

## Families of missing call for govt to speed up the adoption of law



[Loulwa Reda](#) | The Daily Star

BEIRUT: Families of those who went missing or were kidnapped during the Lebanese Civil War demanded Wednesday that the government implement a new law setting up a national commission to investigate the fate of the missing and prosecute those responsible. The law was passed by Parliament earlier this month, but needs government action to go into full effect.

“The government has to hurry up with the implementation of the provisions of this law, starting by forming a national commission and naming its candidates. We hope that they would elect its members according to their qualifications, far from sectarianism and political quotas,” Wadad Halwani, head of the Committee for the

Families of the Kidnapped and Disappeared in Lebanon, was quoted as saying at a news conference in Downtown Beirut Wednesday.

“Speeding up the establishment of this body is important so that we can begin collecting biological samples from parents.

“We have the right to know the fate of our loved ones. The official recognition [by the government] of our right to know is enough to explain that this is a community right and that we have the right to know the full truth,” she said.

Along with committee members, media and guests, MPs Alain Aoun, Chamel Roukoz, Hikmat Dib and former MP Ziad al-Qadri were also in attendance at Wednesday’s gathering, according to the NNA.

According to Halwani, by implementing this law, the government would be restoring its credibility and fulfilling its duties toward the Lebanese people.

“By searching for the missing people, they are searching for the citizens of Lebanon, citizens of the country, without any type of discrimination,” she said.

Halwani also explained that the committee is not responsible for the law’s controversial Article 37, which calls for prosecuting those responsible for the disappearances and those who may have concealed any information regarding the missing.

“The draft bill that we proposed did not include any penalty for past commitments. We limited our demands to our rights today, in the present and in the future, not to the harm anyone has brought us or our children during the war,” she said.

Some 17,000 people went missing during Lebanon’s 15-year Civil War.

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