graves and 26 thousand unidentified bodies: “This accounts for the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis”</td>
<td>And human rights crisis we are facing and which we ought to overcome in our country”. GoM</td>
<td>February 4th, 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not to mention the large sum of those who have not denounced due to diverse reasons.</td>
<td>humanitarian crisis</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>March 1st, 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We live an immense tragedy, a humanitarian crisis</td>
<td>which has not been acknowledged and assumed in its true dimension by whom is to be held accountable in this situation, the</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>March 2nd, 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Enforced disappearances in Mexico labeled as a humanitarian crisis in the second set of corpora.

This is interesting in the light of the overall differences between these two corpora —as, in principle, differing lexical corpora are unlikely to reflect such specific conceptual similarities.

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\(^{12}\) The original text in Spanish and the hyperlinks to the sources can be consulted in Annex 3.1.
In the comparison chart below (Figure 4\textsuperscript{13}), the higher scores signify greater differences between two given corpora in the second set. The difference between the corpus from the Government of Mexico and the corpus from CSOs here is evident:

![Comparison chart](image)

Figure 4. Overall comparison of second set of corpora analyzed.

Enforced disappearances are characterized also as other crises in this second set. From the broad labeling as an enforced disappearance-related crisis, to more specific labels such as crisis de derechos humanos (‘human rights crisis’), crisis de seguridad (‘security crisis’), crisis de impunidad (‘impunity crisis’) and crisis forense\textsuperscript{14} (‘forensic crisis’), 36% of these characterizations are contained in sources dated after October 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2018. The other 64% of the labels is distributed between years 2013, 2016, 2017 and two months of 2018, June and August; however, they are mostly broad characterizations of the phenomenon as an enforced disappearance-related crisis (Figure 5\textsuperscript{15}).

\textsuperscript{13} For the technical details on this specific figure, please refer to Annex 2 (data analysis, section 4).

\textsuperscript{14} Another, stand-alone label was found in the lexical analysis performed to the second set of corpora. This label was crisis de identificación de cuerpos exhumados (‘crisis of identification of exhumed bodies’); however, on account that the identification of human remains is a basic aspect of forensic science, this label is considered a variation of crisis forense. In any case, both the latter label and crisis de impunidad fall under the category ‘Other’ in Figure 5.

\textsuperscript{15} The original text in Spanish and the hyperlinks to the sources can be consulted in Annex 3.2.
4.3.3. Summary of findings

1) The lexical corpora focused on the Ayotzinapa case do not characterize this event as forming part of a humanitarian crisis.

2) The analyzed corpora do not extensively characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis; however, they do label them as different crises on several occasions.

3) The labeling of enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis seems to increase after the declarations made by Encinas in October 11th, 2018.

The following section is dedicated to the interpretation of these findings. For this purpose, non-linguistic elements potentially shaping the ways in which the main stakeholders use language are factored in.
5. Interpretation of findings

5.1. Contextualization

Communication takes place within a given context; therefore, any interpretation of the above findings should incorporate contextual, non-linguistic factors. Among these, the political interplay bringing together the analyzed stakeholders is thrown into sharp relief. However, as pointed out by Minear, Scott and Weiss, this is an interplay branded by an intrinsic asymmetry (1996, viii). This inherent imbalance stems both from distinct formal attributes of the stakeholders — such as mandate and organizational identity — and informal factors occurring over a specific time period — such as political priorities and administrative changes. Not depending only on formal attributes, this asymmetrical political interplay is not fixed but fluctuating, which reflects on and stems from the language used to characterize political matters. That is to say, politics of language around enforced disappearances in Mexico run in parallel to the mutable political interplay and shifting power relations that take place among the stakeholders involved in the issue: in order to interpret its concrete lexical manifestations, it is necessary to contextualize them.

Up until the time of writing, the context of enforced disappearances in Mexico has been defined by a dynamic political interplay among, mainly, the four stakeholders analyzed in this paper. Together, these stakeholders have contributed to co-constructing the social and political understanding of the phenomenon in question, notably through the use of language and certain linguistic codes. It is true that language — understood as a sum of spoken or written speech events — has not been the only form of communication used by these entities to characterize the phenomenon and that, often, linguistic codes work in tandem with other types of codes, such as the ones pertaining to visual and audiovisual resources; however, language has the unique capacity to codify and recodify itself, which renders it versatile and widely used. In the case at hand, such qualities, paired with the ongoing nature of a phenomenon marked by unstable power relations, has translated into a string of linguistic codes linked up in a progression that seems to point towards a metalingual change favoring the use of humanitarian language.

The anti-establishment stance of actors such as the EAAF and the GIEI regarding the "historical truth" around the Ayotzinapa case can be seen as a seminal moment in this progression. These two entities not only challenged the former Attorney General’s official discourse on what befell the 43 disappeared students: in doing so, they contributed to evince the misuse of the term desaparición forzada in it — which exonерated the Mexican State and its agents from all liability. The controversy around the “historical truth” initially took place between these two
non-state actors and the Mexican Attorney General’s Office; however, the climate of mistrust soon spread and elicited collective opposition to the formal power exercised through language by agents of the Mexican State. This seems to reflect on the subsequent communications on the matter among the four stakeholders analyzed. The fact that the corpora on Ayotzinapa refer six times less to said specific case than to the phenomenon of enforced disappearances in Mexico appears to underscore an acknowledgement of the former as a paradigm of the latter. From the foregoing, it can be inferred that this event is not seen by the stakeholders in question —as Murillo Karam’s "historical truth" hinted at— as isolated, but rather the sample of a protracted problem.

This may explain why, in this set, the corpora from the CSOs and humanitarian sector are particularly inclined to mention the general phenomenon, rather than to use the proper noun Ayotzinapa. The magnitude of the problem in question is better conveyed this way: a geographically isolated case of malfeasance does not carry the same political and social implications as a crime against humanity. This would continue the trend initiated by the EAAF (an NGO ultimately constituted by members of the civil society) and the GIEI (an entity belonging to the human rights sector and, therefore, inclined to a humanitarian perspective). On the other hand, there are also more references to the general phenomenon in the corpus extracted from government webpages; nevertheless, this is also the corpus with the most occurrences of the toponym Ayotzinapa, which may be symptomatic of the discourse adhered to by the Attorney General’s Office. The media corpus does mention the place name more than the general phenomenon, but the difference is proportionally minimal and roughly results in a 1:1 ratio. This may be seen as the result of an effort to avoid favoring a particular point of view, but it is also likely to reflect the delicate situation of Mexican journalists regarding press freedom on highly polemical matters.

Given that enforced disappearances in Mexico occur under circumstances which confer on them the magnitude of a humanitarian crisis, that they have been recently labeled as such by a high-

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16 This can also be seen as an attempt at attracting more media and international attention: the name of the crime is more likely to speak to non-specialized and international audiences than the name of the town where this crime was committed, at least during an initial, strategic stage in the dissemination of information on the case. This would be akin to the use of the word ‘famine’ to raise awareness on the level of human suffering amid certain situations, attract media and gather emergency funds (BBC, 2011, July 20). The opinion of this author is that, in the case of Ayotzinapa, what seems to appeal to international media the most —and probably to their audience also—is the fact that the victims were young students, as this tends to be the focus of their headlines.

17 Tragedy is often upon those reporting on the matter in Mexico. As pointed out by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in a recent report on freedom of expression in Mexico, the "[…] pervasive assault on journalists and journalism present the most immediate and challenging threat to freedom of expression in Mexico today" and this stems—at least partly—from a "[…] historic transition from past authoritarian practices in government to emerging political pluralism and demands for democratic standards […]" (IACHR, 2018, p. 4-7).
ranking official of the executive branch of the Government of Mexico and, finally, that Ayotzinapa represents the paradigm of this phenomenon, the question arises as to why the term crisis humanitaria—or similar ones, such as emergencia humanitaria (humanitarian emergency)—is not part of this first set of corpora, especially when the existence of a general enforced disappearance-related crisis is acknowledged on six occasions (Table 1). The use of the word crisis conveys the actuality of a certain social and political distress; however, as has been explained before, the very concept of enforced disappearance is not shared among the different parties communicating on the matter, which may bring about ambiguity and equivocation. Ambiguous understanding of a message, according to Jakobson’s typology of the speech event, would make for ineffective communication and possibly trigger the metalingual function of language. This may be the reason behind the coexistence of several labels characterizing enforced disappearances in Mexico as different types of crisis, when the case study is expanded to cover the phenomenon as a whole (Figure 5).

It is, indeed, important to note that while all of these labels refer to the same phenomenon and are part of the same progression, each focuses on a particular aspect of the problem, its context, and the existing power relations among those communicating on the issue. For example, the widespread labeling of enforced disappearances in Mexico as a general crisis reflects a horizontal awareness, among the analyzed stakeholders, of a protracted problem, while the label ‘security crisis’—used in the corpora only by the Government of Mexico—accentuates its dimension as a matter of national security and suggests that, as such, it falls within the exclusive competence of Mexican authorities, which implies a vertical understanding of power and its exercise. Similarly, the labels ‘forensic crisis’ and ‘impunity crisis’—used only by CSOs—invoke and, ultimately, question the capacities of the Mexican State in evidence management for law enforcement and the prosecution of criminals. This also implies a vertical understanding of power and the way it is exercised, but from a bottom-up approach.

In this sense, the label ‘human rights crisis’, calls for special attention. The reason lies in the complex political interplay and power relations that a label based on a human rights perspective bears witness to, especially considering when and by whom it is used. The label crisis de derechos humanos turns up relatively late in the second set of corpora, as it can only be found in a source dated June 2018; however, certain events that took place around that period may provide revealing insight in this regard. On May 30th that year, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2014 to 2018, publicly condemned the disappearance of more than 20 civilians in the previous three months, in the border town of
Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, “amid strong indications that these crimes [had been] committed by federal security forces” (OHCHR, 2018, May 30).

That same day, the CNDH released a separate statement claiming that the number of persons disappeared within that timeframe rose to over 30 (CNDH, 2018, May 30)\(^\text{18}\). This uncertainty regarding the number of victims, the presence of minors among them and the threats received by investigative journalists reporting on the cases (Díaz, 2018, June 4), coupled with the fact that the *Ley General en Materia de Desaparición Forzada de Personas* had been enacted only a few months before, contributed to catalyze the attention that the issue received from the OHCHR and CNDH. The website of the Government of Mexico soon acknowledged their concerns through a press release and extended the OHCHR an invitation to “share “the information and records at its disposal and which it has documented on the occasion of its actions in the field” (Gobierno de México, 2018, May 31). One day after this press release was published, media disseminated the plight of the families of the victims, who demanded to know the whereabouts of their loved ones (García, 2018, June 1).

A few days later, staff from the OHCHR in Mexico carried out a working mission to Nuevo Laredo, to meet these families and the local authorities. Media covering this visit would occasionally mention the existence of a crisis (Olivares Alonso, 2018, June 6). Virtually on the eve of Mexico’s 2018 presidential election, which was to be held on July 1\(^\text{st}\), the visibility given to the rawness of these social demands found an echo in civil society, especially among the CSOs working on enforced disappearances in Mexico. On June 11\(^\text{th}\), MNDM published an open letter addressed to the presidential candidates that reads: "Mexico is currently experiencing a serious human rights crisis, which is reflected in the more than thirty-seven thousand missing persons recognized by the State and the many more it does not recognize" (MNDM, 2018, June 11). This is text containing the first occurrence of the label *crisis de derechos humanos* in the second set of corpora.

A few weeks after this open letter was published, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein delivered a communiqué which, on the occasion of the end of his mandate, emphasized the outstanding issues on the agenda of the Human Rights Council (HRC), among which were enforced disappearances in Mexico and the over 310 urgent actions registered by the CED since 2012 (Zeid, 2018, June 18). As a member of the HRC, Mexico faced immediate pressure, although the topic of enforced disappearances was not discussed straightaway before this inter-

\(^{18}\) According to some Mexican media, local NGOs in Tamaulipas reported as much as 40 disappeared persons within that same three-month timeframe (Olivares Alonso, 2018, June 6). However, at the time of writing this paper, there are no formal reports issued by said organizations which can support this estimation.
governmental body (HCR, 2018, June 19). Later on, a press release was published on the website of the Government of Mexico, which, on the occasion of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, stated that disappearances and enforced disappearances “represent a serious security and human rights crisis that must be addressed with urgency, speed and effective coordination between the federal authorities and the states” (Gobierno de México, 2018, August 30). This is the text containing the second occurrence of the label crisis de derechos humanos in the second set of corpora.

It is worth pointing out that this official statement distinguishes between disappearances and enforced disappearances, as this implies that enforced disappearances coexist with disappearances for which the Mexican State cannot be held responsible. This is problematic because, while it is true that enforced disappearances must meet the criteria contained in the definition established by the ICPPED to be considered as such, the Ley General en Materia de Desaparición Forzada de Personas, as has been explained before, does not entirely reflect said standards, especially for what pertains to acquiescence of the State. On the other hand, albeit this communication reflects the discourse contained in said law—which implies that the Mexican State cannot be a potential accomplice to a national security problem—it also acknowledges a rife unfulfillment of human rights in the country. In this sense, the use of the composite label crisis de seguridad y derechos humanos represents a transitional moment between two vying discourses and linguistic codes. Interestingly, this label can only be found, in any of the two corpora obtained from the Government of Mexico, after the 2018 Mexican presidential election, which resulted in a political turn to the left and significant changes to the structure and priorities of this stakeholder.

A human rights crisis is not far off from a humanitarian crisis, insofar as the former may well exceed all coping mechanisms available, especially if it protracts in time. As Fiona Terry points out, the prime responsibility to fulfil human rights lies with the States entrusted with the safety and well-being of individuals. Humanitarian action becomes necessary when “governments […] have been unwilling or unable to shoulder their respective responsibilities” (Terry, 2002, p. 17). From this perspective, addressing a human rights crisis from a humanitarian perspective is part of a logical progression. A current or outgoing government administration is not likely to admit to the existence of a situation necessitating humanitarian action due to neglect of State responsibilities; however, an incoming administration may be open to this possibility—particularly if its political affiliations are close to the end of the spectrum opposite to that of its predecessor.
This was true of the transitional period between Mexican presidential administrations in 2018, when Alejandro Encinas acknowledged the longstanding existence of a humanitarian crisis demanding international cooperation in Mexico, which implied that there had been an unfulfillment of State responsibilities in the past. Following these declarations, between October 2018 and early 2019, the label *crisis humanitaria* has been applied to characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico several times, including but not limited to the examples shown in Table 4. In December 1st, 2018, for example, the incoming governor of the Mexican state of Veracruz declared a “crisis of violation of human rights in terms of disappearance of persons” in this federal entity (*TVMÁS*, 2018, December 1). However, presumably due to the subsequent involvement of the ICRC, some media opted for using the label *crisis humanitaria* instead (Escobar, 2019, July 24)—which attests to the close links between a human rights crisis and a humanitarian crisis.

The humanitarian sector, however, tends to avoid labeling the phenomenon altogether. Although the lexical analysis shows a consensus among all the stakeholders analyzed that a certain type of crisis exists, the word *crisis* is used only once to characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico in the second corpus from the humanitarian sector (CICR, 2019, January 17). Labels like ‘humanitarian crisis', 'human rights crisis', 'security crisis' and 'impunity crisis' convey an allocation of responsibility that is not necessarily conducive to the materialization of humanitarian assistance. The duties to avoid human suffering, ensure the fulfilment of human rights, provide security and impart justice to those who attempt against it falls, first and foremost, on States and “humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of an appeal by the affected country” (General Assembly, 1991, December 19, p. 50). In other words, it is a prerogative of States to determine whether a specific phenomenon occurring within their territories is a humanitarian crisis.

For the humanitarian sector, not using the label *crisis humanitaria* to characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico is presumably linked to maintaining its acceptance in this country and, thus, its activities—in terms of this specific problem and others. That is not to say it cannot share a humanitarian metalanguage with the other three stakeholders; however, a pragmatic approach to said metalanguage is particularly critical for the effective involvement of this sector. For this stakeholder, “an approach based on humanitarian objectives which does not look into who is responsible […], with proper management of confidential information, could be a powerful instrument for searching for and collecting relevant information on the missing in certain conditions” (Crettol, M., Milner, L., La Rosa, A. and Stockwell, J., 2017, p. 592).
This may even translate into not using the label *crisis humanitaria* at all, as can be inferred from the lexical analysis and this contextualization. In order to draw nearer to the perspectives of the humanitarian sector in Mexico in this regard, an interview was conducted with a representative of one of the organizations comprised here as part of the humanitarian sector in Mexico, the ICRC\(^{19}\). A few relevant extracts of this interview have been included in the section below.

### 5.2. Input from the ICRC Regional Delegation for Mexico and Central America

In an interview with Mr. Martienus de Boer, Deputy Head of the ICRC Regional Delegation for Mexico and Central America, issues relating to the ICRC’s activities in Mexico were discussed, specifically those pertaining to its engagement on matters related to the missing and the institutional position of the Committee regarding the labeling of enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis by a high-ranking official of the executive branch of the Mexican government. Mr. de Boer explained that, as a matter of mandate, the ICRC does not only get involved in enforced disappearances, but all issues related to the missing “regardless of who is the responsible party.” He stated: “Our starting point is answers to families. What we want is that the families receive answers about their missing relatives and […] we already had, for a long time, a discussion with the authorities […] on the distinction between justice —and the judicial process— and the search process. We focus on the search process, whereas both the government and, for instance, the UN, focus on the justice” (de Boer, 2019, July 3\(^{20}\)). However, he also added that the current stance of the ICRC on this particular matter is that these two elements, search and justice, “go hand in hand”.

In Mexico, the ICRC’s activities related to the missing can be divided into five different thematic areas that support the work carried out by the authorities in the country: capacity building in forensics, database management, homogenization of the existent legal frameworks, liaison between family associations and the government and, recently, technical support for what concerns missing migrants. All these activities are coordinated with the Government of Mexico. “We are very involved with this government and they are very open to receive our support.” When asked about the relationship between the ICRC and the current administration of the Mexican government —to which Alejandro Encinas belongs—, Mr. de Boer stated that it is characterized by the “recognition […] that there is a problem [in terms of missing persons in the country]; that solutions need to be found”.

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\(^{19}\) To date —and despite several attempts—, it has not been possible to establish contact with the OHCHR or the section of the CNDH in charge of issues related to enforced disappearance in Mexico.

\(^{20}\) Nota bene. All the quotes in this subsection have been extracted from this same source.
About Encinas’ declarations on enforced disappearances in Mexico amounting to a humanitarian crisis, Mr. de Boer acknowledged: “That also makes us feel more comfortable that we can [...] publicly state that we are trying to help”. He clarified that, in the case of Mexico, “the terminology of using [the label] ‘humanitarian crisis’ [...] did not really change the relationship [with the Mexican State], because it was already really strong.” However, Encinas’ declarations did provide to the Committee, he said, visibility as “more publicly an actor among those that are working on the scene”. He went on to say that this “does help the relationship with other government authorities” and, as for civil society, this has the potential to “increase their confidence that, if they talk to us, we have a strong link to the government”. He added that not focusing only on enforced disappearances has also contributed to maintaining a good relationship with the Mexican authorities.

Finally, when asked about the importance of language for the ICRC in terms of the materialization of humanitarian assistance, he commented that, in the past, the ICRC “bringing a humanitarian perspective has helped conflicting parties getting together”, a good example of which, he said, is the peace process between the Colombian government and the FARC, as has been explained in the state of the field of study.

6. Conclusion

A metalanguage characterizing enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis appears to be currently operative among the stakeholders analyzed in this paper. This can be inferred from the consistent labeling of this phenomenon as a crisis humanitaria since October 11th, 2018, which includes but does not limit to the samples presented in the data analysis section. Much like crisis de derechos humanos, the label crisis humanitaria evinces a political interplay that simultaneously stems from and reflects on the language used by the Mexican government, humanitarian sector, media and CSOs to characterize enforced disappearances in Mexico. This is done either explicitly, by applying the label crisis humanitaria to this phenomenon, or implicitly, through actions reflecting an acknowledgement of this label. As follows from the interview made to Mr. Martienus de Boer, a case in point of the latter mechanism is the ICRC in Mexico.

This organization, while not explicitly labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis, experiences greater visibility and better rapport with Mexican authorities and CSOs since this label is extensively in use. This manifests in the involvement of the Committee as an active collaborator of participatory processes addressing the issue of enforced disappearances in the country, like the new 11-point plan for the implementation of the Ley General en Materia de Desaparición Forzada de Personas, announced by the Government of
Mexico on February 4th, 2019, where the provision of technical assistance from the ICRC, among other members of the international community, is contemplated (Gobierno de México, 2019, February 4 [press release]). Labeling enforced disappearances in Mexico as a humanitarian crisis has promoted a humanitarian approach to this problem and, although this has not drastically altered the institutional interactions that already existed between the international humanitarian community and the Mexican State, it did open up new pathways to this problem, which facilitates the materialization of humanitarian objectives of entities currently dealing with this complex phenomenon.

The introduction of a metalanguage allowing different actors to communicate on enforced disappearances in Mexico within the framework of a humanitarian signification system should, ideally, result in the establishment of an epistemic community, defined by Peter Haas as a network of experts that assists policy makers in establishing causes and effects of complex problems, identifying their objectives in relation to said problems and framing the debate for policymaking, all of this based on “intersubjective, internally defined criteria for weighing and validating knowledge in the domain of their expertise”, as well as “a common policy enterprise” (Haas, 1992, p. 3). In the case at hand, the introduction of a humanitarian metalanguage has proven useful in facilitating access of relevant experts to the problem and debate; however, the devising and implementation of sustainable policies to address enforced disappearances in Mexico demand also a common understanding of the problem to be policed.

Further research on the importance of language as a factor for the access of humanitarian actors to the phenomenon of enforced disappearances in Mexico may focus on the importance of wording of international standards, such as —and especially— the definition of enforced disappearance contained in the ICPPED, which should be reflected in the Mexican legal framework and policymaking. On the same line of research, the issue of translation and the semantic nuances between ‘enforced disappearance’ (which implies a dimension of commission of the crime from a position of authority) and desaparición forzada (which lacks this dimension, despite pointing out the use of force), may provide some insight, from a linguistic perspective, on the difficulties for law enforcement and the prosecution of perpetrators of enforced disappearances in Mexico.

Finally, it should be remembered that language is, regardless of the context, a key factor for humanitarian action. Words (‘survivor’ vs. ‘victim’, ‘famine’ vs. ‘food shortage’) often determine not only how, but whether lives will be saved at all. In a present that seems awash with discourses of hatred, those dedicated to saving lives and upholding human dignity must remember that words can be indeed dangerous, but also a powerful tool to end human suffering.
7. References

7.1. Bibliographic references


7.2. Hemerographic references

7.2.1. Journals


7.2.2. Online corporate articles and press releases


Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense [EAAF] (2016, February 9). Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (EAAF) presenta peritaje sobre caso Ayotzinapa; confirma la imposibilidad científica de la “verdad histórica” oficial. [Argentinian Team of Forensic


7.2.3. Online newspapers and news magazines


7.3. Reports


7.4. Legal documents


7.5. Official agreements and treaties


7.5.1. United Nations documents

Naciones Unidas, Comité contra la Desaparición Forzada [CED], Informe sobre las peticiones de acción urgente recibidas en virtud del artículo 30 de la Convención [Report on requests for urgent action submitted under article 30 of the Convention.] CED/C/15/3 (2018, November 30). Retrieved from:

General Assembly resolution 60/1, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, A/RES/60/1 (2005, October 24). Retrieved from: [https://undocs.org/A/RES/60/1](https://undocs.org/A/RES/60/1)


7.6. Speeches


7.7. Interviews
Boer, M. de (2019, July 3rd). Personal interview. [Video file.]

7.8. Manuals


7.9. Web sources
7.9.1. Databases


7.9.2. Videos


7.9.3. Blogs


7.9.4. Miscellaneous web sources


7.10. Other sources
Annex 1. List of acronyms

This annex follows three basic guidelines:

1) It lists, in alphabetical order, all acronyms used more than once in the main paper. One-time acronyms are included in the main paper only, immediately after the mention of the complete term. This stylistic decision stems from the rules of the American Psychological Association regarding abbreviations21 and has the purpose of avoiding a cumbersome use of acronyms, which may impede a fluent reading and understanding of the text.

2) It includes only widely accepted or institutionalized acronyms. Exceptionally, the acronym GoM (*Government of Mexico*), which was implemented to save space in tables and graphics inside the main paper22, is also listed.

3) It presents all the acronyms in singular form, although, eventually, their plural forms may be used in the main paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CED</td>
<td>Committee on Enforced Disappearance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNDH</td>
<td>Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARC</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIEI</td>
<td>Grupo Interdisciplinario de Expertos Independientes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoM</td>
<td>Government of Mexico</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRC</td>
<td>Human Rights Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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21 The *Concise Rules of APA Style* (APA), states that: “Abbreviations introduced on first mention of a term and used fewer than three times thereafter, particularly in a long paper, may be difficult for a reader to remember […]” (APA, 2010 pp. 76-77).

22 Other two exceptionally implemented acronyms were HS (*humanitarian sector*) and ONM (*online news media*), also exclusively used in tables and graphics.

23 On occasion, only a Spanish version is available.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICPPED</td>
<td>International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IACHR</td>
<td>Inter-American Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHL</td>
<td>International Humanitarian Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNDM</td>
<td>Movimiento por Nuestros Desaparecidos en México</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIAC</td>
<td>Non-International Armed Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHCHR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to protect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td>Uniform Resource Locator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 2. Technical details of data collection and analysis

For reasons of space, only the results of the lexical analysis have been kept as part of the main paper. All the technical details have been transferred to this annex, which is divided into two sections: data collection and data analysis. Each section is divided into several subsections and organized in a frequently asked questions-like way. This allows for a convenient distribution of the information, quick identification of specific issues — and also comfortable reading. On occasion, the present document may refer to the main paper; however, this Annex 2 is designed to be self-contained and function as a separate brief guide to navigate the lexical analysis with more ease. This guide refers the reader to each section and subsection through hyperlinks rather than page numbers.

Data collection

This section deals with questions related to: 1) criteria for selection of four main stakeholders analyzed, 2) criteria for representation of multi-entity stakeholders, 3) case study selection criteria, 4) medium used for data collection, 5) filters applied to medium when collecting data and 7) number of online sources collected and extracted.

1. How were the four main stakeholders selected?

The inclusion criteria used to select four main stakeholders whose labeling of enforced disappearance in Mexico is analyzed were mainly: a) they had to represent a key sector involved in the production of information around enforced disappearance in Mexico and b) they had to have a significant in-country presence. The Government of Mexico, media and humanitarian sector were, based on the nature of this research — politics of language as part of a humanitarian crisis —, an obvious choice. However, the inclusion of CSOs was based on the social context of enforced disappearance in Mexico, in which civil society is rather active and outspoken. Consequently, for the purposes of this paper, the triangle of crisis (Minear et al., 1996) was reshaped into a “square of crisis” featuring these four stakeholders as its components.

2. Why are some stakeholders composed by more than one specific entity? How were these entities selected?

Specifically, there are two multi-entity stakeholders: humanitarian sector and media. These stakeholders are plural by definition; however, a representative sample of each was needed in order to analyze relevant and manageable information. To represent the humanitarian sector, three inclusion criteria were used: a) the entities had to have an explicit mandate for or related to enforced disappearance, b) they had to have in-country presence c) they had to have an official website. After carrying out a mapping for candidates, only three organizations met these criteria: the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International


Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the agency for human rights in Mexico, the Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (CNDH).

In order to keep a symmetrical relation between both multi-entity stakeholders, media was also to be represented by three entities, which were selected following three criteria: a) they had to be native news media, b) they had to have an official website and c) they had to enjoy a certain degree of preference among users of online news media in Mexico. Evidently, the options outnumbered, by far, those available for the humanitarian sector. For this reason and in order to make an evidence-based decision, the Reuters Digital News Report was consulted. In its most recent edition (2018), this report lists Aristegui Noticias (website dedicated to investigative journalism), El Universal Online (online platform of one of the leading national newspapers in the country) and Animal Político (website dedicated to independent journalism) as the top three preferred native online news media in Mexico.

3. What are the case study selection criteria?
As explained in the presentation to section 4 of the main paper: “Given the conditions under which it occurred —forcible deprivation of the liberty and killing of civilians perpetrated by agents of the State and acquiesced to by the governmental apparatus—, the Ayotzinapa case represents a paradigmatic example of enforced disappearance. It has also received significant media attention and, by virtue of this, become the flagship case of enforced disappearances in Mexico […]” (González Batista, 2019). The paradigmatic nature of this event provides for a full-fledged case study for any research on enforced disappearance in Mexico.

However, the case study in this paper encompasses both the Ayotzinapa case and enforced disappearances in Mexico as a whole. This was done in order to provide a relevant backdrop against which the results found after analyzing the case study could be interpreted. Enforced disappearance in Mexico, as a phenomenon, takes place within an ample geographic and chronological context, which must be considered for a realistic approach to the problem. This maximalist strategy is, additionally, necessary to ensure a correct approach to the nature of the present research, as is explained from this point of the annex onwards.

4. What was the medium used to collect data? Why was this medium chosen?
As this research revolves around language, the decision was made to perform a lexical analysis, based on both cases to be analyzed. For practical reasons and to take advantage of the functionalities of the tool chosen to carry out this lexical analysis, it was decided to create two sets of lexical corpora composed by the lexical items contained in URLs embedded in the official websites of the four stakeholders selected. The medium chosen was the search engine
Google, mainly because this company is currently in control of almost 75% of the market share for search engines worldwide\textsuperscript{24}, which means most content creators resort to it for publishing online. Google is also particularly competitive in terms of the algorithms it uses to track and manage HTML content (online contents of URLs). In view of this, Google was deemed advantageous over other search engines regarding visibility and representativeness of the URLs to be retrieved and collected.

5. Were the URLs used to create the lexical corpora filtered? How?

Yes. Filtering the URLs was, in fact, key to identify only data which was relevant for the analysis to be performed. The following filters were applied in the search field before retrieving the URLs:

1. **Keyword between quotation marks (““”).** Used to ensure representativeness of the sources in terms of geographical context. For the corpora on the Ayotzinapa case, the keyword was “Ayotzinapa”; for the second set of corpora, the keyword was “México”. The spelling of these keywords was always in Spanish, as the sources to be consulted would be, too, in this language.

2. **Boolean operator OR.** Used to ensure representativeness of the sources in terms of the topic. The operator was inserted in between the following terms: ‘desaparición forzada’ (studied phenomenon as a concept), ‘desapariciones forzadas’ (studied phenomenon as concrete events) and ‘desaparecidos’ (individuals affected by the studied phenomenon). These elements were also always written in Spanish.

3. **Google operator site: + web address of official website of stakeholder or entity comprised in a multi-entity stakeholder.** To ensure representation of the four main stakeholders. The web address could belong to one unitary stakeholder (like www.gob.mx, which belongs to the Government of Mexico as a whole) or to an entity making up one of the multi-entity stakeholders (like https://aristeguinoticias.com/, which is one of the three entities comprised in media).

4. **Google advanced options for language.** Through which Spanish was selected as the preferred language for the searches.

5. **Google advanced options for range of dates.** Through which the timeframes for both sets of corpora were defined. In the case of the set on Ayotzinapa, the timeframe went from September 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2014 (date in which the enforced disappearance of the 43 students took place) to March 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2019 (date when the data collection process was carried out). For the second set of corpora, the timeframe went from December 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2006 (date in which Felipe

\textsuperscript{24} For live updates on this, see Net Marketshare: https://netmarketshare.com/search-engine-market-share.aspx
Calderón, whose Drug War triggered the soaring of enforced disappearances, took office) and March 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2019.

6. **Google basic option for sorting results by relevance.** Through which the information retrieved by the search engine was organized from most to least relevant in terms of the keywords, operators and preferences selected.

The same filters were applied before retrieving URLs from the official websites of each stakeholder and entity comprised in a multi-entity stakeholder, once using the keyword “Ayotzinapa” (which corresponds to the case study) and once using the keyword “México” (which corresponds to the control case). This accounted for a total of eight sets of URLs. To ensure accessibility, all these URLs were bookmarked after being retrieved. After having applied these filters, the search fields in the search engine looked as in the below example:

![Figure A1. Filters applied to search field on Google (1).](image1)

![Figure A2. Filters applied to search field on Google (2).](image2)

The bookmarks to access the URLs retrieved were stored in the search engine preferences as shown in Figure 3, below:
After having completed this retrieving process, the URLs were manually transferred to a .doc (Word) document, in order to preserve the hyperlinks. Later, these URLs were uploaded onto the tool used to perform the lexical analysis, as explained in point 3 of the section on data analysis.

6. How many URLs were collected and extracted? What were the criteria were used to set a number?

As the number of URLs retrieved by the search engine would always vary depending on the stakeholder or entity in question, the decision was made to establish a maximum number of URLs collected per stakeholder, which was set taking the lowest maximum number of URLs identified for any of the stakeholders as a point of reference. In the set of URLs identified for the control case, the lowest maximum was set by CSOs, for which the search engine was able to retrieve a total of 72 URLs; in the set of URLs identified for the case study, the lowest maximum was also set by CSOs, as the search engine was only able to retrieve 13 URLs. For the other three stakeholders, the search engine collected over 72 URLs every time, except for one occasion. Table 1 shows the number of URLs retrieved by the search engine per stakeholder. Multi-entity stakeholders are disaggregated.
With the aim of offsetting the differences in the number of URLs identified, a maximum of 50 URLs collected per stakeholder was set. Those URLs collected were the first 50 ones as sorted by relevance through the search engine. However, in order not to artificially modify the data, only those 13 URLs retrieved for CSOs in the corpora on Ayotzinapa were used. On one occasion, the maximum of 50 URLs had to be divided between two of the entities comprised in a multi-entity stakeholder, as no URLs were found for the third one (ICRC, as part of media in the corpora for Ayotzinapa). These were minor methodological setbacks and did not represent an obstacle in obtaining relevant results (see section 4 of the main paper).

Data analysis

This section deals with questions related to: 1) definition of lexical analysis, 2) introduction to the lexical analyzer, 3) process to extract and compile the lexical corpora, 4) process followed to analyze the lexical corpora.

1. What is a lexical analysis?

In computer science, lexical analysis refers to the process of converting a sequence of linguistic characters into tokens with a discernible meaning, often words\(^{25}\). This type of analysis can be applied to both spoken and written language, as long as the characters making up the speech event analyzed are transcribed into a medium accessible to the computational tools designed to identify and examine tokens in speech, lexical analyzers. A number of lexical analyzers are available; however, the majority focuses on the analysis of programming language. The tool chosen for the lexical analysis performed in this research has been developed for language data mining in general. The name of this lexical analyzer is Sketch Engine and its basic functioning is explained in point 2 of this section, below.

---

\(^{25}\) It is possible to convert these characters into other categories of tokens but that is a matter outside the scope of this research and, as such, not deemed relevant in the present document.
2. How does Sketch Engine work?

Sketch Engine is used by linguists and language specialists to explore how language works. This tool operates through algorithms able to crawl large text corpora and identify unusual, emerging or extensive usage of the language. The analyzer already contains five hundred ready-to-use corpora in ninety different languages, but it is also designed to serve as a corpus building software and create text corpora from, among other sources, relevant websites and webpages. For the purposes of this dissertation, the tool was used as corpus building software, as the corpora required were rather specific.

3. How were the lexical corpora extracted and compiled in Sketch Engine?

The URLs collected were transferred for analysis into Sketch Engine by following the below steps:

1) **Creation of a new corpus in Sketch Engine.** This is the first step when using the tool as corpus building software. Here, the corpus is assigned a name, language and, optionally, a description of its contents. Figure 4, below, shows how the interface looks like at this point.

![Create Corpus Interface](image)

Figure C. Creation of an original corpus in Sketch Engine.

---

26 “Crawling” is the technical term used in computational science to refer to the action performed by Internet bots (software applications designed to run automated tasks) programmed to browse the web for keywords. These crawlers are frequently used to index the contents of the web with a specific purpose.
2) **Selection of type of texts to be uploaded.** This was the first step in uploading the URLs collected onto the lexical analyzer. Sketch Engine offers two options for the upload of text documents: 1) from the web or 2) in formats like .pdf, .doc., .txt and others. As explained in point 2 of this document, the first option was used for this research. Figure 5 shows the interface at this point.

![Interface for uploading texts](image)

**CREATE CORPUS**

**CORPUS:** México - Government of Mexico (test) (Spanish)

1. CREATE CORPUS  >  2. ADD TEXTS  >  3. COMPILE

4) **Copy-paste of URLs.** This was the second step in uploading the URLs collected onto the lexical analyzer. Sketch Engine is able to work with text documents taken from the web using one of three options: 1) crawling the web for keywords, 2) copying and pasting specific URLs embedded in websites or 3) uploading entire websites. For the purposes of this research, the second option was used, as this allowed for the upload of previously filtered URLs. All the technical details related to the filters applied before retrieval of the URLs collected for the lexical analysis can be found in point 6 of the section on data collection. The compilation of all lexical items contained in these URLs was automatically carried out after the extraction. Figure 6 shows how the interface looks at this point.

![Interface for upload of text documents](image)
5) **Compilation of corpus.** The last step in building a corpus from the web is storing the compiled lexical items as part of the user corpora. In Figure 7, all eight corpora compiled for this research are already stored. At this point, the interface displays the following information, from left to right: 1) language of the corpus, 2) name of the corpus and 3) volume of the corpus in number of words compiled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Ayozinapa - CSOs</td>
<td>168,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Ayozinapa - Government of Mexico</td>
<td>490,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Ayozinapa - Humanitarian sector</td>
<td>458,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Ayozinapa - Online news media</td>
<td>57,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>México - CSOs</td>
<td>51,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>México - Government of Mexico</td>
<td>203,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>México - Humanitarian sector</td>
<td>102,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>México - Online news media</td>
<td>49,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure F. List of user corpora analyzed for this research.
The different volumes of these eight corpora was an expected methodological limitation, as there is no way of knowing the volume of lexical items in URLs beforehand. A manual count of the lexical items contained by each one would have been highly impractical and trying to “even out” the corpora by adding or removing URLs until achieving a given size would have been methodologically problematic too, given that the URLs collected are, as explained in point 7 of the section on data collection, the first 50 automatically sorted by relevance. For this reason, the corpora were kept as they are, without altering their original volumes. (As it can be seen in section 4 of the main paper, this did not seem to impact the results obtained through the data analysis, as, in fact, often the smallest corpora contained more instances of the elements looked for.)

4. What was the process followed to analyze the lexical corpora?

In lexical analysis, this is called “concordancing” and best explained in the following screencast, made by the developers of Sketch Engine: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhRNwhwG-V0.

Additionally, the second set of corpora was also analyzed through a Sketch Engine tool known as “compare corpora”, through which different corpora in the same language can be contrasted to find out their differences and similarities. The results of this operation are displayed in a comparison chart (Figure 4), where the value of 1 indicates identical corpora — the higher score in the chart, the greater the difference between corpora. The functioning of this tool is best explained in the Sketch Engine user guide: https://www.sketchengine.eu/guide/compare-corpora/?highlight=compare%20corpora.
Annex 3. Lists of labels

Annex 3.1. Crisis humanitaria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiperlink to source</th>
<th>Text to left of label</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Text to right of label</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/presidente-lopez-obrador-presenta-plan-de-implementacion-de-la-ley-general-en-materia-de-desaparicion-forzada-de-personas">https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/presidente-lopez-obrador-presenta-plan-de-implementacion-de-la-ley-general-en-materia-de-desaparicion-forzada-de-personas</a></td>
<td>desaparecidas, más de mil 100 fosas clandestinas y 26 mil cuerpos sin identificar: “Eso da cuenta de la magnitud de la crisis humanitaria y de violación a los derechos humanos que estamos enfrentando y que debemos superar en nuestro país”.</td>
<td>crisis humanitaria</td>
<td>Encinas</td>
<td>GoM</td>
<td>February 4, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/introduccion/">https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/introduccion/</a></td>
<td>. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Sin contar una enorme cifra negra de quienes no han denunciado por diversos motivos. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Vivimos una enorme tragedia, una crisis humanitaria que no ha sido reconocida y asumida en su verdadera dimensión, por quien tiene la responsabilidad de esta situación, el</td>
<td>crisis humanitaria</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/movimiento-desaparecidos-en-mexico-movndmx/">https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/movimiento-desaparecidos-en-mexico-movndmx/</a></td>
<td>de todo el país exigimos que nuestras voces sean verdaderamente escuchadas. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Vivimos una enorme tragedia, una crisis humanitaria que no ha sido reconocida y asumida en su verdadera dimensión, por quien tiene la responsabilidad de esta situación, el</td>
<td>crisis humanitaria</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>March 2, 2019</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A. Which displays the original text in Spanish used for Table 4 of the paper.
Annex 3.2. Other types of crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiperlink to source</th>
<th>Text to left of label</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Text to right of label</th>
<th>Type of crisis</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/presidente-lopez-obrador-presenta-plan-de-implementacion-de-la-ley-general-en-materia-de-desaparicion-forzada-de-personas">GoM</a></td>
<td>desaparecidas, más de mil 100 fosas clandestinas y 26 mil cuerpos sin identificar: “Eso da cuenta de la magnitud de la crisis humanitaria y de violación a los derechos humanos que estamos enfrentando y que debemos superar en nuestro país”.</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>GoM</td>
<td>Feb-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.gob.mx/ceav/prensa/urgente-la-coordinacion-entre-federacion-y-entidades-federativas-para-atender-casos-de-desaparicion-y-desaparicion-forzada-ceav">https://www.gob.mx/ceav/prensa/urgente-la-coordinacion-entre-federacion-y-entidades-federativas-para-atender-casos-de-desaparicion-y-desaparicion-forzada-ceav</a></td>
<td>de desaparición y desaparición forzada de personas. Apuntó que, para la CEAV, ambos fenómenos representan una grave crisis en materia de seguridad y derechos humanos que debe ser atendida con urgencia, celeridad y coordinación eficaz entre las Federaciones y entidades federativas para atender casos de desaparición y desaparición forzada de personas.</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>GoM</td>
<td>Aug-18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.icrc.org/es/document/mexico-balance-un-ano-de-la-entrada-en-vigor-de-la-ley-general-en-materia-de-personas">https://www.icrc.org/es/document/mexico-balance-un-ano-de-la-entrada-en-vigor-de-la-ley-general-en-materia-de-personas</a></td>
<td>encontrados, por un lado, celebramos contar con una ley que permite encausar los esfuerzos para atender esta grave crisis, pero por otro lado, no podemos olvidar que se trata de un año más que se suma a una larga espera para ofrecer mayores Enforced disappearance-related</td>
<td>HS</td>
<td>Jan-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/a-ano-la-entrada-en-vigor-la-ley-desaparicion-existen-grandes-pendientes-retos-en-implementacion-federal-estatal/">https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/a-ano-la-entrada-en-vigor-la-ley-desaparicion-existen-grandes-pendientes-retos-en-implementacion-federal-estatal/</a></td>
<td>de manera plena y adecuada en las acciones de implementación de la Ley, exigimos ¡SIN LAS FAMILIAS NO! Responder a la de identificación de cuerpos exhumados en fosas clandestinas y fosas comunes con un mecanismo extraordinario de crisis</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Jan-19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecha</td>
<td>Enlace</td>
<td>Descripción</td>
<td>Organización</td>
<td>Mes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun-18</td>
<td><a href="https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/carta-abierta-a-los-candidatos-a-la-presidencia-la-republica/">https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/carta-abierta-a-los-candidatos-a-la-presidencia-la-republica/</a></td>
<td>el primero de julio marcarán el rumbo del país durante los próximos seis años. México vive actualmente una grave crisis de derechos humanos, que queda reflejada en las más de treinta y siete mil personas desaparecidas que reconoce el Human rights CSOs</td>
<td>Jun-18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlace</td>
<td>texto</td>
<td>categoría</td>
<td>fecha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlace</td>
<td>Descripción</td>
<td>Clase</td>
<td>Fecha</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/mexico-rendira-cuentas-ingeniera-ante-expertos-la-onu-desapariciones-forzadas/">https://sinlasfamiliasno.org/mexico-rendira-cuentas-ingeniera-ante-expertos-la-onu-desapariciones-forzadas/</a></td>
<td>La crisis que azota a México no sólo ha afectado a las y los mexicanos, sino también a miles de migrantes</td>
<td>Enforced disappearance-related</td>
<td>CSOs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notas:**
- Crisis de desapariciones que azota a México.
- Crisis de más de 37 mil personas desaparecidas.
- Crisis forense.

**Fecha:**
- Nov-16
- Oct-18
- Nov-18
de manera inmediata aspectos que son urgentes y no pueden esperar a que se haya implementado totalmente la ley, como las crisis forenses existentes en varias entidades del país y el establecimiento de mecanismos para la búsqueda inmediata de Other

En el informe de las recomendaciones del Comité, la implementación integral de las mismas apunta a hacer un frente multilateral a la crisis de desapariciones e impunidad que tiene en indefensión al país: desde la ausencia de registros certeros que propicien Enforced disappearance-related CSOs Nov-18

En su informe Los Desaparecidos crisis ignorada, HRW detalla que la crisis de extraviados en México es peor que en otros países de América Latina. crisis Enforced disappearance-related ONM Jun-13

En su informe Los Desaparecidos crisis ignorada, HRW detalla que la crisis de extraviados en México es peor que en otros países de América Latina. crisis Enforced disappearance-related ONM Jun-13
<p>| en México. El persistente costo de una crisis de extraviados en México es peor que en otros países de América Latina. Ante este contexto fue que la Segob presentó sus responsables ante la justicia. documentó casi 250 desapariciones durante el sexenio del ex presidente Felipe Calderón y que en 149 de esos |
|---|---|---|---|
| crisis | crisis | Enforced disappearance-related | ONM |
| El persistente costo de una crisis ignorada, HRW detalla que la crisis de extraviados en México es peor que en otros países de América Latina. &lt;s&gt;El persistente costo de una crisis ignorada, HRW detalla que la crisis de extraviados en México es peor que en otros países de América Latina. Ante este contexto fue que la Segob presentó sus responsables ante la justicia. documentó casi 250 desapariciones durante el sexenio del ex presidente Felipe Calderón y que en 149 de esos | Enforced disappearance-related | ONM |
|  |危机 | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hyperlink</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Fixed crisis</th>
<th>Type of crisis</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://aristeguinoticias.com/2002/mexico/elementos-de-seguridad-participaron-en-desapariciones-forzadas-hrw/">https://aristeguinoticias.com/2002/mexico/elementos-de-seguridad-participaron-en-desapariciones-forzadas-hrw/</a></td>
<td>Vivanco, director para las Américas de HRW, consideró que el presidente Enrique Peña Nieto heredó “una de las peores crisis en materia de desaparición (de personas) que se hayan producido en América Latina a lo largo de la historia”. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; La crisis de los 37_mil casos de personas no localizadas. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Debido a que México ratificó en 2008 la Convención Internacional para la prevención, el castigo y el摇了摇头</td>
<td>Enforced disappearance-related</td>
<td>ONM</td>
<td>Feb-13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://aristeguinoticias.com/1011/mexico/al-nuevo-gobierno-le-tocara-decidir-la-entrada-de-expertos-al-pais-justifico-estado-mexicano-ante-observaciones-del-comite-de-desapariciones-forzadas/">https://aristeguinoticias.com/1011/mexico/al-nuevo-gobierno-le-tocara-decidir-la-entrada-de-expertos-al-pais-justifico-estado-mexicano-ante-observaciones-del-comite-de-desapariciones-forzadas/</a></td>
<td>del diálogo de seguimiento a las recomendaciones que en 2015 se le dieron al Estado mexicano con el fin de atender la crisis de los 37_mil casos de personas no localizadas. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Debido a que México ratificó en 2008 la Convención Internacional para de desapariciones. &lt;/s&gt;&lt;s&gt; Sin embargo, este proyecto no cumple las normas internacionales en algunos aspectos</td>
<td>Enforced disappearance-related</td>
<td>ONM</td>
<td>Nov-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>crisis</th>
<th>Enforced disappearance-related</th>
<th>ONM</th>
<th>Nov-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>que México no atiende pero sobre la que sí da recomendaciones</td>
<td>Durante el Examen Periódico Universal (EPU) de Arabia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desapariciones forzadas, la crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B. Which displays the original text in Spanish used to create the chart in Figure 5 of the paper. As mentioned before, the label crisis de identificación de cuerpos exhumados was, for the purposes of this paper, considered as a variation of the label crisis forense. The specific types of crisis are to the right of each label; however, several enforced disappearance-related crisis labels lack further specifications.