

Working to end child immigration detention through peer learning

Side-Event at the International Migration Review Forum 19 May 2022, 9:00 – 10:00 NY-time, Online

Background

Since the adoption of the [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) (GCM) in 2018 considerable momentum has been built towards implementing elements of GCM Objective 13 on alternatives to immigration detention, including on working to end the practice of child detention in the context of international migration. This side meeting will build on the momentum created in recent years through normative and policy developments, political commitments, and programmatic work at different levels, including a range of measures taken by various governments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the peer learning exchanges undertaken by the [UN Migration Network Working Group on Alternatives to Immigration Detention](#) and the [Cross-Regional Peer Learning Platform on Alternatives to Child Immigration Detention](#).

Over the past four years steps forward have been taken by many States towards ending child immigration detention. This has required them to address several challenges, and the process of peer learning, at different levels, has proved invaluable in sharing lessons learned.

In this side event, the examples shared by States during the peer learning as well as good practices on alternatives to child immigration detention will be highlighted, including of States that do not utilise the practice of immigration detention. The International Detention Coalition (IDC) has undertaken a global mapping on progress on Objective 13 implementation since the adoption of the GCM, including the issue of working to end child detention in the context of international migration.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children chairs the UN Task Force on Children Deprived of Liberty, and has called for prevention of child immigration detention through reforms of law and policies and building upon the wealth of child rights-based measures to prevent and provide alternatives to child immigration detention.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has clearly [stated](#) that the detention of any child because of their or their parents' migration status constitutes a child rights violation and contravenes the principle of the best interests of the child. This has been further reinforced by the 2019 [UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty](#), the 2020 report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants on [Ending immigration detention of children and providing adequate care and reception for them](#), and the [high-level event co-organized by the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children](#) in 2021 on ending child immigration detention in line with the SDG agenda.

Description of the Side-event

This side meeting will provide a space for States and other stakeholders to exchange experiences on working to end child immigration detention, and to hear from others working on this issue, including an advocate with lived experience of immigration detention, a presentation by the International Detention Coalition (IDC) on the findings of its global mapping on progress on Objective 13 implementation, and by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. The side meeting will also provide an important opportunity for States to share progress made towards ending child immigration detention in different contexts, and how they have addressed and overcome challenges as well as their comments on how to construct a plan or guidelines for the progress to be made in implementing Objective 13 of the GCM. It will also highlight the ecosystem of guidance and support of stakeholders that are available to assist with such implementation underlining the importance of the whole-of-government and the whole-of-society approach.

The side meeting will build on the [three recent global peer learning exchanges on alternatives to immigration detention](#), and continue the work towards building global, regional and national communities of practice, encouraging States and other stakeholders to pursue further peer learning opportunities at different levels and develop further the Community of Practice that has been built. It will focus on the importance of implementing pledges on working to end child immigration detention - and the support that is available to assist with such implementation – in order to maintain the momentum that has been created and work towards full implementation.

Format

Event in English. Interpretation will be provided in Spanish.

Register [here](#)

International
Detention Coalition

Suggested agenda

<p>Date Thursday 19 May, 2022</p> <p>Time: 9:00 – 10:00 (New York) 15:00 – 16:00 (Geneva)</p> <p>Venue: Online</p>	
6 minutes	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <p>(This includes housekeeping)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H.E. Mrs. Suphatra Srimaitreephithak, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN in Geneva (<i>pre-recorded video message</i>) Verena Knaus, Global Lead on Migration and Displacement for UNICEF to welcome participants and introduce UN Migration Network video: “There Are Alternatives to the immigration detention of children” (3 mins)
29 minutes	<p>Panel discussion</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Hayat Akbari, Campaigner and advocate with lived experience Mrs. Thientong Prasanpanich, Secretary to the Department, Department of Children and Youth, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Government of Thailand Ms. Guadalupe Arbeláez, Head of Legal Affairs, Migración Colombia, Government of Colombia Ms. Rosário Farmhouse, President of the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People, Government of Portugal Ms. Carolina Gottardo, Executive Director, International Detention Coalition Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid-Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. <p>Moderator: Verena Knaus, Global Lead on Migration and Displacement, UNICEF</p>
20 minutes	<p>Discussion / Q&A</p> <p>Round-table discussion about the way forward – IMRF and beyond</p>
5 minutes	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jacopo Giorgi (Senior Legal Officer and Head of the Asylum and Migration Unit, Division of International Protection, UNHCR)