



United Nations General Assembly – 69th Session (UNGA-69)

CALL FOR A GLOBAL STUDY ON CHILDREN DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY

- Date and Venue:** 18:30 – 20:00, 14 October 2014
International Education, 12th Floor
809 UN Plaza 1st Avenue (between 45th and 46th)
- Organisation:** Defence for Children International-DCI & Human Rights Watch on behalf of the NGO Panel for the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty
- Sponsored by:** Permanent Mission of *Ethiopia, Norway Qatar, Uruguay*
- Title:** Call for a Global Study on Children deprived of liberty
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I. Introduction:

On March 13, 2014, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, within the context of the Annual Day on the Rights of the Child of the Human Rights Council, Defence for Children International together with a number of NGOs active in the field of child rights launched an appeal to the UN for the implementation of Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty.

The Call for a Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty (please find official document enclosed) derives from the need to comprehensively collect quantitative and qualitative data and statistics from across regions on the number and situation of children in custody; share good practices; and formulate recommendations for effective measures to prevent human rights violations against children in custody and reduce the number of children deprived of liberty.

Deprivation of liberty has very negative consequences for the child's harmonious development and is to be a "measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time"¹. Children deprived of liberty are exposed to increased risks of abuse, violence, acute social discrimination and denial of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; certain disadvantaged groups are more affected than others; and society is affected at large as deprivation of liberty tends to increase social exclusion, recidivism rates, and public expenditure.

¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 37 (b)



This Study would build upon the model of the United Nations Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996) conducted by Graça Machel and the United Nations Study on Violence against Children (2006), carried out by Paulo Sergio Pinheiro. Both of these studies exposed the nature, extent and causes around the issues of conflict and violence, and proposed clear recommendations for prevention and responsive actions. These studies represent a strong platform for advocacy and action and have led to important advancements for children. They are also a benchmark to assess any progress made in these specific fields; this Study will do the same. In the area of deprivation of liberty a concrete evaluation of the situation is highly necessary and urgent.

The call for a Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty has very rapidly gained significant international support and many of DCI partners, UN agencies (in particular the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which has official recommended the Study be carried out) and civil society associations expressed great enthusiasm about the initiative.

On June 13, 2014 and against the backdrop of the 26th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Defence for Children International with the support of the NGO Panel for the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, organized an Expert Consultation on the Call for a Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

The Consultation aimed at advancing the discussions in the area of children in detention and to gather inputs and recommendations from various participants (permanent representatives, academics and experts), with a view to guiding the Call towards the United Nations General Assembly, and defining the framework of the future Study. The discussion was timely, penetrating and focused not only on promoting the Call at national, international and regional level but dealt also with the challenges and opportunities around the idea of the Global Study, international standards and good practicing as well as the key elements to be used in carrying out a Global Study. Please find the report of the Consultation enclosed.

In light of the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the NGO Panel for the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty would like to hold an event to raise awareness and open a space for dialogue, between all actors, in connection to the proposed Study.

II. Objective: Lobby for a Global Study on Children deprived of liberty

- *In particular:*
 - Call on States to support this initiative (within the UN General Assembly);
 - Create an open dialogue between all actors (UN experts, States, civil society, children);
 - Promote the respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of the children deprived of their liberty.



III. Panel speakers:

- Keynote speakers:
 - H.E. **Gonzalo Koncke** Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations in New York
 - H.E. **Sheikha Alya Bint Ahmed Bin Saif Al Thani**, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations in New York
 - H.E. **May-Elin Stener**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations in New York
 - **Marta Santos Pais**, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
 - **Susan Bissell**, Associate Director, Child Protection, UNICEF
 - **Kirsten Sandberg**, Chairperson, United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Moderator:
 - **Jo Becker**, Children's Rights Advocacy Director, Human Rights Watch (HRW)

Reception to follow