



Company of the
Daughters of Charity of
St. Vincent de Paul

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Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children.

Mr. President,

The International Catholic Child Bureau and its 10 partner organizations of the Program *Enfance sans Barreaux* in Africa and Latin America, and the three co-signing organizations congratulate the SRSG on Violence against children on her annual report and her tireless effort and guidance to States for the implementation of their obligations related to the elimination of violence against children, including in the criminal justice system.

The report refers to the girls and violence in criminal justice system. Indeed, girls alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law face more stereotypes from the general public that increase discrimination and, *de facto*, deprive them of their rights-holders status. These misperceptions lead to physical violence and prejudices during arrest, transfer and deprivation of liberty period. Arrests may expose girls to further disproportionate forms of violence whilst detention conditions cause harsh, unsafely and latent damages to their physical and psychological integrity.

→ **Training of public officers serving in the administration of the criminal justice system should integrate girl-friendly procedures. Girls' needs to be integrated in States' policies.**

Even if there is no global robust transparent data on young girls pregnant or imprisoned with their babies, there is no doubt that thousands of young girls are affected around the world with severe consequences in terms of psychological and physical violence and safety implications. Girls who are pregnant or give birth in detention have no or little access to prenatal health care services as well as inadequate access to safe drinking water and basic hygiene for themselves and for their babies. Hence, lactating women and girls are not provided with the food and care they need to properly feed their children. The right of these children to leisure and play, and the child dietary consideration are not always included in the penitentiary administration policies.

→ **States should ensure that a non-custodial sentence is always be first considered when sentencing pregnant girls to avoid further violence and prejudices for the baby and for the girl as the main or sole caretaker for that baby, taking into account her best interests, relevant international norms and standards, including the Bangkok Rules as well as the Model strategies and practical measures on the elimination of violence against children and women in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice.**

Could the SRSG elaborate more on how concretely States can translate into action these Model Strategies to improve their juvenile justice systems?

Mr. President,

Even if there is segregation between children and adults in detention, very often, girls are not separated from boys in the child sector. Gender-based procedures and mechanisms are not always integrated in reforms related to detention conditions' improvement.

How States should be sensitized in order to tailor a gender perspective and conduct awareness raising activities so that the general public understands girls' needs and supports the implementation of the juvenile justice system?

Thank you Mr. President.