

Committee: Human Rights Council (HRC)

Topic: Upholding the rightful treatment of prisoners

Student Officer: George Skourletos

Position: Deputy President

Dear Delegates,

My name is George Skourletos, and I am an IB1 student at Costeas-Geitonas School. In this year's session of CSMUN, I have the honour of serving as the Deputy President of the Human Rights Council. After attending 8 conferences as a delegate, this will be my first time chairing.

Firstly, I would like to welcome you all to the 13th CSMUN conference and wish you a great experience! If this is your first MUN conference ever, I really hope that you will love it and become passionate about it, as it is a great way to develop critical skills. I promise you that the other Student Officers and I will try and create the best environment possible for you! I hope that during the conference you will challenge yourself, engage meaningfully in debate and leave more confident and inspired!

This study guide, on the topic of "Upholding the rightful treatment of prisoners", will give you the most important information about the topic and will help you prepare for the conference in October, but it is equally important to do your own research, as it will help you gain a more holistic understanding of the topic and your country's stance.

If you have any questions regarding this topic and the study guide, do not hesitate to contact me via email at georgesourletos@gmail.com. Furthermore, if you have any other questions, please contact Aloigkania, the President of the Human Rights Council, at aloigkaniaa@gmail.com.

I'm looking forward to meeting you!

Best Regards,

George Skourletos



Topic Introduction

Due to the constant human rights violations incarcerated individuals face, upholding the rightful treatment of prisoners is essential. While they are being held captive for crimes they committed, it is important to remember that they remain human beings and are thus entitled to the fundamental human rights, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which in Articles 1 and 2 states that every individual is born equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to the same rights without discrimination.¹

In many prisons around the world, prisoners are under extremely inhumane conditions, which lead to several human rights violations. For example, Article 5 of the UDHR forbids torture, cruel and inhumane treatment, but many prisoners are often subjected to physical abuse, solitary confinement for over 15 days and medical neglect.² Additionally, article 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) states that “All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person”³, yet many prisoners live under unsanitary conditions and in prisons which are severely overcrowded. In fact, it is estimated that one in five countries is operating at over 150% of the intended capacity.⁴ Finally, prisoners often face discrimination, violating Article 2 of the UDHR.⁵

Generally, the main goals of imprisonment are retribution, deterrence and rehabilitation,⁶ something which many times is not achieved, due to the extreme conditions in prison. Imprisonment needs to

¹“Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

²“Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

³ United Nations. “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” *OHCHR*, United Nations, 1966, www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights.

⁴ “The State of Our Prisons: 5 Key Findings from UNODC’s New Prison Matters Research Brief.” *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, www.unodc.org/unodc/en/news/2024/July/the-state-of-our-prisons-5-key-findings-from-unodcs-new-prison-matters-research-brief.html.

⁵“Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

⁶ Kifer, Misty, et al. “The Goals of Corrections: Perspectives from the Line.” *Criminal Justice Review*, vol. 28, no. 1, May 2003, pp. 47–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/073401680302800104>.



fulfil its purpose of serving justice, and not injustice. It becomes an injustice when it leads to abuse and worsens the lives of prisoners without giving them a chance to change inside the prison.

Definition of key concepts

Incarcerated

“Confined in a jail or prison.”⁷

Overcrowding

Overcrowding is defined as “the situation when there are too many people or things in one place.”⁸ In the context of prisons, it refers to when the number of prisoners exceeds the maximum capacity of the facility.

Solitary Confinement

“Solitary confinement consists in keeping an inmate alone in a cell for over 22 hours a day.”⁹

Rehabilitation

“The process of returning to a healthy or good way of life, or the process of helping someone to do this after they have been in prison, been very ill, etc.”¹⁰

Deterrence

“The act of making someone decide not to do something and preventing a particular act or behaviour from happening.”¹¹ In the context of imprisonment, it is the act of preventing individuals from committing a crime again.

⁷ “Incarcerated.” www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/incarcerated.

⁸ “Overcrowding Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com.” [Oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/overcrowding), 2025, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/overcrowding.

⁹ “Solitary Confinement | APT.” [www.apr.ch](https://www.apr.ch/knowledge-hub/dfd/solitary-confinement), 2015, www.apr.ch/knowledge-hub/dfd/solitary-confinement.

¹⁰ Cambridge Dictionary. “Rehabilitation.” [@CambridgeWords](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rehabilitation#google_vignette), 14 Feb. 2024, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rehabilitation#google_vignette.

¹¹ Britannica. “Deterrence Definition & Meaning | Britannica Dictionary.” [www.britannica.com](https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/deterrence), www.britannica.com/dictionary/deterrence.



Retribution

“Deserved and severe punishment.”¹²

Recidivism

“The act of continuing to commit crimes even after having been punished.”¹³

Background Information

Historical Background

In ancient civilisations, like Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, prisons were not commonly used as a form of permanent punishment, but were used as a form of temporary detention, where inmates were held there awaiting to be sentenced, most often to death or slavery.¹⁴ The conditions of the prisons at the time were very harsh. For example, in ancient Rome, prisoners were held in underground, small, dark and claustrophobic cells, and they were often chained to underground passageways.¹⁵ During the Medieval Period, the most common punishment methods were torture devices and public execution.¹⁶ During the Enlightenment period, a period in the 17th and 18th centuries marked by an emphasis on reason, logic, individual rights and social reform, some philosophers advocated for reforms in the penal system, such as Cesare Beccaria. He, in his work “On Crimes and Punishment”, stated that the purpose of the punishment is to prevent the offender from committing the crime again and prevent others from doing so as well.¹⁷ Also, he expressed that the

¹²“RETRIBUTION | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Cambridge.org*, 2019, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/retribution.

¹³ Cambridge Dictionary. “RECIDIVISM | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, 2023, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/recidivism.

¹⁴ Evie, Lilly. “History of Prisons.” *Study.com*, 2022, study.com/learn/lesson/prisons-history-characteristics-purpose.html.

¹⁵ibid

¹⁶ “Transition from Physical Cruelty to Imprisonment.” *Medieval Torture Museum — Our Main Product Is Emotion*, 16 Jan. 2025, medievaltorturemuseum.com/blog/transition-physical-cruelty-imprisonment-historical-overview/.

¹⁷ Beccaria, Cesare. “On Crimes and Punishments | Office of Justice Programs.” *Www.ojp.gov*, www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/crimes-and-punishments.



severity of the punishment should depend on the severity of the offence.¹⁸ After the 18th century, the use of imprisonment spread globally, mostly from colonies. By the 21st century, it has become the most severe punishment someone can be subjected to.¹⁹

Issues Prisoners Face

Overcrowding

With prisons in 118 countries exceeding their maximum occupancy rate and with 11 national prison systems at more than double their capacity,²⁰ overcrowding becomes a widespread and pressing issue, leading to various consequences within the prisons.

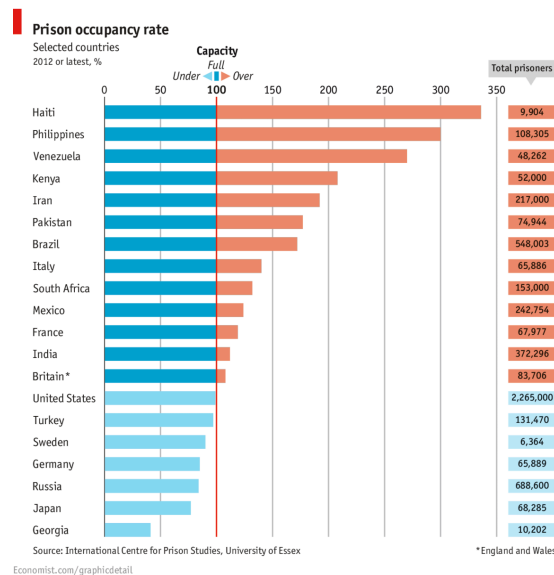


Figure 1: Prison occupancy rate in selected countries²¹

Overcrowding creates an overwhelming and stressful environment, thus tensions are really high. As a result, the violence between inmates is increased, with prisoners in non-overcrowded cells,

¹⁸ ibid

¹⁹ Coyle, Andrew. "Prison | Definition, History, & Facts." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/prison.

²⁰ Penal Reform International. "Overcrowding." *Penal Reform International*, Penal Reform International, 2023, www.penalreform.org/issues/prison-conditions/key-facts/overcrowding/.

²¹ Caumont, Andrea. "Chart of the Week: The Problem of Prison Overcrowding." *Pew Research Center*, 2 Aug. 2013, www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2013/08/02/chart-of-the-week-the-problem-of-prison-overcrowding.

compared to prisoners in overcrowded cells, being 19% more likely to be involved in an assault within a one-year period.²²

Overcrowding also has a negative impact on the health of the inmates, as the risk of the transmission of infectious diseases is increased by it.²³ Overcrowding facilitates the transmission of skin conditions, respiratory illnesses, such as tuberculosis and pneumococcal disease, and other communicable infections.²⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted these risks, as overcrowding made social distancing, isolation and quarantine measures for those affected challenging.

Prolonged Solitary Confinement

Solitary confinement, in excessive use, has become a pressing issue regarding prisoners' rights. When prisoners are isolated for an extended time, significant mental health issues like depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts are created.²⁵ It is estimated that they are 78% more likely to commit suicide in addition to having a 127% higher chance of dying due to an opioid overdose, and are 54% more likely to be murdered.²⁶

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), which is a set of guidelines on how prisoners should be treated, prohibits it for more than 15 days.²⁷ Nevertheless, in the USA, the average duration of solitary confinement is approximately 22.2 days.²⁸

²² Justice, Ministry of. "The Impact of Overcrowding on Assaults in Closed Adult Public Prisons." *GOV.UK*, 19 June 2025, www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-impact-of-overcrowding-on-assaults-in-adult-public-prisons/the-impact-of-overcrowding-on-assaults-in-closed-adult-public-prisons.

²³ Aon, Maha, et al. *DIGNITY Fact Sheet Collection HEALTH #18 PRISON OVERCROWDING HEALTH CONSEQUENCES*. Oct. 2022, dignity.dk/wp-content/uploads/prison-overcrowding-factsheet-english.pdf.

²⁴ World Health Organization. Household Crowding. *Www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov*, World Health Organization, 2018, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK535289/.

²⁵ Haney, Craig. "The Psychological Effects of Solitary Confinement: A Systematic Critique." *Crime and Justice*, vol. 47, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 365–416, www.researchgate.net/publication/323674531_The_Psychological_Effects_of_Solitary_Confinement_A_Systematic_Critique.

²⁶ Brinkley-Rubinstein, Lauren, et al. "Association of Restrictive Housing during Incarceration with Mortality after Release." *JAMA Network Open*, vol. 2, no. 10, 4 Oct. 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.12516>.

²⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)." *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.

²⁸ Eser, Alexander. "Solitary Confinement Statistics Statistics: ZipDo Education Reports 2025." *ZipDo*, 30 May 2025, zipdo.co/solitary-confinement-statistics.



Prison Staff Abuse

Inmates are often harmed by the methods used by prison staff, in the form of both physical and mental abuse.²⁹ Guard abuse includes physical violence, psychological harm (such as threats or sleep deprivation), sexual abuse, refusal of medical care, or any act that causes serious physical or emotional harm to a prisoner³⁰. For instance, in one study in the USA across 12 state prison systems, 21% of 7000 prisoners reported at least one physical assault by the prison staff.³¹ This has severe consequences on the inmate's physical and mental health.

Lack of Medical Care

Prisoners do not often receive enough medical care and treatment. They frequently face delays in their medical treatments, denial of access to doctors and medication, due to a combination of factors. Many prisons are underfunded, leading to understaffing and a shortage of medical equipment.³² Meanwhile, with security being a priority, medical care is often neglected, resulting in poor living conditions that reduce prisoners' life expectancy by two years for every year inside the prison.³³

For instance, Walter Jordan died in a prison in Arizona from a form of cancer, after getting delayed treatment. He might have survived if he had received competent treatment by the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADOC).³⁴ This happened due to issues within the regional prison systems, including the fact that only 60 per cent of physician positions were filled.³⁵

²⁹ Kelner & Kelner. "Protecting Inmates' Rights | NYC Attorneys Kelner & Kelner." *Kelnerlaw.com*, 27 Sept. 2023, kelnerlaw.com/news/prison-guard-abuse-against-prisoners/.

³⁰ "Prisoner Abuse Law and Legal Definition | USLegal, Inc." *Uslegal.com*, 2025, definitions.uslegal.com/p/prisoner-abuse/.

³¹ Seneca, Kristofer. "'No One's Going to Believe Them.'" *Prison Journalism Project*, 30 Jan. 2024, prisonjournalismproject.org/2024/01/30/corrections-officers-abuse-inmates-common/.

³² "Access to Healthcare in Prisons: A Critical Examination - Legislation Hub." *The Insurance Universe*, 18 Aug. 2024, legislationhub.com/access-to-healthcare-in-prisons/.

³³ McCann, Sam. "Health Care behind Bars: Missed Appointments, No Standards, and High...." *Vera Institute of Justice*, 29 June 2022, www.vera.org/news/health-care-behind-bars-missed-appointments-no-standards-and-high-costs.

³⁴ "How Poor Health Care Turned Walter Jordan's Prison Sentence into a Death Sentence | News & Commentary." *American Civil Liberties Union*, 11 Jan. 2018, www.aclu.org/news/prisoners-rights/how-poor-health-care-turned-walter-jordans.

³⁵ *ibid*



Discrimination

Many vulnerable groups, including prisoners with mental healthcare needs, disabilities, ethnic and racial minorities, foreign national prisoners, LGBT prisoners and older prisoners, face unequal treatment and discrimination in prisons.

People who belong to these groups face discrimination from the general public, something which increases inside prisons, as they face discrimination from both inmates and prison staff. For example, prisoners with mental healthcare needs may be isolated due to stigma, worsening their condition. Furthermore, they may be seen as disruptive by medical staff, leading to further neglect.³⁶

Case Studies

Attica Prison Riot (1971)

In 1971, the conditions in the Attica Maximum Security Prison were appalling.³⁷ There was severe overcrowding, the men were locked in their cells for 14-16 hours a day and worked 5 hours a day just to receive about 20 cents to 1 dollar an hour, whilst they were only allowed to shower once a week.³⁸ Additionally, a lot of racial discrimination took place by white guards, along with the physical consequences of their imprisonment.³⁹

Nearly 2400 prisoners had made an effort to have their issues resolved through “proper” and official means, including the submission of numerous letters to the Department of Corrections Commissioner, Russel Oswald, and to at least one state senator.⁴⁰ But, their concerns were not being heard, and as a result, on September 9th of 1971, prisoners rioted and gained control of the facility

³⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES for UNITED NATIONS USE ONLY*. 2009, www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Handbook_on_Prisoners_with_Special_Needs.pdf.

³⁷ Rose, Akira. “A History of the Attica Uprising.” American Friends Service Committee, 10 Sept. 2021, afsc.org/newsroom/history-attica-uprising.

³⁸ Rose, Akira. “A History of the Attica Uprising.” American Friends Service Committee, 10 Sept. 2021, afsc.org/newsroom/history-attica-uprising.

³⁹ Rose, Akira. “A History of the Attica Uprising.” American Friends Service Committee, 10 Sept. 2021, afsc.org/newsroom/history-attica-uprising.

⁴⁰ Thompson, Heather Ann. “The Attica Uprising.” *Against the Current*, 2025, againstthecurrent.org/atc126/p313/.



whilst taking members of the prison facility hostage.⁴¹ After 4 days, state police officers barged in and killed 29 prisoners and 10 guards who were held captive.⁴²

After the retaking of the prison, prisoners were subjected to severe torture, sexual abuse, and physical violence, leading to long-term disabilities.⁴³

The Attica situation reveals systematic abuse and neglect inside prisons as it demonstrates how the rights of prisoners can be severely violated and shows that when prisoners are denied basic rights and humane treatment, the situation can escalate to violence. Moreover, it highlights the fact that prisoners' voices and concerns should be heard and that they deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.

Comayagua Prison fire

On February 14 of 2012, one of the deadliest prison fires ever occurred in the Granja prison in Comayagua, where over 300 prisoners lost their lives.⁴⁴ The facility, at the time of the fire, was operating at three times more than its intended capacity, as 852 prisoners were being held in a facility meant for 250.⁴⁵

According to José Miguel Vivanco, Americas Director at Human Rights Watch, the fire outbreak was a result of overcrowding and poor prison conditions.⁴⁶ The fire started from an open flame,⁴⁷ probably from a prisoner who accidentally dropped a lit cigarette on a highly flammable polyurethane cushion

⁴¹ Lombardo, Lucien X. "Attica Prison Revolt | American History." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2 Sept. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/Attica-prison-revolt.

⁴² Lombardo, Lucien X. "Attica Prison Revolt | American History." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2 Sept. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/Attica-prison-revolt.

⁴³ Lombardo, Lucien X. "Attica Prison Revolt | American History." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2 Sept. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/Attica-prison-revolt.

⁴⁴ CBC. "10 Deadly Prison Fires around the World." *CBC*, 15 Feb. 2012, www.cbc.ca/news/world/10-deadly-prison-fires-around-the-world-1.1160708.

⁴⁵ EL PAÍS. "Honduran Prison Fire Was Accidental." *EL PAÍS*, 23 Dec. 2012, english.elpais.com/elpais/2012/02/23/inenglish/1330002013_227963.html.

⁴⁶ "Honduras: Overhaul Prison Conditions." *Human Rights Watch*, 15 Feb. 2012, www.hrw.org/news/2012/02/15/honduras-overhaul-prison-conditions.

⁴⁷ "U.S. Investigators: Honduras Prison Fire Was Accidental." *Daily Breeze*, 21 Feb. 2012, www.dailybreeze.com/2012/02/21/us-investigators-honduras-prison-fire-was-accidental/.



mattress⁴⁸, in the cramped prison where the mattresses were really close. As a result, the fire spread rapidly. This was worsened by the absence of fire protection systems within the prison, like fire alarm pull stations, manual extinguishers, sprinklers or any other fire safety equipment.⁴⁹

This showcases how poor prison facilities and severe overcrowding can lead to detrimental consequences, even in the death of many inmates. It demonstrates how failing to ensure their most basic needs and protection undermines their rights and can also lead to catastrophic and preventable consequences.

Kalief Browder (Riker's Island, USA)

Kalief Browder was an African American from New York who was accused of beating a man and then stealing his backpack, something which he denied.⁵⁰ He spent 1000 days in a detention centre in New York, Riker's Island, including 700 days in solitary confinement while waiting for trial,⁵¹ since his family could not afford the 3000 dollar bail.⁵² Eventually, prosecutors dropped the charges after he had been imprisoned for almost 3 years⁵³, but the damage from the prolonged solitary confinement was already done. After he got released in 2013, he endured PTSD and after multiple psychiatric hospitalisations for his condition and two suicide attempts, he hanged himself and died.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ The World. "Honduras: Was the Fire at Comayagua Prison Started by a Lit Cigarette? - the World from PRX." *The World from PRX*, 14 May 2017, theworld.org/stories/2017/05/13/honduras-was-fire-comayagua-prison-started-lit-cigarette.

⁴⁹ Moncada, Jaime A. "Lessons of Comayagua." *Archive.org*, 1 Sept. 2012, web.archive.org/web/20170608034314/www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/publications/nfpa-journal/2012/september-october-2012/features/lessons-of-comayagua.

⁵⁰ News, A. B. C. "Who Kalief Browder Might Have Been If He Hadn't Spent over 1,000 Days in Jail without a Conviction." *ABC News*, 18 June 2015, abcnews.go.com/US/kalief-browder-spent-1000-days-jail-charges/story?id=31832313.

⁵¹ Webster, Katharine. "The Cost of Pleading Innocent: The Kalief Browder Case." *Uml.edu*, 27 Feb. 2019, www.uml.edu/news/stories/2019/cj_panel.aspx.

⁵² News, A. B. C. "Who Kalief Browder Might Have Been If He Hadn't Spent over 1,000 Days in Jail without a Conviction." *ABC News*, 18 June 2015, abcnews.go.com/US/kalief-browder-spent-1000-days-jail-charges/story?id=31832313.

⁵³ "New York City to Pay \$3 Million to Settle Kalief Browder Lawsuit." *ABC7 New York*, 2025, abc7ny.com/post/nyc-to-pay-.

⁵⁴ Webster, Katharine. "The Cost of Pleading Innocent: The Kalief Browder Case." *Uml.edu*, 27 Feb. 2019, www.uml.edu/news/stories/2019/cj_panel.aspx.



This case demonstrates how prolonged solitary confinement can permanently damage an incarcerated individual's mental well-being. It makes clear that this practice, in its excessive use, is cruel and inhumane and that it is essential that it be used only with limitations.

Major countries, Organisations and Alliances

United States of America (USA)

With the United States' imprisonment rate being the largest in the world, with around two million individuals behind bars at any given moment,⁵⁵ the country's prison system faces numerous challenges regarding the treatment of prisoners, including overcrowding, prolonged solitary confinement, inadequate healthcare and high levels of violence. Despite the challenges, the US has taken important legislative measures to combat the issue, including the Civil Rights of Institutionalised Persons Act (CRIPA)⁵⁶ and the First Step Act.⁵⁷

The CRIPA allows the Attorney General to investigate and address systematic violations in state and local government-run institutions, including prisons.⁵⁸ While it does not create new rights, it gives the Department of Justice (DOJ) the power to target abuses, though its effectiveness varies and has been criticised for weak enforcement.⁵⁹ The First Step Act, a federal law, which was passed in 2018, aims for the reduction of recidivism, the improvement of prison conditions and the provision of rehabilitation programmes to prisoners. Although it has lowered recidivism rates to 12.4%,⁶⁰ it applies only to federal prisons, which are only a small part of all the prison systems.

⁵⁵ Prison Policy Initiative. "United States Profile." *Prisonpolicy.org*, Prison Policy Initiative, 2023, www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/US.html.

⁵⁶ Kastenmeier, Robert W. "H.R.10 - 96th Congress (1979-1980): Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act." *Www.congress.gov*, 23 May 1980, www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/10.

⁵⁷ Federal Bureau of Prisons. "BOP: First Step Act Overview." *Federal Bureau of Prisons*, 2018, www.bop.gov/inmates/fsa/overview.jsp.

⁵⁸ Kastenmeier, Robert W. "H.R.10 - 96th Congress (1979-1980): Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act." *Www.congress.gov*, 23 May 1980, www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/10.

⁵⁹ National Council on Disability. *The Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act: Has It Fulfilled Its Promise?* National Council on Disability. 8 Aug. 2005, www.ncd.gov/assets/uploads/reports/2005/ncd-civil-rights-institutionalied-persons-act-2005.pdf.

⁶⁰FAMM. "FIRST STEP at FIVE: THE SUCCESS and SAFETY of the FIRST STEP ACT after FIVE YEARS in EFFECT." *FAMM*, famm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/First-Step-at-5-successes.pdf.



Norway

During the 1990s, the recidivism rate in Norway was at about 70%,⁶¹ which is extremely high, driving the government to completely renovate the prison system, which now serves as a model for the rest of the world. First of all, instead of having large and centralised prisons, there is a network of small, community-based facilities that emphasise reintegration and rehabilitation into society, while in many prisons, prisoners are allowed up to 3 visits a week. Moreover, most prisons are luxurious, for example, Halden prison.⁶²

The rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners is achieved through a variety of ways. Most importantly, the prisoners while in prison receive education, including primary and secondary school, work qualifying courses, vocational training and tertiary studies.⁶³ This helps them acquire skills and qualities needed to secure employment after release, helping them build stable lives instead of committing a crime again. Also, they receive mental support and healthcare, helping them reduce aggression, as their mental well-being is recognised as important.⁶⁴

This prison system has had a significant impact on Norway's recidivism rate, which is now at 20% within 2 years of release, which is the lowest in the world.⁶⁵

El Salvador

The government of El Salvador, on March 27th of 2022, declared a state emergency, after a rise in murders and violent crimes.⁶⁶ This has led to mass arrests inside the country of people who are

⁶¹ First Step Alliance. "What We Can Learn from Norway's Prison System: Rehabilitation & Recidivism." *First Step Alliance*, First Step Alliance, 3 Jan. 2022, www.firststepalliance.org/post/norway-prison-system-lessons.

⁶² Tønseth, Christin, and Ragnhild Bergsland. "Prison Education in Norway – the Importance for Work and Life after Release." *Cogent Education*, vol. 6, no. 1, June 2019, pp. 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2019.1628408>.

⁶³ Tønseth, Christin, and Ragnhild Bergsland. "Prison Education in Norway – the Importance for Work and Life after Release." *Cogent Education*, vol. 6, no. 1, June 2019, pp. 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2019.1628408>.

⁶⁴ Horgan, Emma. "Prisons and Their Alternatives." *Macquarie University Law Society*, 1 Dec. 2023, www.muls.org/the-brief-online/norway-australia-prisons.

⁶⁵ First Step Alliance. "What We Can Learn from Norway's Prison System: Rehabilitation & Recidivism." *First Step Alliance*, First Step Alliance, 3 Jan. 2022, www.firststepalliance.org/post/norway-prison-system-lessons.

⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch "El Salvador: Broad 'State of Emergency' Risks Abuse." *Human Rights Watch*, 29 Mar. 2022, www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/29/el-salvador-broad-state-emergency-risks-abuse-0.



suspected of being gang members.⁶⁷ Since then, Salvadoran authorities have arrested approximately 83,000 people.⁶⁸ As a result, many innocent people have been arrested due to suspicion, without being given the chance to prove their innocence. Thus, even though crime rates have decreased a lot and many citizens feel safer,⁶⁹ it has also resulted in the suffering of countless innocent people and their families in the name of national security. Also, they have established Mega-Prisons which are large and have maximum security, like the Terrorist Confinement Centre (CECOT).⁷⁰ However, the conditions inside the prisons are very inhumane. Severe overcrowding is present here too, since many prisons operate at over 300% capacity.⁷¹ Moreover, more than 300 deaths under the state's custody have been reported, due to violence, inadequate healthcare and torture.⁷² This shows that even though a prison system may appear to be effective on the surface level, it can be problematic at the same time.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The UNODC plays a significant role in addressing the violations prisoners face, as it advocates for the humane and equal treatment of all prisoners. It promotes the implementation of international standards, most significantly the Nelson Mandela Rules.⁷³ It is tasked with helping nations improve their jail systems. Also, it provides support for strengthening the legal protections of prisoners,

⁶⁷ Robinson, Niamh. "El Salvador President Threatens to Send Imprisoned Gangsters to Paris Fashion Week." *The Telegraph*, 29 June 2025, www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2025/06/29/el-salvador-cecot-imprisoned-gangsters-paris-fashion-week/.

⁶⁸ Amnesty International. "El Salvador: A Thousand Days into the State of Emergency. 'Security' at the Expense of Human Rights." *Amnesty International*, 20 Dec. 2024, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/el-salvador-mil-dias-regimen-excepcion-modelo-seguridad-a-costa-derechos-humanos/.

⁶⁹ Papadovassilakis, Alex. "The Road to El Salvador's State of Emergency." *InSight Crime*, 6 Dec. 2023, insightcrime.org/investigations/road-el-salvador-state-emergency/.

⁷⁰ "Human Rights Watch Declaration on Prison Conditions in El Salvador for the J.G.G. V. Trump Case." *Human Rights Watch*, 20 Mar. 2025, www.hrw.org/news/2025/03/20/human-rights-watch-declaration-prison-conditions-el-salvador-jgg-v-trump-case.

⁷¹ Amnesty International. "El Salvador: A Thousand Days into the State of Emergency. 'Security' at the Expense of Human Rights." *Amnesty International*, 20 Dec. 2024, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/el-salvador-mil-dias-regimen-excepcion-modelo-seguridad-a-costa-derechos-humanos/.

⁷² *ibid*

⁷³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)." *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.



decriminalising and lowering sentences for some acts, and helping offenders reintegrate into society.⁷⁴

For example, in 2014, they collaborated with the Zambian Prison Services and created the first Prison Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) Centre, which was located at the Kabwe Maximum Prison Complex to the Zambian Prisons Service, providing quality services to about 10,000 people.⁷⁵

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

The Human Rights Watch is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) which conducts systematic investigations of human rights abuses in many countries around the world.⁷⁶ Regarding the treatment of prisoners, it documents abuses, raises public awareness and pressures governments to reform. Even though it is influential in the shaping of policies, it's only a research group and thus cannot enforce changes itself, and governments can dismiss its findings. One example of HRW's work is the documentation of many severe human rights violations within the prison system of El Salvador, particularly at the CECOT in Tecoluca.⁷⁷

Previous attempts to solve the issue

United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners,⁷⁸ also known as the Nelson Mandela Rules, were officially adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, as a revision of the

⁷⁴ "Prison Reform." *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2017, www.unodc.org/unodc/en/urban-safety/prison-reform.html.

⁷⁵ "UNODC Hands VCT Centre to Zambian Prisons Service." *Unodc.org*, 2025, www.unodc.org/southernafrica/en/stories/unodc-hands-vct-centre-to-zambian-prisons-service.html

⁷⁶ Human Rights Watch. "About Our Research." *Human Rights Watch*, Human Rights Watch, 21 Apr. 2015, www.hrw.org/about/about-us/about-our-research.

⁷⁷ "Human Rights Watch Declaration on Prison Conditions in El Salvador for the J.G.G. V. Trump Case." *Human Rights Watch*, 20 Mar. 2025, www.hrw.org/news/2025/03/20/human-rights-watch-declaration-prison-conditions-el-salvador-jgg-v-trump-case.

⁷⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)." *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.



original 1955 rules.⁷⁹ They set out 122 guidelines to ensure prisoners are treated humanely, without them being deprived of their human rights.⁸⁰ Some of the most important principles of them are respect for human dignity, prohibition of torture, equal access to healthcare, fair use of discipline and right to contact family and legal representatives.⁸¹

The Nelson Mandela Rules are widely accepted and have inspired many reform efforts, and have influenced legislation and policies regarding prisoners.⁸² However, their effectiveness varies. Since they are not legally binding, governments are not legally obliged to implement them, and many times they are ignored or partially applied.

United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Riyadh Guidelines)

The Riyadh guidelines were adopted by the General Assembly on December 14, 1990.⁸³ They are a set of guidelines for the prevention of juvenile criminality, and thus they have a youth-centred approach which promotes education, support and social inclusion rather than punishment.⁸⁴ They are considered effective because they have a comprehensive approach to the issue. But, again, it is not legally binding and is not easily enforceable. Moreover, there are no monitoring mechanisms to evaluate how they are being implemented.

⁷⁹ UNHCR. "Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners." *Refworld*, www.refworld.org/legal/otherinstr/un/1955/en/108625.

⁸⁰ UNODC. "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)." *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.

⁸¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)." *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.

⁸² Penal Reform International. "Mandela Rules Focus of OSCE/ODIHR Regional Consultation in Warsaw - Penal Reform International." *Penal Reform International*, 20 Apr. 2017, www.penalreform.org/news/mandela-rules-discussed-at-osceodihr-regional-consultation-in/.

⁸³ UNHCR. "United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency ('the Riyadh Guidelines') : Resolution / Adopted by the General Assembly | Refworld." *Refworld*, 2023, www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unga/1990/ru/42900.

⁸⁴ *ibid*



Possible solutions

Strengthening Oversight and Monitoring of Prisons

A possible solution to ensure the rightful treatment of prisoners is the establishment of independent monitoring bodies, which will oversee prisons and report if there are any human rights abuses. By being independent from governments and prison authorities, objectivity and transparency can be maintained.

The function of these will be to inspect prisons, talk to prisoners, document any abuses of human rights and submit reports with detailed findings and recommendations. They would be made up of legal and human rights experts who are diverse in terms of ethnicity and gender. An organisation that could be involved are Human Rights Watch, which could contribute by doing independent investigations and public reporting on prison conditions.

Establishment of Rehabilitation Programmes

The establishment of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes is essential to uphold the rights of prisoners, since they help them prepare to successfully reintegrate into society after being released. These programmes would address the most important causes of criminality, and thus lower the chances of reoffending and ensure public protection.

One of the most important aspects of these would be education and vocational training, run by certified professionals, offering literacy, schooling and job skills, to increase their chances of getting employed after release and reduce recidivism. Also, they would include mental health support, by therapy, psychological counselling and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) by licensed psychological professionals, which could help prisoners manage their anger issues and address criminal thinking patterns. To ensure that prisoners would participate in these programmes, participation would be mandatory and built into the daily prison schedule.

Promoting Compliance with the Nelson Mandela Rules

Urge Member States to align their prison conditions with the Nelson Mandela Rules, which serve as the global standard for the treatment of prisoners.



Specifically, the countries' prison systems should ban torture, inhumane treatment, solitary confinement for more than 15 days and maintain standards for conditions such as clean water, healthcare, and sanitation. Also, prisoners should have guaranteed access to rehabilitation programmes and prison staff should be required to train on human rights, conflict management and mental health. This is something very important, as it is a practical step to improve prison conditions and prioritise rehabilitation over punishment.

This can be ensured with the help of international bodies, like the UNODC, which would support this process through guidance, training and monitoring.



Bibliography

“Access to Healthcare in Prisons: A Critical Examination - Legislation Hub.” *The Insurance Universe*, 18 Aug. 2024, legislationhub.com/access-to-healthcare-in-prisons/.

Amnesty International. “El Salvador: A Thousand Days into the State of Emergency. ‘Security’ at the Expense of Human Rights.” *Amnesty International*, 20 Dec. 2024, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/el-salvador-mil-dias-regimen-excepcion-modelo-seguridad-a-costa-derechos-humanos/.

Andrés Martínez-Fernández. “Why El Salvador’s ‘Mega’ Prisons Are Making the World Safer.” *The Heritage Foundation*, 2019, www.heritage.org/global-politics/commentary/why-el-salvadors-mega-prisons-are-making-the-world-safer.

Aon , Maha, et al. *DIGNITY Fact Sheet Collection HEALTH #18 PRISON OVERCROWDING HEALTH CONSEQUENCES*. Oct. 2022, dignity.dk/wp-content/uploads/prison-overcrowding-factsheet-english.pdf.

BBC. “Is This a ‘Luxury Prison’?” *BBC News*, www.bbc.com/news/av/world-43261564.

Beccaria, Cesare. “On Crimes and Punishments | Office of Justice Programs.” *Www.ojp.gov*, www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/crimes-and-punishments.

Brinkley-Rubinstein, Lauren, et al. “Association of Restrictive Housing during Incarceration with Mortality after Release.” *JAMA Network Open*, vol. 2, no. 10, 4 Oct. 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.12516>.

Britannica. “Deterrence Definition & Meaning | Britannica Dictionary.” *Www.britannica.com*, www.britannica.com/dictionary/deterrence.

Cambridge Dictionary. “RECIDIVISM | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” *Dictionary.cambridge.org*, 2023, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/recidivism.



- “Rehabilitation.” @CambridgeWords, 14 Feb. 2024, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rehabilitation#google_vignette.
- “RETRIBUTION | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 2019, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/retribution.
- Caumont, Andrea. “Chart of the Week: The Problem of Prison Overcrowding.” *Pew Research Center*, 2 Aug. 2013, www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2013/08/02/chart-of-the-week-the-problem-of-prison-overcrowding.
- CBC. “10 Deadly Prison Fires around the World.” *CBC*, 15 Feb. 2012, www.cbc.ca/news/world/10-deadly-prison-fires-around-the-world-1.1160708.
- Committee on Causes and Consequences of High Rates of Incarceration, et al. “Impact of Incarceration on Health.” *Www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov*, National Academies Press (US), 2013, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201966/.
- Coyle, Andrew. “Prison | Definition, History, & Facts.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019, www.britannica.com/topic/prison.
- Crowder, Carla. “Four Years after the U.S. Department of Justice Warning, Alabama’s Prisons Have Only Gotten Worse – Alabama Appleseed.” *Alabama Appleseed*, 3 Apr. 2023, alabamaappleseed.org/alabama-prisons/four-years-after-the-u-s-department-of-justice-warning-alabamas-prisons-have-only-gotten-worse.
- Department of Justice. *Department of Justice Activities under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act Fiscal Year 2021*. 2021, www.justice.gov/d9/pages/attachments/2023/05/16/2021_cripa_report_0.pdf.
- EL PAÍS. “Honduran Prison Fire Was Accidental.” *EL PAÍS*, 23 Dec. 2012, english.elpais.com/elpais/2012/02/23/inenglish/1330002013_227963.html.
- Evie, Lilly. “History of Prisons.” *Study.com*, 2022, study.com/learn/lesson/prisons-history-characteristics-purpose.html.



Fair Fight Initiative. "Solitary Confinement and Prison Guard Abuse." *Fair Fight Initiative*, 2024, www.fairfightinitiative.org/solitary-confinement-and-prison-guard-abuse/.

"Solitary Confinement and Prison Guard Abuse." *Fair Fight Initiative*, 2024, www.fairfightinitiative.org/solitary-confinement-and-prison-guard-abuse/.

FAMM. "FIRST STEP at FIVE: THE SUCCESS and SAFETY of the FIRST STEP ACT after FIVE YEARS in EFFECT." *FAMM*, famm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/First-Step-at-5-successes.pdf.

Federal Bureau of Prisons. "BOP: First Step Act Overview." *Federal Bureau of Prisons*, 2018, www.bop.gov/inmates/fsa/overview.jsp.

First Step Alliance. "What We Can Learn from Norway's Prison System: Rehabilitation & Recidivism." *First Step Alliance*, First Step Alliance, 3 Jan. 2022, www.firststepalliance.org/post/norway-prison-system-lessons.

Forman Jr, James. "Attica, Attica: The Story of the Legendary Prison Uprising." *The New York Times*, 30 Aug. 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/09/04/books/review/blood-in-the-water-attica-heather-ann-thompson.html.

GLOBAL PRISON TRENDS 2025. May 2025, cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/PRI-Global-prison-trends-2025.pdf.

GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS. June 1993, www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/g/general/general2.936/general2936full.pdf.

"GUEST BLOG: Putting the Nelson Mandela Rules into Practice: The Work of the UK National Preventive Mechanism | APT." *Www.appt.ch*, 2017, www.appt.ch/news/guest-blog-putting-nelson-mandela-rules-practice-work-uk-national-preventive-mechanism.

Haney, Craig. "The Psychological Effects of Solitary Confinement: A Systematic Critique." *Crime and Justice*, vol. 47, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 365–416,



www.researchgate.net/publication/323674531_The_Psychological_Effects_of_Solitary_Confinement_A_Systematic_Critique.

“Honduras: Overhaul Prison Conditions.” *Human Rights Watch*, 15 Feb. 2012, www.hrw.org/news/2012/02/15/honduras-overhaul-prison-conditions.

Horgan, Emma. “Prisons and Their Alternatives.” *Macquarie University Law Society*, 1 Dec. 2023, www.muls.org/the-brief-online/norway-australia-prisons.

“How Poor Health Care Turned Walter Jordan’s Prison Sentence into a Death Sentence | News & Commentary.” *American Civil Liberties Union*, 11 Jan. 2018, www.aclu.org/news/prisoners-rights/how-poor-health-care-turned-walter-jordans.

Human Rights Watch. “About Our Research.” *Human Rights Watch*, Human Rights Watch, 21 Apr. 2015, www.hrw.org/about/about-us/about-our-research.

“About Us.” *Human Rights Watch*, www.hrw.org/about-us.

GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS GLOBAL REPORT on PRISONS
www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/g/general/general2.936/general2936full.pdf.

“Human Rights Watch Declaration on Prison Conditions in El Salvador for the J.G.G. V. Trump Case.” *Human Rights Watch*, 20 Mar. 2025, www.hrw.org/news/2025/03/20/human-rights-watch-declaration-prison-conditions-el-salvador-jgg-v-trump-case.

“US: Look Critically at Widespread Use of Solitary Confinement.” *Human Rights Watch*, July 2016, www.hrw.org/news/2012/06/18/us-look-critically-widespread-use-solitary-confinement.

“Human Rights Watch: Human Rights Abuses against Prisoners.” *Www.hrw.org*, www.hrw.org/legacy/advocacy/prisons/abuses.htm.

in. “Over 122,000 People Imprisoned in Solitary Confinement in US: Study.” *Aa.com.tr*, 2019, www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/over-122-000-people-imprisoned-in-solitary-confinement-in-us-study/2904456.



“Incarcerated.” *Www.merriam-Webster.com*, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/incarcerated.

INCORPORATING the NELSON MANDELA RULES into NATIONAL PRISON LEGISLATION a Model Prison

Act and Related Commentary.

www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/21-08355_Incorporating_the_Nelson_Mandela_Rules_into_National_Prison_Legislation.pdf.

Justice, Ministry of. “The Impact of Overcrowding on Assaults in Closed Adult Public Prisons.”

GOV.UK, 19 June 2025,

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-impact-of-overcrowding-on-assaults-in-adult-public-prisons/the-impact-of-overcrowding-on-assaults-in-closed-adult-public-prisons.

Kastenmeier, Robert W. “H.R.10 - 96th Congress (1979-1980): Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons

Act.” *Www.congress.gov*, 23 May 1980, www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/10.

Keller, Jeff. “How Underfunding Is Driving Correctional Healthcare Lawsuits.” *Corrections1*, 13 Feb.

2020,

www.corrections1.com/correctional-healthcare/articles/why-correctional-medicine-is-often-driven-by-lawsuits-nrsy1a57BXVCRRF0.

Kelner & Kelner. “Protecting Inmates’ Rights | NYC Attorneys Kelner & Kelner.” *Kelnerlaw.com*, 27

Sept. 2023, kelnerlaw.com/news/prison-guard-abuse-against-prisoners/

Kifer, Misty, et al. “The Goals of Corrections: Perspectives from the Line.” *Criminal Justice Review*, vol.

28, no. 1, May 2003, pp. 47–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/073401680302800104>.

Kriminalomsorgen. “About the Norwegian Correctional Service - Kriminalomsorgen.no.”

Kriminalomsorgen.no, 2021,

www.kriminalomsorgen.no/about-the-norwegian-correctional-service.6327382-536003.html

Lombardo, Lucien X. “Attica Prison Revolt | American History.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2 Sept. 2018,

www.britannica.com/topic/Attica-prison-revolt

“Mandela Rules: The Problems of the Brazilian Prison System.” *Conectas*, 19 Aug. 2024,

conectas.org/en/noticias/mandela-rules-the-problems-of-the-brazilian-prison-system/.



Marder, Shoshana. *UNHRC Topic 2: Human Rights of Prisoners*.
www.yu.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/UNHRC%20Topic%20%20Human%20Rights%20of%20Prisoners.pdf

McCann, Sam. "Health Care behind Bars: Missed Appointments, No Standards, and High...." *Vera Institute of Justice*, 29 June 2022,
www.vera.org/news/health-care-behind-bars-missed-appointments-no-standards-and-high-costs

Moncada, Jaime A. "Lessons of Comayagua." *Archive.org*, 1 Sept. 2012,
web.archive.org/web/20170608034314/www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/publications/nfpa-journal/2012/september-october-2012/features/lessons-of-comayagua.

National Council on Disability. *The Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act: Has It Fulfilled Its Promise?* *National Council on Disability*. 8 Aug. 2005,
www.ncd.gov/assets/uploads/reports/2005/ncd-civil-rights-institutionalized-persons-act-2005.pdf.

"New York City to Pay \$3 Million to Settle Kalief Browder Lawsuit." *ABC7 New York*, 2025,
abc7ny.com/post/nyc-to-pay-.

npr. "1 in 4 Inmate Deaths Happens in the Same Federal Prison. Why?" *NPR*, 23 Sept. 2023,
www.npr.org/transcripts/1200626103.

Papadovassilakis, Alex. "The Road to El Salvador's State of Emergency." *InSight Crime*, 6 Dec. 2023,
insightcrime.org/investigations/road-el-salvador-state-emergency/.

Penal Reform International. "Solitary Confinement." *Penal Reform International*, 2013,
www.penalreform.org/issues/prison-conditions/key-facts/solitary-confinement/.

Prison Policy Initiative. "United States Profile." *Prisonpolicy.org*, Prison Policy Initiative, 2023,
www.prisonpolicy.org/profiles/US.html.

"Prisoner Abuse Law and Legal Definition | USLegal, Inc." *Uslegal.com*, 2025,
definitions.uslegal.com/p/prisoner-abuse/.



Quandt, Katie Rose, and Alexi Jones. "Research Roundup: Incarceration Can Cause Lasting Damage to Mental Health." *Prison Policy Initiative*, 13 May 2021, www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/05/13/mentalhealthimpacts/.

Robinson, Niamh. "El Salvador President Threatens to Send Imprisoned Gangsters to Paris Fashion Week." *The Telegraph*, 29 June 2025, www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2025/06/29/el-salvador-cecot-imprisoned-gangsters-paris-fashion-week/.

Rose, Akira. "A History of the Attica Uprising." *American Friends Service Committee*, 10 Sept. 2021, afsc.org/newsroom/history-attica-uprising.

Seneca, Kristofer. "'No One's Going to Believe Them.'" *Prison Journalism Project*, 30 Jan. 2024, prisonjournalismproject.org/2024/01/30/corrections-officers-abuse-inmates-common/.

"Solitary Confinement | APT." *Www.apr.ch*, 2015, www.apr.ch/knowledge-hub/dfd/solitary-confinement.

The World. "Honduras: Was the Fire at Comayagua Prison Started by a Lit Cigarette? - the World from PRX." *The World from PRX*, 14 May 2017, theworld.org/stories/2017/05/13/honduras-was-fire-comayagua-prison-started-lit-cigarette.

Thompson, Heather Ann. "The Attica Uprising." *Against the Current*, 2025, againstthecurrent.org/atc126/p313/.

Tønseth, Christin, and Ragnhild Bergsland. "Prison Education in Norway – the Importance for Work and Life after Release." *Cogent Education*, vol. 6, no. 1, June 2019, pp. 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2019.1628408>.

"Transition from Physical Cruelty to Imprisonment." *Medieval Torture Museum — Our Main Product Is Emotion*, 16 Jan. 2025, medievaltorturemuseum.com/blog/transition-physical-cruelty-imprisonment-historical-overview/.



“U.S. Investigators: Honduras Prison Fire Was Accidental.” *Daily Breeze*, 21 Feb. 2012, www.dailybreeze.com/2012/02/21/us-investigators-honduras-prison-fire-was-accidental/.

UNHCR. “Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.” *Refworld*, www.refworld.org/legal/otherinstr/un/1955/en/108625.

“United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (‘the Riyadh Guidelines’) : Resolution / Adopted by the General Assembly | Refworld.” *Refworld*, 2023, www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unga/1990/ru/42900.

United Nations. “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” *OHCHR*, United Nations, 1966, www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights

“Nelson Mandela Rules.” *Un.org*, 2015, www.un.org/en/events/mandeladay/mandela_rules.shtml.

“Universal Declaration of Human Rights.” *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs CRIMINAL JUSTICE HANDBOOK SERIES for UNITED NATIONS USE ONLY*. 2009, [www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Handbook on Prisoners with Special Needs.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Handbook_on_Prisoners_with_Special_Needs.pdf).

“The State of Our Prisons: 5 Key Findings from UNODC’s New Prison Matters Research Brief.” *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, www.unodc.org/unodc/en/news/2024/July/the-state-of-our-prisons_-5-key-findings-from-unodcs-new-prison-matters-research-brief.html

“United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules).” *International Legal Materials*, vol. 55, no. 6, Dec. 2016, pp. 1180–205, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020782900030898>.

UNODC. “Alternatives to Imprisonment: The Brazilian Approach.” *Unodc.org*, 2021, www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/frontpage/2023/11/alternatives-to-imprisonment-the-brazilian-approach.html.



“Prison Reform.” *United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2017, www.unodc.org/unodc/en/urban-safety/prison-reform.html.

“UNODC Hands VCT Centre to Zambian Prisons Service.” *Unodc.org*, 2025, www.unodc.org/southernafrica/en/stories/unodc-hands-vct-centre-to-zambian-prisons-service.html.

Watamura, Eiichiro, et al. “Justification of Sentencing Decisions: Development of a Ratio-Based Measure Tested on Child Neglect Cases.” *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, 14 Jan. 2022, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.761536>.

Webster, Katharine. “The Cost of Pleading Innocent: The Kalief Browder Case.” *Uml.edu*, 27 Feb. 2019, www.uml.edu/news/stories/2019/cj_panel.aspx

Yuhas, Alan. “New Attica Documents Reveal Inmate Accounts of Torture after 1971 Prison Riot.” *The Guardian*, 22 May 2015, www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/may/22/new-attica-documents-reveal-inmate-torture.

Zames Fleische, Doris. “Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act.” *Sagepub.com*, 2025, sk.sagepub.com/ency/edvol/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-intellectual-and-developmental-disorders/chpt/civil-rights-institutionalized-persons-act.

