

Ancillary Event
GLOBAL STUDY ON CHILDREN DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

Date and Venue: 10:30 – 12:00, Monday 13 April 2015
Qatar National Convention Centre (Doha, Qatar)

Organisation: Defence for Children International (DCI)

Sponsored by: Permanent Mission of Qatar to the UN
Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN
Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the UN

Introduction:

Detention often occurs in squalid conditions, without adequate oversight and regulation, negatively impacting children's mental and physical development. While detained, children are all too often deprived of education, making successful future lives outside bars even harder to imagine. Despite evidence that deprivation of liberty is both costly and harmful, there is an acute lack of comprehensive, disaggregated data and qualitative research on child detention. The exact number of children deprived of their liberty worldwide is unknown. States are left without a clear indication of the scope of the problem or adequate information on alternatives to detention that may be more beneficial to both children and society.

A Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, which has been formally requested through the child rights resolution (A/RES/69/157, §51.d) of the United Nations General Assembly in December 2014, will collect sorely needed qualitative and quantitative data on children in detention, while also studying good practices that can shape more effective policies and practices. Previous in-depth UN studies of this caliber have proved crucial in providing an objective reference point for serious issues such as children affected by armed conflict (Machel Study, 1996) and violence against children (Pinheiro Study, 2006). A Study would add to the information base, raise the issue on political agendas, increase coordination, and provide guidance on the best ways forward to protect children's rights. The proposed Study will take into account deprivation of liberty in all its forms, including: children in conflict with the law, children confined due to physical or mental health or drug use, children living in detention with their parents, children in conflict zones, immigration detention, and children detained for their protection or for national security reasons such as during armed conflict. It

will take a collaborative approach with the involvement of a range of actors, including UN agencies, States, civil society organizations, academic, and children.

Objectives: Identify and share experiences on the situation of children in detention worldwide, in light of the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty and the human rights of children worldwide.

Panel speakers:

- **Mr. Benoit VAN KEIRSBILCK, Defence for Children International, DCI**
(background of the call for a Global Study & DCI's work)

- **Ms. Alexandra MARTINS, Justice Section, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – UNODC** (data collection, its need & use)

- **Mr. Michael BOCHENEK, Human Rights Watch, HRW** (status & next steps for the Study)

Moderator:

- **Ms. Anna D. TOMASI, Defence for Children International, DCI**