



## BRIEFING

### The process of Review of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

March 2014

In December 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 65/230, “Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” which, among other things, requests the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to establish,

“... an open-ended intergovernmental expert group... to exchange information on best practices, as well as national legislation and existing international law, and on the revision of existing United Nations standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners so that they reflect recent advances in correctional science and best practices, with a view to making recommendations to the Commission on possible next steps.”<sup>1</sup>

Within the process based on this resolution, Member States concluded that the SMR are still valid, however they also “recognized the need for some areas of the Standard Minimum Rules to be reviewed.”<sup>2</sup>

Acknowledging the complexity involved in the complete revision of the Rules, Member States opted for the approach of restricting the substantive redrafting of the Rules to the areas and Rules most outdated. The following areas were identified “for possible consideration in order to ensure that the Rules reflected recent advances in correctional science and best practices:

- (a) Respect for prisoners’ inherent dignity and value as human beings;
- (b) Medical and health services;
- (c) Disciplinary action and punishment, including the role of medical staff, solitary confinement and reduction of diet;
- (d) Investigation of all deaths in custody, as well as any signs or allegations of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners;
- (e) Protection and special needs of vulnerable groups deprived of their liberty, taking into consideration countries in difficult circumstances;
- (f) The right of access to legal representation;
- (g) Complaints and independent inspection;
- (h) The replacement of outdated terminology;
- (i) Training of relevant staff to implement the Standard Minimum Rules.”<sup>3</sup>

Recommendations and resolutions since the beginning of the process have reiterated the consensus that “any changes to the Rules should not lower any of the existing standards”.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly resolution 65/230, “Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,” 21 December 2010, 1 April 2011, A/RES/65/230, para. 10, available at:

[www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/230](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/230), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Report on the meeting of the Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners held in Vienna from 31 January to 2 February 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1, 16 February 2012, Recommendations 4 and 5, available at: [www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1](http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 4. **See also:** Economic and Social Council Resolution on Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 20 September 2013, E/RES/2013/35, OP 10; UN General Assembly Resolution on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or

## A. Key dates in the revision process

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### (1) 2010: UN General Assembly Resolution

The UN General Assembly Resolution 65/320 requested the establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental expert group “to exchange information on best practices, as well as national legislation and existing international law, and on the revision of existing United Nations standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners so that they reflect recent advances in correctional science and best practices, with a view to making recommendations to the Commission on possible next steps.”<sup>5</sup>

### (2) 2011: Preparatory expert meetings

Prior to the first intergovernmental expert group meeting (IEGM), two preparatory meetings were organised by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in Santo Domingo (August 2011) and in Vienna (October 2011). The outcomes from the two meetings were collated by the Justice Section of the UNODC in a “Background Note.”<sup>6</sup>

The Note included four options for approaching a revision of the Rules, including “restricting the substantive redrafting of the Rules to an essential minimum,” in view of the complexities involved in a complete restructure and substantive redrafting of the Rules. This approach was adopted by the first IEGM in Vienna in February 2012.

### (3) February 2012: First intergovernmental expert group meeting, Vienna

The first intergovernmental expert group meeting (IEGM) was held in Vienna from 31 January to 2 February 2012 and attended by 143 representatives from 52 States.<sup>7</sup> The UNODC Background Note (see above) formed the basis of discussions.

The report of the IEGM<sup>8</sup> was submitted to the 21st session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Crime Commission) and “recognized the need for some areas of the Standard Minimum Rules to be reviewed,”<sup>9</sup> expressed the “consensus” of delegates that “any changes to the Rules should not lower any of the existing standards,”<sup>10</sup> recommended the continuation of its work, and identified “preliminary areas for possible consideration in order to ensure that the Rules reflected recent advances in correctional science and best practices.”<sup>11</sup>

### (4) April 2012: UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Crime Commission)

Based on the recommendations of the IEGM in Vienna, Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Thailand submitted a draft resolution to the 21st session of Crime Commission held from 23 to 27 April 2012 in Vienna. The plenary of the Crime Commission adopted the Resolution “Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of

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degrading treatment or punishment, 22 October 2013, A/C.3/68/L.33, 32 bis; Human Rights Council Resolution on human rights in the administration of justice, 23 September 2013, A/HRC/24/L.28, OP 16; Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Resolution on Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, 25 April 2013, E/CN.15/2013/L.22/Rev.1, OP 10 (endorsed by ECOSOC, 20 September 2013, E/RES/2013/35 and subsequently endorsed by UN General Assembly); Report and recommendations of the Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in Buenos Aires, 13 December 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/4, Para.4; UN General Assembly Resolution, 20 December 2012 A/RES/67/188, OP 5; Economic and Social Council Resolution, 10 August 2012, E/RES/2012/13, OP 5; Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Resolution, UN Doc. E/CN.15/2012/L.4/Rev.2, 24 April 2012, OP 5.

<sup>5</sup> UN General Assembly resolution 65/230, “Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,” 21 December 2010, 1 April 2011, UN Doc. A/RES/65/230, 1 April 2011, para. 10. Available at:

[www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/230](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/230), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>6</sup> “Background note: Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting on the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, Vienna, 31 January-2 February 2012.” Available at [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/AGMs/Background\\_note.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/AGMs/Background_note.pdf), accessed 28 May 2012.

<sup>7</sup> For the full list see Report on the meeting of the Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners held in Vienna from 31 January to 2 February 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1, 16 February 2012, para. 9, available at: [www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1](http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/1), accessed 28 May 2012.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Recommendation 4.

<sup>11</sup> See areas identified on page 1.

Prisoners”,<sup>12</sup> sponsored by Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Thailand and co-sponsored by 12 other States.<sup>13</sup>

It took note and repeated *verbatim* the list of preliminary areas as identified by the IEGM for possible consideration (as quoted above) and underscored “that the requirements and needs of prisoners with disabilities should be duly considered, as applicable, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.” (OP7)

The Resolution extended the mandate of the expert group, with a view to reporting to the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the Crime Commission (OP8) and invited Member States to actively participate (OP9). It also reiterated the important role of the UN network, IGOs and NGOs in the dissemination, promotion and practical application of the SMR, in accordance with the procedures for the effective implementation of the SMR (OP16).

Following its adoption by the Crime Commission, the resolution was endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 10 August 2012 (E/RES/2012/13) and adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 December 2012 (A/RES/67/188).

### **(5) December 2012: Second inter-governmental expert group meeting, Buenos Aires**

The second inter-governmental expert meeting took place from 11 to 13 December 2012 in Buenos Aires, based on a Working Paper<sup>14</sup> prepared by the UNODC Secretariat which examined in detail the developments in relevant international law and standards.

Fifty contributions were submitted ahead of the IEGM from 41 Member States and one non-Member State with observer status with the UN, and a compilation was provided by the UNODC Secretariat.<sup>15</sup> Submissions to the IEGM also included a paper by the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture,<sup>16</sup> the “Summary of an Expert Meeting at the University of Essex on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners Review”,<sup>17</sup> (so-called ‘Essex paper’)<sup>18</sup> and other submissions by non-governmental organisations.<sup>19</sup>

The meeting was attended by 76 representatives from 28 States. Other participants included the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture, the Council of Europe, representatives of the institutes of the UN crime prevention and criminal justice programme network, independent experts and NGOs with ECOSOC status.

The Expert Group submitted its report and recommendations to the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the Crime Commission held in April 2013.<sup>20</sup> It recommended an extension of its mandate, or a referral to a drafting group of Member States (para. 3). The Expert Group further recommended that the Crime Commission “request the Secretariat to prepare an on-going consolidated text of the Rules for discussion at a further

<sup>12</sup> “Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners”, UN Doc. E/CN.15/2012/L.4/Rev.2, 24 April 2012. Available at: [www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.15/2012/L.4/Rev.2](http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.15/2012/L.4/Rev.2), accessed 23 March 2014. Hereinafter reference will be made to the resolutions Operational Paragraphs (OP) within the text.

<sup>13</sup> Albania, Chile, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Lebanon, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa and Uruguay.

<sup>14</sup> Working paper prepared by the Secretariat, 6 November 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/2, [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E-V1257278.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E-V1257278.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Summaries of replies from Member States to the Notes Verbaux of 8 March 2011 and 11 September 2012, 30 November 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/CRP.1, [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/IEGM-SMR\\_II\\_CRP\\_prepared\\_by\\_the\\_Secretariat.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/IEGM-SMR_II_CRP_prepared_by_the_Secretariat.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>16</sup> UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/INF/3, 26 November 2012, [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/SPT-INF-3.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/SPT-INF-3.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>17</sup> UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/NGO/1, 21 November 2012, available in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian; [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/NGO-1\\_PRI-ESSEXUNI.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/NGO-1_PRI-ESSEXUNI.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Report on the meeting of the Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners held in Buenos Aires from 11 to 13 December 2012, 27 December 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/4, Para. 32, available at: [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E.version.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E.version.pdf), accessed 22 March 2014. **See also** the Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 25 July 2013, E/RES/2013/35, footnote 19, available at [www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/ECOSOC-Res-2010-20/ECOSOC-Res-Dec-2013/E\\_RES\\_2013\\_35.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/ECOSOC-Res-2010-20/ECOSOC-Res-Dec-2013/E_RES_2013_35.pdf), accessed 24 March 2014.

<sup>19</sup> These include additional submissions of the NGOs undersigning this Joint Briefing: Friends World Committee for Consultation and Penal Reform International, Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union; see “Other submissions” at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings5.html#\\_ftn3](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings5.html#_ftn3), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Report on the meeting of the Expert Group on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners held in Buenos Aires from 11 to 13 December 2012, 27 December 2012, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2012/4, [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E.version.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/E.version.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

meeting to continue the revision process” (para. 5).

The Expert Group report identified for consideration issues and rules for the revision of the SMR, following the list of areas identified by the first IEGM (see above in Introduction) and took note of various contributions including from Member States, the summary of the expert meeting on the review of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners held at the University of Essex, and NGO submissions.

The IEGM made substantive progress in identifying the Rules, issues and elements for further consideration, and commended the Working Paper prepared by the Secretariat as having, to a large extent, “captured the issues and identified the rules to be considered for a comprehensive revision under each area” (para. 6).

## **(6) UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice - April 2013**

Based on the recommendations of the IEGM in Buenos Aires, a draft resolution was submitted by Argentina, Brazil and Thailand to the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the Crime Commission from 23 to 26 April 2013 in Vienna. The Committee of the Whole of the Crime Commission adopted the Resolution “Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners” on 26 April.<sup>21</sup> It was (co-)sponsored by Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Latvia, Mexico, Philippines, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand and Uruguay.

The Resolution took into consideration the recommendations of the IEGM in Buenos Aires and reiterated the nine areas identified for revision. It extended the mandate of the Expert Group, with a view to reporting to the 23rd session of the Crime Commission (OP6).

Member States were invited to continue engagement in the revision process, by submitting to the UNODC Secretariat proposals for revision in the nine areas identified for revision by 30 September 2013, and by actively participating in the next meeting of the Expert Group. Civil society and relevant UN bodies were also invited to contribute to the process (OP8). The UNODC Secretariat was requested to prepare a working paper integrating the inputs from Member States, for consideration at the next Expert Group meeting (OP9).

## **(7) March 2014: Third intergovernmental expert group meeting, Vienna**

On 25-28 March 2014 the third intergovernmental expert group meeting (IEGM) on the revision of the Standard Minimum Rules will be held in Vienna.

The meeting is envisaged to start drafting a proposal on revised text for the nine areas identified for revision (see above), based on the proposals submitted by Member States until 30 September 2013. As requested by virtue of the last resolution of the Crime Commission,<sup>22</sup> the 33 individual and joint proposals for revision submitted by 39 Member States on the nine areas identified have been compiled by the UNODC Secretariat in a Working paper.<sup>23</sup>

This working paper “consists of the current version of the Standard Minimum Rules, into which all submissions received from Member States have been incorporated alongside the issues and the rules identified for revision by the second meeting of the Expert Group.”

In addition to Member States, various bodies from intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) made submissions. On 9 August 2013, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, Juan Méndez, issued a report on the SMR review to the UN General Assembly.<sup>24</sup> The Special Rapporteur stated that the revision process is “an opportunity to enhance understanding of the scope and nature of the prohibition against torture and

<sup>21</sup> “Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners”, UN Doc. E/CN.15/2013/L.22/Rev.1, 25 April 2013. Available at: [www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ\\_session22/E2013\\_30\\_ECN152013\\_AUV.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ_session22/E2013_30_ECN152013_AUV.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014, p21.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Working paper prepared by the Secretariat for the third Expert Group Meeting, UN Doc. UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2014/CRP.1, 29 November 2013, Available at: [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/IEGM\\_Brazil\\_Jan\\_2014/UNODCCCCPCJEG62014-CRP1-E-V1388548.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/IEGM_Brazil_Jan_2014/UNODCCCCPCJEG62014-CRP1-E-V1388548.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>24</sup> Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, UN Doc A/68/295, 9 August 2013, available at [www.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SRT-report.pdf](http://www.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/SRT-report.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

other ill-treatment, the contexts and consequences in which they occur and effective measures to prevent them.”

Other intergovernmental bodies that made submissions include the Subcommittee for the Prevention of Torture, Committee against Torture, the World Health Organization, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Various submissions were also made by NGOs.

All submissions are available on the UNODC website along with other meeting documentation for the forthcoming Expert Group meeting at: [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings6.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings6.html)

### **(8) Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> IEGM Meeting**

The IEGM in Vienna will report to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Crime Commission session to be held from 12 to 16 May 2014. Should the Expert Group not complete negotiations on revisions to the SMR, or not finish discussions on all areas identified for possible revision, the Crime Commission may decide to further extend the mandate of the IEGM to complete the process in a fourth IEGM, subject to availability of the required budgetary resources.

## **B. Civil society**

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Throughout the process, a group of NGOs has argued, including in several joint statements,<sup>25</sup> that while the SMR still hold value today, in the nearly 60 years since their adoption, there have been major developments in human rights and criminal justice, and these have resulted in what must now be recognised as unacceptable flaws and gaps in a modern set of standards. This group of NGOs welcomes the progress made so far in the process of revision, as they believe the Rules should not pass through a process of review without being amended and supplemented at least in its most outdated areas.

NGOs have argued that the flaws and gaps of the SMR are problematic given that they are often referred to as a primary source of standards relating to treatment in detention. In many countries, the SMR are the only standards available to prisoners regarding their treatment in detention and in other countries the Rules are used as the “blueprint” for national prison rules.

Moreover, the SMR are one of the key frameworks used by national, regional and international monitoring and inspection mechanisms in assessing the treatment of prisoners. It is therefore crucial that this framework is consistent with current standards of human rights and criminal justice.

Concrete suggestions for a possible revised text of the Rules in the key areas identified at the first IEGM were discussed by 28 experts at a meeting at the University of Essex, convened on 3 and 4 October 2012. The ‘Summary of outcomes’ (known as the ‘Essex Paper’) from this meeting of independent experts was submitted to the UN in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Russian ahead of the IEGM in Buenos Aires. The Essex Paper seeks to identify current international norms and standards in the areas proposed for possible reform and any outdated language and gaps in the SMR as a result of the international legal developments that have taken place since their adoption in 1955. The submission recommends specific changes to the Rules and elaborates on the rationale behind each of them. It reiterates the commitment made in the resolution that any changes must not lower existing standards.

The Essex Group of Experts reconvened on 12 – 13 September 2013 to discuss the developments in the process of the revision of the SMR arising from the December 2012 IEGM in Buenos Aires and the draft

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<sup>25</sup> See Joint Statement submitted by Amnesty International (AI), Conectas Direitos Humanos, the Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos y Justicia de Género, the Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) and Penal Reform International (PRI), non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, E/CN.15/2012/NGO/4, 20 April 2012, available at: [www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.15/2012/NGO/4](http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.15/2012/NGO/4), accessed 28 May 2012; Joint oral NGO statement to the Crime Commission on 27 April 2012, available at: [www.penalreform.org/resource/joint-ngo-statement-crime-commission-april-2012-review/](http://www.penalreform.org/resource/joint-ngo-statement-crime-commission-april-2012-review/), accessed 23 March 2014. See also oral statement to the 25th Session of the UN Human Rights Council submitted by Penal Reform International American Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International, Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales, Conectas, the International Commission of Jurists, and the International Commission of Catholic Prison Pastoral Care, available at: [www.penalreform.org/resource/statement-human-rights-council-march-2014-revision-process](http://www.penalreform.org/resource/statement-human-rights-council-march-2014-revision-process), accessed 23 March 2014.

resolution adopted by the Crime Commission in April. A second report was submitted to the third IEGM as a supplement to its first paper from 2012 with the view to facilitate discussion on the issues they considered as requiring further attention in order to enable full discussion at the IEGM.<sup>26</sup>

Further recommendations to the Expert Group of Experts were submitted to the second and third intergovernmental expert group meetings from within this group of NGOs by Friends World Committee for Consultation and Penal Reform International, Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) and Conectas Direitos Humanos.<sup>27</sup>

It should be noted that the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners were originally adopted by the League of Nations in 1934. In 1949 a decision was taken by the then newly-established UN to revise them, and the process was completed in 1955, concluding – in other words - the first revision of the SMR.

NGOs have also flagged the precedent of an amendment to the SMR in 1977, through ECOSOC resolution 2076 (LXII). This resolution amended Section E (Rule 95) to the SMR,<sup>28</sup> broadly speaking extending their scope by providing for the applicability of the Rules to persons arrested or imprisoned without charge. The 1977 resolution is of particular interest as it demonstrates that targeted changes and amendments to the Rules are feasible and effective as a method of updating them.

With regard to claims, made by some states during discussions, that in the face of economic crises it is not the time to redraft the Rules, NGOs reiterated that the 2010 UN General Assembly resolution on which the process is based explicitly comprehends a progressive assignment. They also flagged that if the SMR still hold value today, some sixty years later; it is because the drafters of the current Standard Minimum Rules were visionary and long-sighted, in times which were no less difficult economically and politically between 1949 and 1955.

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<sup>26</sup> Second Report of Essex Expert Group on the Review of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, Prepared by Penal Reform International / Essex University, UNODC/CCPCJ/EG.6/2014/NGO.7, 20 March 2014, [www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/PRI\\_ESSEX-2nd-paper.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/EGM-Uploads/PRI_ESSEX-2nd-paper.pdf), accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>27</sup> See "Other submissions" at [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings5.html#\\_ftn3](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings5.html#_ftn3) for 2<sup>nd</sup> IEGM and [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings6.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/justice-and-prison-reform/expert-group-meetings6.html) for 3<sup>rd</sup> IEGM, accessed 23 March 2014.

<sup>28</sup> Adopted in 1977 by ECOSOC Res. 2076 (LXII), 13 May 1977, following a recommendation by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control at its Fourth Session.