**HRC 44 – Oral Statement on Children of Incarcerated Parents for the Panel Discussion on Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela and Bangkok Rules)**

Friends World Committee for Consultation and Child Rights Connect welcome this attention in the Human Rights Council to detained populations. The rights of children of incarcerated parents are acknowledged in the Bangkok and Mandela Rules, and included in the report.[[1]](#footnote-2) However, the lack of specific guidance for States in this area leaves a significant gap in the provision of technical assistance.

There is a growing body of international standards on the rights of these children. We note in particular the Global Study on Children Deprived of their Liberty[[2]](#footnote-3) and the 2018 Council of Europe recommendation on the treatment of children with imprisoned parents.[[3]](#footnote-4) Our recently published Briefing Paper draws these standards together.[[4]](#footnote-5)

There is also growing good practice in which Civil Society Organisations are key partners. Members of the Child Rights Connect Working Group on Children of Incarcerated Parents have contributed to technical assistance:

* In Croatia, COPE member [RODA](https://www.roda.hr/) has worked with local UNICEF staff and the Ministry for Justice to implement video visits for children and renovate prison spaces to ensure they are welcoming to children.
* In Scotland, [Families Outside](https://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/) provide a vital bridge sharing knowledge, information and resources between families, prison management and government.
* In Argentina, [Plataforma NNAPES](http://www.nnapes.org/news) members were key in producing the National Ombudsman for Prisons´ report on Children with Incarcerated Parents.
* In Canada, the [ICCLR](https://icclr.org/), Legal Aid and [EFry](https://www.elizabethfry.com/) collaborated to create tools for courts, justice system officials, and social care providers to build supportive networks for these children. They also created tools for communities to guide support and services for children and families.

A joint UN agency handbook to guide States in upholding the rights of children of incarcerated parents based on these standards and drawing on this expertise would provide much needed technical assistance.

Does the panel see a value in such guidance and what steps can be taken towards this?

1. ‘Technical cooperation and capacity-building to promote and protect the rights of persons deprived of their liberty: implementation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Noncustodial Measures for Women Offenders’, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, A/HRC/44/37 (21 May 2020) <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/44/37>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Manfred Nowak, ‘The United Nations Global Study on Children Deprived of their Liberty’ (2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning children with imprisoned parents (4 April 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Lucy Halton and Laurel Townhead (2020), Children of Incarcerated Parents: International Standards and Guidelines (Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)