

More than seven million children worldwide are deprived of their liberty



United Nations, December 6 (RHC)-- The United Nations released a recent report showing that over 7 million children worldwide are being held in detention and deprived of their liberty.

The report was published on the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the landmark international treaty affirming the world's commitment to protect children. The Convention is the most ratified U.N. treaty in history, yet the United States - which is holding more children than the other countries - is the only country in the world that hasn't signed it.

Despite the existence of the convention, the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty says that at least 410,000 of those children are detained in jails and prisons, where violence is "endemic," from children jailed on the United States border with Mexico to the missing children of ISIS fighters.

The study also shows that the number of children detained in the context of wars has dramatically risen over the past years. "Children deprived of liberty remain an invisible and forgotten group in society notwithstanding the increasing evidence of these children being in fact victims of further human rights violations," the study says.

“Countless children are placed in inhumane conditions and in adult facilities – in clear violation of their human rights - where they are at high risk of violence, rape and sexual assault, including acts of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

The report also points out that “children are being detained at a younger and younger age and held for longer periods of time. The personal cost to these children is immeasurable in terms of the destructive impact on their physical and mental development, and on their ability to lead healthy and constructive lives in society.”

“The Convention on the Rights of the Child is very clear. It says deprivation of liberty of children shall only be allowed as a measure of last resort. So it means that we have to do much more, states primarily have to do much more, in order to reduce those children by means of diversion, by stopping migration detention, because it is never a measure of last resort.

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