

28th February 2020

Human Rights Council – 43rd session

ITEM 3 – Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment

Delivered by Defence for Children International (DCI)

Madam President,

Defence for Children International (DCI) welcomes the opportunity to speak in this dialogue on behalf of the NGO Panel for the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, comprised of 170 NGOs.

The NGO Panel commends the Special rapporteur for highlighting that children have particular vulnerabilities and their experience of psychological torture will differ from that of an adult. Children deprived of their liberty in the administration of justice, in institutions, for migration-related reasons, in armed conflict, and on the basis of national security are at an increased risk of facing psychological torture as per the findings of the UN Global Study.

Indeed, the use of solitary confinement of children, detention of children for immigration reasons as well as during armed conflict may amount to torture – in violation of article 37 a) and b) of the Convention on the rights of the child.

An increased awareness of the deprivation of liberty of children around the world has enabled the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty to be carried out and presented to the UN General Assembly last year.

The NGO Panel for the Study remains concerned that children continue to be deprived of their liberty in many settings around the world despite the detrimental effects on their health and wellbeing, and that we lack quality, disaggregated data concerning these children.

We call on Member States:

- to support the Global Study and its recommendations, including specific mechanisms to continue data collection and to implement good practices on alternatives to detention.
- And furthermore, to ensure an effective follow up of its recommendations.

This engagement is crucial for the success of the Study and its impact on the lives of millions of children deprived of their liberty all over the world.¹

Special Rapporteur, what recommendations can be made to ensure that children deprived of their liberty are not subjected to psychological torture?

Thank you.

¹ According to the [Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty](https://childrendeprivedofliberty.info/), at least 1.5 million children per year are *de jure* deprived of liberty in the different settings (administration of justice, migration, armed conflicts...) while the *de facto* annual number of children deprived of liberty exceeds 7 million. <https://childrendeprivedofliberty.info/>