End immigration detention of children

1 February 2024, 09:00 hrs – 10:00 hrs (NY time)
15:00 hrs – 16:00 hrs (Geneva time)
Venue: Meeting Registration - Zoom
Livestream: Home | UN Web TV
Spanish/French simultaneous interpretation provided

Concept Note

Background
Immigration detention remains a widespread issue around the world faced by refugees and migrants with a severe impact on the persons concerned. Immigration detention of children is never in the best interest of the child and constitutes a child rights violation.¹

At least 77 countries have laws and policies that allow children to be detained based on their legal or migratory status, and at least 330,000 children globally per year are deprived of their liberty based on their or their parents’ legal or migratory status.

However, there are alternatives beneficial for people affected by detention - including children and their families - in place in a wide range of countries and regions and which are more human-rights

¹ The UN Task Force members are: SRSG VAC (Chair), SRSG CAAC, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, CRC Committee, WHO, UNODC, OHCHR.
² The UN Network on Migration Workstream on Alternatives to Detention is co-led by the International Detention Coalition (IDC), UNHCR and UNICEF and its members are comprised of representatives of UN agencies, civil society organizations, young people, local governments and technical experts working on immigration detention and alternatives all over the world. See https://migrationnetwork.un.org/alternatives-immigration-detention.
compliant, more effective and less costly, as shown in a number of reports and in the **Advocacy Brief: End immigration detention of children**, developed by the UN Task Force on Children Deprived of Liberty.

Pursuing these alternatives for migrants and refugees is a commitment made by States in the **New York Declaration**; as well as, in the **Global Compact for Migration** (GCM - Objective 13) and the **Global Compact on Refugees** (GCR-para. 60).

**Format and scope**
This side event, co-organised by the UN Task Force on Children Deprived of Liberty and the **Workstream on Alternatives to Immigration Detention** of the UN Network on Migration, co-lead by UNHCR, UNICEF and International Detention Coalition (IDC), is intended for States and stakeholder representatives responsible for the protection of migrants and refugees. It is organised in a virtual format to maximize global participation.

The side event will serve to launch the new **Advocacy Brief** of the United Nations Task Force on Children Deprived of Liberty to **End immigration detention of children** and to further mobilize pledges and promote promising practices to end immigration detention of children and advocate for alternatives to immigration detention of migrants and refugees, following the commitments made during the 2022 International Migration Review Forum and at the 2023 Global Refuge Forum under the **multistakeholder pledge on Developing Alternatives to Immigration Detention and Ending Immigration Detention of Asylum-Seeking, Refugee, Stateless and Migrant Children and their Families** and in view of the upcoming regional reviews of the GCM and the 2026 International Migration Review Forum.

**Programme**

**Moderator: Mr. Jonathan Prentice Head, United Nations Network on Migration Secretariat**

New York time/Geneva time

9:00-9:05am    15:00-15:05pm **Introductory remarks**
H.E. Mr. Rongvudhi Virabutr
Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative and Chargé d'affaires a.i. of Thailand (3 min)

9:05-9:15am    15:05-15:15pm **Presentation of the UN Task Force Advocacy Brief to End immigration detention of children (3 min per speaker)**
Dr. Najat Maalla M’jid, SRSG on Violence Against Children and chair of the UN Task Force on Children Deprived of Liberty
Ms. Eva Akerman-Borje, Director of the Department of Policy and Research. IOM
Ms. Sheema Sen Gupta, Director, Child Protection. UNICEF

9:15-9:20am    15:15-15:20pm **Presentation of the multistakeholder pledge on alternatives to immigration detention for migrants and refugees**
Ms. Carolina Gottardo, Executive Director, International Detention Coalition

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9:20-9:50am  15:20-15:50pm  Discussion on commitments and promising practices on ending immigration detention of children and alternatives to immigration detention for migrants and refugees – Interventions from the floor 3 minutes each.
   Intervention by Morocco tbc
   Intervention by Mr. Okan KAYMAK, Migration Expert, Government of Türkiye

9:50-10:00am  15:50-16:00pm  Concluding remarks
   Ms. Elizabeth Tan, Director of the Division of International Protection, UNHCR
   Ambassador Gustavo Gallón Giraldo, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the UN in Geneva (3 minutes each)

*CMW/C/GC/4-CRC/C/GC/23 Joint General Comment Number 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their families and number 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligations regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return, paragraph 5-12 1720405 (un.org)