

## **Memorandum of Understanding between the UK's National Preventive Mechanism and the Human Rights Implementation Centre**

### **Parties**

1. The UK's National Preventive Mechanism is made up of 18 organisations which monitor places of detention across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The NPM was designated on 31 March 2009 in accordance with the UK's obligations as a State Party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). At the same time, HM Inspectorate of Prisons was appointed as the NPM's coordinating body.

2. The Human Rights Implementation Centre (HRIC) at the University of Bristol is based in the Law School and is an independent academic institution providing advice and expertise on a range of human rights issues including OPCAT.

### **Purpose**

3. From 2009 to 2012, HRIC has provided the NPM with valuable ad hoc support and assistance. This has included maintaining a database of NPM members; organising, supporting and/or hosting NPM business meetings and thematic seminars; and preparing briefings regarding the effective implementation of OPCAT for the benefit of NPM members. The NPM and HRIC wish to continue with this mutually beneficial relationship: the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to place this relationship on a more formal and transparent footing.

### **Relationship between the parties**

4. The NPM may request, or HRIC may offer, assistance in the coordination and operation of the NPM. Assistance may take the form of, but is not limited to:

- continuing to maintain and host a database of the members of the UK NPM, based on contributions from the members themselves and research carried out by HRIC;
- supporting meetings, workshops or seminars of the NPM by, for example, organising or hosting the events or contributing to the agenda;
- providing policy and academic papers on topics of relevance to the NPM's work; and
- facilitating links between the UK NPM and other NPMs around the world and with other relevant bodies.

5. This collaboration would enable HRIC to:

- use its contacts to facilitate exchanges between the members of the UK NPM, either individually or collectively, with those in other parts of the world;
- on the request of individual members of the NPM, carry out research or provide advice;
- fit this within its wider strategy to continue to provide advice on OPCAT;
- maintain the database of the NPM members; and
- continue to ensure that the research the Centre carries out has an impact on the ground.

### **Independence and conflicts of interest**

6. For the avoidance of doubt, both the NPM (collectively and severally) and HRIC remain independent entities. In particular, the NPM remains wholly responsible for determining its own practices as regards the coordination and execution of its activities, including its monitoring activities and other responsibilities under OPCAT.

7. Neither the NPM or HRIC or its members shall participate, or be asked to participate, in any activity or in any other fashion which might cause a reasonable observer to believe there

to be a conflict of interest between their personal and/or professional interests and/or responsibilities as a result of this.

### **Confidentiality**

8. Meetings of, and correspondence between, NPM members allows members to discuss best practice in monitoring detention, challenges encountered, findings not yet published and future plans. Discussions held and information shared at meetings or in correspondence of NPM members is confidential to those members unless otherwise stated (and may be subject to freedom of information legislation). HRIC undertakes not to divulge confidential information obtained at NPM events unless with the express consent of the NPM.

### **Point of contact**

9. On behalf of the NPM, the NPM Coordinator will act as the primary point of contact with HRIC. The Coordinator will report, in the first instance, to the NPM Steering Group and ultimately to all NPM members. On behalf of HRIC, Rachel Murray, Director, will act as the primary point of contact with the NPM.


### **Funding**

10. No commitment is made by either party regarding funding. In the event of any joint activities, the two parties will clarify and agree upon their own expectations of the events, areas of respective responsibility, financial and resource commitments, etc at the outset (it being understood that changes may be necessary across the life of a particular collaborative activity).

### **Reviewing the MoU**

11. The MoU may be reviewed at least once a year and at any time by the request of either party.

Signed



Nick Hardwick  
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons  
On behalf of the NPM



Rachel Murray  
Director, Human Rights Implementation Centre

Date: 11/06/2013

Date: 16/1/13