

The Honorable Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General
The United Nations

Re. Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty: the Appointment of an Independent Expert

January, 2015

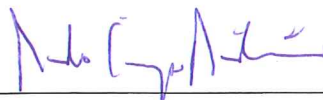
Dear Secretary-General,

I write to you with regard the request to your office to commission an in-depth global study on children deprived of liberty (UNGA Resolution A/C.3/69/L.24/Rev.1). Over the past 20 years, your office has commissioned two other global studies on children: the 1996 UN Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, conducted by Ms. Graca Machel, and the 2006 UN Study on Violence against Children, conducted by myself. Both studies have proved crucial in mobilizing international attention to previously under-recognized issues, and prompted critical action to enhance the protection of children in vulnerable situations. In the area of deprivation of liberty a concrete evaluation of the situation is highly necessary and urgent. In fact, in the Study I conducted it was explicitly highlighted, in the area of custody and detention, how “[...] *better data collection is urgently needed globally* [...]”(page 191).

In order for a Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty to be carried out to the best extent possible, it is crucial that an independent expert be appointed, as it will best ensure a comprehensive approach and broker cooperation and contributions to the Study by all relevant UN agencies and stakeholders (“*including but not limited to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary - General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, as well as the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including Member States, civil society, academia and children*” - UNGA Resolution A/C.3/69/L.24/Rev.1). As aforementioned, the appointment of an independent expert is consistent with past practice, and will bring a high profile to the issue. The two previous UN studies on children were both conducted by independent experts, a leadership which helped ensure serious consideration of for the respective studies, and concrete follow-up. The Study on deprivation of liberty deserves the same level of attention.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Paulo Sergio PINHEIRO