

**Defence for Children International (DCI) statement before the 49<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council**

**Item 3 – Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against children**

Defence for Children International (DCI) welcomes the opportunity to speak on behalf of the [NGO Panel on Children Deprived of Liberty](#).

We commend the Special Representative for highlighting that detaining children is never in their best interest and is a form of violence that violates their rights. We thank the Special Representative for her continued engagement towards the eradication of deprivation of liberty of children.

The NGO Panel on Children Deprived of Liberty remains concerned that children continue to be detained in many settings around the world despite the detrimental effects on their mental and physical health. Indeed, children in immigration detention face high levels of serious development delays, as well as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and self-harm.

Children on the move are affected by protection gaps in their access to services and adequate reception. Including the use of age-assessment procedures to delay child protection, lack of legal assistance, lack of an effective remedy, the use of detention, and a lack of child-friendly information on rights and procedures.

We urge States to release all children from immigration detention and place them in appropriate alternative care and non-custodial reception facilities that promote and respect human rights<sup>1</sup> and to implement good practices on alternatives to detention and ban children's administrative detention at all times.

We call on Member States:

- to comply with international human rights standards, including article 37 b) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- apply children's rights to be protected, effectively participate in proceedings, to be heard and kept informed;
- to provide comprehensive procedural safeguards for all children in decision making affecting them, including in any screening, border, asylum, anti-trafficking and return instruments,
- And; to implement the recommendations of the [UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty<sup>2</sup>](#), which establishes that migration related detention is never in the best interest of the child and cannot be justified;

Madam Special Representative, October 2022 will mark 3 years since the presentation of the Global Study to the UN General Assembly. How can the NGO Panel support you and the interagency task force in the implementation of the Study's recommendations?

Thank you.

<sup>1</sup> A/75/183, [Ending immigration detention of children and providing adequate care and reception for them](#).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, 2019 <https://childrendeprivedofliberty.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Full-Global-Study-Nov-2019.pdf>