NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SRI LANKA

PROGRESS REPORT 2022-2025

June 2026

The Progress Report of National Preventive Mechanism 2022-2025

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

June 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE iii

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE. iv

CHAPTER 1:

National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)-Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka 1

CHAPTER 2:

NPM Visiting Mechanism-Types of Deprivation of Liberty and Institutions Subject to NPM Visits 10

CHAPTER 3:

Detention Facilities in Sri Lanka: Structure and Functioning 15

CHAPTER 5:

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) 25

RECOMMENDATIONS 31

REFERENCES.....34

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

It is with profound pleasure and a deep sense of responsibility that I present the **Progress Report of National Preventive Mechanism 2022-2025**, representing the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL). The formal designation of the HRCSL as the country's independent National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) marked a historic milestone, transitioning our work from a reactive protection model to a proactive, forward-looking preventive strategy. Operating with constitutional independence, the NPM serves as an indispensable safeguard for all persons deprived of their liberty, working systematically to bring transparency, structural accountability, and absolute respect for human dignity to every place of detention across the island.

The multi-year period covered by this report reflects a narrative of remarkable institutional resilience. The operationalization of the NPM commenced amidst unprecedented domestic economic constraints, resource limitations, and the lingering disruptions of the global COVID-19 pandemic. These compounding crises cut deep into state infrastructure, straining facility budgets and placing immense pressure on detention management. Despite these formidable challenges, the Commission remained steadfast in fulfilling its preventive mandate. Through the exceptional dedication of our specialized officers operating under the Research and Monitoring Division at the Head Office, alongside the tireless field efforts of our ten Regional Centres and three sub-offices, the NPM successfully managed to expand its national monitoring footprint, refine its field methodologies, and consolidate its institutional capacity.

Between 2022 and 2025, the NPM systematically executed an extensive series of regular, ad hoc, short-notice, and thematic inspection visits across an expansive spectrum of places of confinement. Our team maintained rigorous oversight over closed prisons, overcrowded remand centers, police holding cells, child care institutions, drug rehabilitation facilities, mental health hospitals, immigration detention centers, residential elders' homes, and military detention facilities. These comprehensive field interventions enabled the Commission to evaluate real-time living conditions, scrutinize administrative registries, and engage in confidential, direct dialogue with detainees away from institutional surveillance. This methodology allowed us to identify deep-seated systemic shortcomings and formulate evidence-based recommendations aimed directly at preventing torture and ill-treatment before they occur.

The empirical findings detailed throughout this report highlight several persistent human rights concerns that demand urgent national attention. Chief among these is the critical structural crisis of prison overcrowding, which is further exacerbated by inadequate access to timely legal representation, prolonged pretrial detention, and severe staff shortages. Furthermore, our investigations exposed significant structural vulnerabilities within child care institutions, a lack of specialized psychosocial programming, and systemic procedural deficiencies within drug rehabilitation and immigration detention networks. Concurrently, however, this report highlights numerous successful interventions driven by the NPM. Our persistent engagement has directly contributed to correcting acute infrastructural defects, upgrading basic sanitation and healthcare access, reinforcing procedural safeguards like Torture and Assault Registers, and advancing the fundamental rights of highly vulnerable populations, including women, minors, and foreign nationals.

A crowning achievement during this reporting period was the successful reaccreditation of the HRCSL with "A" Status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). This international distinction powerfully reaffirms the Commission's compliance with the Paris Principles, celebrating our institutional independence, operational autonomy, and robust preventive role in monitoring places of confinement. This international standing was matched by crucial internal advancements, most notably the successful drafting and operationalization of a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the NPM, alongside the integration of standardized monitoring checklists. These structural tools have elevated the professionalism, consistency, and objective effectiveness of our field teams, ensuring our methodologies align perfectly with international benchmarks such as the Nelson Mandela Rules, the Bangkok Rules, and the Beijing Rules.

The total eradication and prevention of torture cannot be achieved through the isolated efforts of a single oversight body. It is an expansive societal obligation that demands the collective commitment of government ministries, law enforcement agencies, judicial officers, detention administrators, civil society organizations, and the public. We therefore call upon all institutional stakeholders to approach this report not as a document of criticism, but as an actionable operational roadmap. We urge a collaborative, cross-sectoral effort to implement the recommendations contained herein, ensuring we collectively foster a national culture rooted in transparency, administrative accountability, and an absolute respect for human rights.

In closing, I extend my profound gratitude to my fellow Commissioners, especially the Focal Commissioner for the NPM and the Focal Commissioner for International Affairs, and the Secretary for their strategic leadership. I wish to express my deepest, most heartfelt appreciation to the Focal Director of the NPM / Director of Research & Monitoring, whose visionary guidance, tireless oversight, and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in driving the mechanism forward and steering the division through this challenging cycle. My sincere thanks also go out to our dedicated NPM Head Office staff, our Regional Coordinators, and the personnel within our sub-offices whose field courage forms the backbone of this mechanism.

I must also express our deep appreciation to our international development partners—most notably the Support to Justice Sector Project (JURE) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Colombo Office, the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, the Asia Pacific Forum (APF), and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT)—for providing the essential technical support, funding, and capacity-building resources that anchored our growth. Finally, I thank the state authorities and all stakeholders who cooperated transparently during our national consultations and field visits. As we look to the future, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka remains resolutely committed to sharpening the effectiveness of the National Preventive Mechanism, ensuring that every person deprived of liberty across our nation is treated with dignity, humanity, and respect.

Chairperson
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
Colombo, Sri Lanka

11th June 2026

PREFACE

The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL), in its capacity as the designated National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT), is pleased to present its Comprehensive Progress Report for the period 2022–2025. This report serves as a transparent and systematic record of our institutional journey, the milestones achieved, the deep-seated systemic challenges encountered, and our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of all persons deprived of their liberty across the island. The mandate of the NPM derives from Sri Lanka's accession to OPCAT on 5 December 2017, entering into domestic effect on 4 January 2018. By Cabinet decision, the Government of Sri Lanka formally designated the HRCSL as the country's independent NPM body, reflecting the Commission's constitutional independence and its established role as the foremost human rights oversight institution in the nation. While the general protection mandate of the HRCSL handles individual complaints and legal redress reactively, the prevention mandate operates concurrently but distinctly. It is built upon core operational pillars, including regular unannounced visits, a structural and systemic focus, forward-looking risk mitigation, holistic analysis of organizational culture, and a cooperative, dialogue-based approach with detention authorities to foster sustainable improvements before violations occur.

The legal architecture guiding our work comprises international human rights treaties and domestic legislation. At the domestic level, our authority is reinforced by the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act, No. 22 of 1994, and Sections 11(d) and 28 of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996. Furthermore, supportive operational parameters are established under Section 15(3) of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018, Section 9A of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, No. 48 of 1979 (as amended by Act No. 12 of 2022), and Section 22(7) of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Act, No. 2 of 2023. The period spanning 2022 to 2025 has been marked by deep socio-economic and political shifts in Sri Lanka. Severe domestic economic constraints and resource limitations directly impacted the daily living conditions of detainees, cutting deep into physical infrastructure and institutional capacities.

Beyond conventional prisons, our oversight revealed critical vulnerabilities across the country's child care institutions. The NPM observed that structural weaknesses, broken family structures, inadequate programming, and a lack of professional psychosocial support often undermine the rehabilitative purpose of these spaces. Most alarmingly, our field interventions identified and corrected instances where children under the age of 18 were being held in adult detention facilities in violation of juvenile justice standards. Similarly, our visits to drug rehabilitation centres highlighted systemic shortages of medical personnel and lack of confidential complaint systems, while investigations into immigration detention highlighted prolonged detentions due to the absence of a dedicated national asylum framework. To manage its vast national mandate under challenging resource constraints, the NPM implemented an integrated dual-structure model. The HRCSL Head Office NPM Team targets facilities primarily within the Western

Province, as well as parts of the Sabaragamuwa and Northwestern Provinces, while serving as the central coordinating body, while ten HRCSL Regional Centres execute regular monitoring and timely interventions across all other provinces.

The mechanism has been successfully prepared and operationalized under a standardized framework within its Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), mapping out four distinct, specialized visit methodologies: regular pre-planned visits to track long-term compliance; unannounced ad hoc visits initiated in response to emerging risk patterns; short-notice semi-scheduled visits optimized for operational flexibility; and cross-institutional thematic visits focusing on specialized practices such as solitary confinement, the treatment of foreign national prisoners, and conditions inside military detention facilities. Our assessments during these field interventions are anchored firmly in internationally accepted minimum standards, evaluating conditions against the Nelson Mandela Rules for general prisoner treatment, the Bangkok Rules for gender-sensitive health and reproductive needs of women prisoners, and the Beijing Rules for juvenile justice. Additionally, the NPM has focused heavily on tracking safeguards like Torture and Assault Registers, proper admission screening, and proper body-check procedures. On the global stage, the NPM's credibility has been significantly bolstered through active engagement. Notably, in 2022, the HRCSL submitted official observations and recommendations regarding Draft General Comment No. 1 under Article 4 of OPCAT to the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT). The subsequent formal adoption of General Comment No. 1 by the SPT in 2024 has expanded our monitoring obligations, reinforcing our access to any location where persons are not permitted to leave freely by order or acquiescence of public authorities.

As we move beyond 2025, the NPM will aggressively pursue the path toward institutional consolidation and systemic reform. Our forward-looking strategy focuses on translating our field data into long-term legislative corrections. The core recommendations outlined at the conclusion of this report serve as our primary operational roadmap, driving our ongoing efforts to eradicate the practice of detaining minors inside adult custodial facilities under any circumstances, upgrade aging infrastructure to fulfill baseline parameters for human dignity regarding sanitation and water purity, implement standardized checklists and centralized digital data systems to track rehabilitation outcomes, and ensure prompt, transparent administrative action on recommendations. The operational resilience of the NPM throughout this difficult multi-year window relies on the vital contributions of our domestic and international allies. We must explicitly recognize the Support to Justice Sector Project (JURE) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Colombo Office, which provided the essential financial and structural support that originally initiated NPM field operations in 2022 and funded our exposure to regional best practices through our study visit to the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal (NHRCN) in 2023. We also appreciate the Government of Sri Lanka for subsequently allocating the necessary recurrent funding to secure the uninterrupted continuation and financial sustainability of our mechanism.

We express deep gratitude to the specialized NPM Team of the HRCSL under the Research and Monitoring Division, as well as the personnel across the ten Regional Centres and three sub-offices, for their dedication and unwavering commitment under trying field conditions. We extend a special note of thanks to our international partners, including the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, the Asia Pacific Forum (APF), and the

Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), for providing the crucial technical support, expertise, and capacity-building resources that significantly strengthened our oversight capabilities throughout this cycle. Finally, we thank all government stakeholders for participating in our landmark National Consultation in 2023 and working towards a unified national approach to torture prevention. It is our profound hope that this Progress Report serves as a practical, evidence-based instrument for legislative reform, judicial oversight, and administrative accountability across Sri Lanka.

CHAPTER 1
National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)
Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

1. Introduction

Sri Lanka's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), established within the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL), serves as a central pillar of the country's efforts to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. The mandate of the NPM derives from Sri Lanka's accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) on 5 December 2017, which entered into domestic effect on 4 January 2018.[1]

Under OPCAT, each State Party is required to designate an independent national body to carry out regular, systematic visits to all places where persons are deprived of their liberty. In fulfilment of this obligation, the Government of Sri Lanka formally designated the HRCSL as the country's NPM by Cabinet decision in 2017. This designation reflects the Commission's constitutional independence and its established role as the foremost human rights oversight institution in Sri Lanka.

2. International Framework for Torture Prevention

The right to be free from torture and from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment constitutes one of the most fundamental and universally recognised guarantees in international human rights law. This prohibition is absolute in character, permitting no derogation even in circumstances of declared states of emergency, armed conflict, or invoked national security imperatives. International human rights norms affirm the core entitlements of all persons deprived of their liberty, encompassing the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the right to equality before the law, humane treatment during detention, and access to education, healthcare, and rehabilitation programmes.

The global architecture for torture prevention is anchored in the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT),[2]

[1] Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, GA Res 57/199, UN Doc A/RES/57/199 (18 December 2002, adopted; entered into force 22 June 2006).

[2] Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, GA Res 39/46, UN Doc A/RES/39/46 (10 December 1984, adopted; entered into force 26 June 1987).

adopted in 1984, which requires State Parties to take comprehensive legislative, administrative, judicial, and other measures to prevent, investigate, and prosecute acts of torture. To strengthen the preventive dimension of UNCAT, the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) was adopted in 2002 and entered into force in 2006.

OPCAT establishes a complementary dual-level preventive system: international oversight exercised by the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT), and domestic oversight by National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs).[3] The SPT is empowered to conduct visits to all places of detention in OPCAT member states and to provide guidance to strengthen national monitoring frameworks. The combined and mutually reinforcing work of the SPT and NPMs aims to improve detention safeguards, enhance institutional transparency, and reduce the risk of torture and ill-treatment across all forms of deprivation of liberty.

3. Legal Framework Governing the National Preventive Mechanism

The NPM in Sri Lanka operates within a comprehensive legal framework comprising international human rights treaties, domestic legislation, and supportive statutory provisions. Together, these instruments provide the authority, scope, and operational basis for torture prevention and the independent oversight of all places where persons are deprived of their liberty. This framework is essential to ensuring that the functions of the NPM remain aligned with global human rights standards established under the United Nations system.

3.1 International Legal Instruments

The following international legal instruments constitute the primary normative foundation for the NPM's mandate:

(a) **UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT)**

Sri Lanka acceded to UNCAT in 1994, thereby undertaking to adopt effective legislative, administrative, judicial, and other measures to prevent acts of torture within its jurisdiction. UNCAT obliges State Parties to ensure the prompt and impartial investigation of torture, prosecute alleged perpetrators, and provide adequate redress to victims.

(b) **Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)**

[3] United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture (SPT), _Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture‘ OHCHR https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/spt accessed 18 November 2025.

Sri Lanka ratified OPCAT in 2017. The Protocol establishes a system of regular, preventive visits to places of deprivation of liberty by independent international and national bodies. Pursuant to Article 3 of OPCAT, Sri Lanka is required to establish, designate, or maintain a National Preventive Mechanism for the prevention of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment at the domestic level.

3.2 Other International Human Rights Treaties

The following international human rights treaties reinforce Sri Lanka's obligations towards persons deprived of liberty, each containing specific protections including prohibitions against torture, ill-treatment, and arbitrary detention:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)[4]
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)[5]
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)[6]

3.3 International Standards Relevant to Detention Monitoring

While the instruments below do not constitute legally binding treaty obligations, they represent internationally accepted minimum standards that NPMs apply when assessing conditions of detention. They operationalise the obligations established under UNCAT and guide States in translating human rights principles into detention practice.

a. The Nelson Mandela Rules (2015) - UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners[7]

The Mandela Rules set out the most widely accepted global benchmarks for the humane treatment of persons deprived of their liberty. They establish clear standards on dignity and respect, adequate accommodation, sanitation, and access to quality healthcare. The Rules regulate disciplinary measures, the use of restraints emphasising that such measures must never constitute torture or ill-treatment and guarantee prisoners' rights to legal representation and meaningful contact with family. Special protections are accorded to vulnerable groups, including women, children, and persons with

[4] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), GA Res 2200A (XXI), UN Doc A/RES/2200A(XXI) (16 December 1966, adopted; entered into force 23 March 1976).

[5] Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), GA Res 44/25, UN Doc A/RES/44/25 (20 November 1989, adopted; entered into force 2 September 1990).

[6] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), GA Res 61/106, UN Doc A/RES/61/106 (13 December 2006, adopted; entered into force 3 May 2008).

[7] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)* (ebook, March 2016) UNODC.

disabilities. The Mandela Rules serve as a central reference framework for both the NPM and the SPT when assessing detention conditions, identifying systemic risks, and preventing torture.

b. The Bangkok Rules (2010) - UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders[8]

The Bangkok Rules establish internationally recognised standards addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women in detention. They require States to provide gender-sensitive health services, including reproductive healthcare, and emphasise protection from all forms of violence, harassment, and abuse in custodial settings. Particular attention is directed to the needs of pregnant women and those who have given birth, as well as to the welfare of children who accompany their mothers in detention. The Rules also encourage the use of non-custodial alternatives to imprisonment for women offenders. They serve as the primary framework guiding NPM inspections of women's detention facilities.

c. The Beijing Rules (1985) - UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice[9]

The Beijing Rules establish internationally accepted minimum standards for the treatment of children in conflict with the law, placing strong emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration rather than punitive responses. All procedures and safeguards must be age-appropriate and consistent with the dignity and developmental needs of the child. The Rules prohibit harsh disciplinary measures, mandate the separation of children from adults in detention, and guarantee access to education, healthcare, and regular family contact. NPMs rely on these Rules when monitoring juvenile justice institutions, children's detention centres, and rehabilitation homes.

[8] United Nations, *United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)* (adopted 21 December 2010, UN GA Res 65/229, annex) (ebook, March 2015) UNODC.

[9] United Nations, United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (‖Beijing Rules‖) GA Res 40/33, UN GAOR, 40th sess, Supp No 53, UN Doc A/40/53, annex (29 November 1985).

d. The Istanbul Protocol (2022) - Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[10]

The Istanbul Protocol establishes internationally recognised standards for the medical and legal documentation of torture. It provides detailed guidance on conducting independent and impartial examinations of alleged victims, including standards for forensic medical evaluations, psychological assessments, and the collection of credible evidence. For NPMs, the Protocol is essential in identifying signs of torture and ill-treatment during visits to places of detention, ensuring that allegations are documented in accordance with international standards. It also strengthens accountability by supporting effective investigations and facilitating access to justice for victims.

3.4 National Legal Framework

a. Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act, No. 22 of 1994

This Act gives domestic legislative effect to Sri Lanka's obligations under UNCAT. It criminalises torture and prescribes penalties for public officers found guilty of committing such acts.[11]

b. Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996

Sections 11(d) and 28 of this Act empower the HRCSL to monitor places of deprivation of liberty and to advise the Government on measures to promote and protect human rights.[12]

[10] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (2004) https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/policy-and-methodological-publications/istanbul-protocol-manual-effective-0 accessed 17 November 2026.

[11] Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act, No. 22 of 1994 <https://www.lawnet.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/Law%20Site/4-stats_1956_2006/set5/1994Y0V0C22A.html> accessed 17 November 2025.

[12] Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996< https://www.hrcsl.lk/about/hrcsl-act/> accessed 17 November 2025.

3.5 Supportive Legislation

a. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018[13]

Section 15(3) of the Act provides that the HRCSL shall have access to places where persons are deprived of their liberty.

b. Prevention of Terrorism Act, No. 48 of 1979 (as amended by Act No. 12 of 2022)[14]

Section 9A of the Act requires that any detention under Section 9 be communicated to the HRCSL pursuant to Section 28 of the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act. This provision strengthens procedural safeguards and transparency by mandating notification and access for the HRCSL to monitor counter-terrorism-related detention.

c. Bureau of Rehabilitation Act, No. 2 of 2023[15]

Section 22(7) of the Act empowers the HRCSL to visit any rehabilitation centre to ensure that the rights of persons undergoing rehabilitation are protected.

4. HRCSL Mandate as the National Preventive Mechanism

4.1 NPM staff must understand the distinction between the preventive mandate of the NPM and the general protection mandate of the HRCSL. These two mandates operate concurrently and complement each other; however, they remain distinct in character and serve different institutional purposes.

4.2 The key features of the prevention mandate are as follows:

(a) Regular, unannounced visits - The NPM conducts systematic and largely unannounced visits to all places of deprivation of liberty across the country.

(b) Systemic focus -The NPM aims to identify and address structural and procedural issues that may create conditions conducive to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

(c) Dialogue-based approach - The NPM engages with detention authorities in a cooperative and non-adversarial manner, with the aim of achieving meaningful and sustainable improvements in detention conditions.

[13] *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018* (Sri Lanka), Gazette, Suppl to Part II, 23 March 2018, 05-2018 E <https://www.srilankalaw.lk/gazette/2018_pdf/05-2018_E.pdf> accessed 17 November 2025.

[14] Prevention of Terrorism Act, No. 48 of 1979 as amended by Act, No. 12 of 2022: Section 9A of the Act < https://www.vertic.org/media/National%20Legislation/Sri%20Lanka/LK_Prevention_of_Terrorism_(Temp_Provisions).pdf> accessed 17 November 2025.

[15] *Bureau of Rehabilitation Act, No. 2 of 2023* (Sri Lanka), Parliament Bill / Act, 6280 <https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6280.pdf> accessed 17 November 2025.

(d) Forward-looking orientation - The emphasis of the NPM's work is on identifying risks and recommending preventive measures before violations occur, rather than responding to violations after the fact.

(e) Holistic analysis - NPM staff analyse relevant laws, institutional practices, and organisational cultures that may contribute to torture or ill-treatment. The Government is expected to implement NPM recommendations and reform measures to protect the rights of all detainees and ensure they are treated with dignity and without discrimination.

4.3 The protection mandate of the HRCSL includes the following key features:

(a) Complaint handling and investigations - The HRCSL receives and investigates individual complaints alleging violations of fundamental rights and, in that context, may visit a place of detention to investigate a specific alleged violation.

(b) Legal redress and advocacy - By visiting places of deprivation of liberty where victims are alleged to be subjected to torture or ill-treatment, the HRCSL assists victims in seeking justice through recommendations, including on compensation or prosecution.

(c) Policy influence - Where patterns of violations are identified, the HRCSL may issue general guidelines and recommendations to relevant State authorities with a view to strengthening human rights protections at the systemic level.

5. Role of the NPM within the HRCSL

As Sri Lanka's designated National Preventive Mechanism under OPCAT, the HRCSL plays a central role in preventing torture and safeguarding the rights of persons deprived of their liberty. Through its NPM mandate, the Commission conducts regular, systematic, and largely unannounced visits to all places of detention and care throughout the country. These visits enable the Commission to monitor the treatment of detainees, identify risks and vulnerabilities, and assess compliance with domestic and international human rights obligations.

5.1 Monitoring and Compliance Assessment

In carrying out its NPM functions, the HRCSL evaluates the extent to which authorities uphold key human rights guarantees enshrined in:

- The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- The Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act, No. 22 of 1994
- The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996

- Relevant international standards, including the Mandela Rules, the Bangkok Rules, and the Beijing Rules

These assessments examine conditions of detention, procedural safeguards, access to legal and medical assistance, treatment of vulnerable groups, and the overall environment in which detainees are held. The NPM also reviews compliance with safeguards against torture, including proper record-keeping, notification procedures, and access to family members, legal counsel, and independent oversight bodies.

5.2 Recommendations and Systemic Reforms

Following each visit, the NPM prepares a set of recommendations — confidential or public depending on the context — which are shared with the relevant authorities and institutions. These recommendations aim to:

- Address identified shortcomings or emerging risks of ill-treatment
- Strengthen institutional practices and accountability mechanisms
- Improve detention conditions and ensure compliance with human rights norms
- Promote rehabilitative, humane, and rights-respecting approaches to detention management

The HRCSL also undertakes follow-up activities with State institutions to verify the implementation of recommendations, thereby contributing to sustained, long-term systemic improvements.

5.3 Contribution to National and International Credibility

The independent and impartial work of the NPM enhances Sri Lanka's standing at the regional and international levels. By demonstrating a commitment to transparent, accountable oversight and adherence to global human rights standards, Sri Lanka strengthens its credibility before the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT), the Human Rights Council, treaty monitoring bodies, and regional human rights forums. These efforts also reinforce public confidence in the State's willingness to protect the rights and dignity of detained individuals.

5.4 Operational Structure

The NPM functions through an integrated dual-structure model designed to ensure comprehensive national coverage of all detention facilities:

- The HRCSL Head Office NPM Team conducts visits primarily within the Western Province and serves as the central coordinating body for the mechanism nationwide.
- The ten HRCSL Regional Centres monitor detention and care facilities in all other provinces.

This integrated structure enables regular monitoring, timely interventions, and consistent oversight across the country.

5.5 Institutional Support and Sustainability

Although the operationalisation of the NPM was initially delayed due to resource constraints, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided critical financial support that enabled the HRCSL to initiate NPM activities in 2022, funding one year of NPM-related operational expenses. This support was instrumental in establishing the national visiting mechanism. The Government of Sri Lanka subsequently allocated sufficient recurrent funding to ensure the uninterrupted continuation of NPM operations. This sustained institutional commitment has strengthened the HRCSL's capacity to prevent torture, promote accountability, and uphold the rights of persons deprived of liberty.

6. Initial Implementation of the NPM

The HRCSL has undertaken several key initiatives to operationalise and strengthen the NPM in line with its mandate to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. These efforts encompass national-level coordination, international exposure, and the capacity development of staff.

6.1 National Consultation on the NPM (December 2023)

A National Consultation on the NPM was convened in December 2023, building upon earlier stakeholder engagement efforts. The consultation aimed to enhance awareness, coordination, and collaboration among key State institutions responsible for places of detention. It provided a structured platform for stakeholders — including representatives from the Sri Lanka Police, Department of Prisons, Department of Probation and Child Care Services, Department of Social Services, and the Bureau of Rehabilitation — to discuss challenges and emerging best practices in the implementation of the NPM mandate. The consultation contributed to strengthening institutional cooperation and advancing a unified national approach to the prevention of torture and ill-treatment.

6.2 Study Visit to Nepal (2023)

In 2023, with financial support from the UNDP under the Justice Sector Support Project (JURE), the HRCSL undertook a study visit to Nepal to examine best practices adopted by National Human Rights Institutions in monitoring places of detention. Nepal was selected as a suitable destination on account of its comparable context to Sri Lanka in terms of geographic scale, population size, and prison demographics. The HRCSL formally engaged with the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal (NHRCN), which responded positively and hosted the delegation. Four HRCSL officers participated in the study visit, which yielded valuable insights into effective monitoring methodologies, institutional coordination, and practical approaches to safeguarding the rights of persons deprived of liberty.

6.3 Capacity Building Initiatives

Strengthening the technical capacity of NPM staff has been identified as a key institutional priority. Under the JURE project, a series of training programmes was conducted for both Head Office and Regional Centre staff:

First Training Programme (13 November 2023): This programme focused on building foundational understanding of the NPM framework. Core topics included the mandate and functions of the NPM, methodologies for conducting visits to places of detention, and techniques for interviewing detainees in accordance with international standards.

Second Training Programme (16 July 2024): This advanced session focused on international legal standards relating to the prevention of torture, as well as the domestic legal framework governing detention in Sri Lanka. The training further strengthened the capacity of staff to carry out monitoring functions effectively and in full compliance with international human rights obligations.

Key SPT and HRCSL Initiatives

Submission on Draft General Comment No. 1 under Article 4 of OPCAT (2022)

In 2022, the HRCSL, in its capacity as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), submitted official observations and recommendations to the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) concerning the Draft General Comment No. 1 on Article 4 of OPCAT. The submission focused on the interpretation and scope of "places of deprivation of liberty" under OPCAT and emphasized the importance of broad preventive monitoring mechanisms.

The HRCSL highlighted its statutory mandate under the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act No. 21 of 1996, which empowers the Commission to monitor the welfare of persons deprived of liberty, conduct visits to places of detention, investigate complaints relating to human rights violations, and make recommendations to relevant authorities. The Commission further emphasized the necessity of ensuring unrestricted access to all places where individuals may be deprived of their liberty, including police stations, prisons, detention centres, rehabilitation facilities, and other custodial institutions.

The submission reflected Sri Lanka's continued engagement with international preventive mechanisms and contributed to the development of international standards relating to torture prevention and detention monitoring.

Adoption of General Comment No. 1 by the SPT (2024)

In 2024, the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) formally adopted General Comment No. 1 on Article 4 of OPCAT concerning places of deprivation of liberty. The General Comment was adopted to provide authoritative guidance to States Parties and National Preventive Mechanisms regarding the interpretation of Article 4 and the scope of preventive monitoring obligations under OPCAT.

The General Comment clarified that places of deprivation of liberty extend beyond traditional prisons and police detention facilities and include any location where persons are not permitted to leave freely by order or acquiescence of public authorities. It further reinforced the obligation of States Parties to ensure unhindered access for National Preventive Mechanisms to all such facilities.

The adoption of General Comment No. 1 represents a significant development in strengthening the international preventive framework against torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. It also provides important guidance for the HRCSL in enhancing its preventive monitoring mandate and expanding oversight mechanisms concerning detention conditions and detainee rights under the OPCAT framework.

CHAPTER 2
NPM Visiting Mechanism
Types of Deprivation of Liberty and Institutions Subject to NPM Visits

1. Overview

In Sri Lanka, deprivation of liberty occurs across a wide range of institutional settings that extend well beyond conventional prisons and police detention facilities. As the designated National Preventive Mechanism, the HRCSL's visiting mandate encompasses the full spectrum of custodial, correctional, medical, rehabilitative, welfare, and security-related facilities in which individuals are held by State authorities or with State consent.

This broad scope reflects the OPCAT obligation to monitor all places where persons may be deprived of their liberty, irrespective of the legal basis for detention, the administering authority, or the stated purpose of the facility. The NPM's visiting programme is therefore designed to provide systematic coverage of all such institutions across the country, ensuring that no category of detained or confined persons falls outside the scope of independent oversight.

2. Institutions Subject to NPM Visits

The following table sets out the categories of institutions currently subject to NPM visits, together with the types of facilities within each category and the relevant administering authority.

Institution	Facility Types / Scope
1. Prisons *Department of Prisons, Ministry of Justice*	– Remand prisons – Closed and open prisons – High-security prisons – Women's prisons and juvenile correctional centres – Prison work camps
2. Police Stations and Detention Cells *Sri Lanka Police Service*	– Police station detention cells and lockups – Detention facilities of special units (CID, CTID)

Institution	Facility Types / Scope
3. Psychiatric Hospitals and Mental Health Institutions *Ministry of Health*	– State-run psychiatric hospitals – Secure psychiatric wards in general hospitals – Long-term care institutions for persons with psychosocial disabilities – Private psychiatric care centres
4. Juvenile Detention Facilities *Department of Probation and Child Care Services*	– Certified schools – Detention homes – Rehabilitation and probation centres – Youth correctional centres
5. Immigration Detention Centres *Department of Immigration and Emigration*	– Facilities for migrants, asylum seekers, and persons awaiting deportation
6. Military Detention Facilities *Sri Lanka Armed Forces*	– Detention of military personnel – Detention for national security-related reasons
7. Elder Care and Social Welfare Institutions *Protection of the Rights of Elders Act No. 9 of 2000*	– Residential care homes for elders – Welfare institutions for vulnerable persons
8. Drug Rehabilitation Centres *National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) / Bureau of Rehabilitation*	– Compulsory treatment programmes – Voluntary treatment programmes
9. Detention Facilities of Specialised Departments *Department of Wildlife Conservation; Forest Department; Excise Department*	– Temporary detention prior to transfer to police custody – Covered under NPM mandate where liberty is restricted
10. Leprosy Treatment Hospitals *Ministry of Health*	– Long-term residential treatment and rehabilitation facilities – Institutions with historical legacy of isolation practices
11. Women Detention Centre *Department of Social*	– Dedicated detention facilities for women deprived of liberty

Institution	Facility Types / Scope
Services()WP	
12. Detention for Homeless Person *Ministry of Social Services*	- State-run shelters where residents are not free to leave at will -Protective custody or temporary accommodation facilities for homeless persons

Note: *With respect to specialised departments such as the Department of Wildlife Conservation, the Forest Department, and the Excise Department, persons arrested by these authorities are ordinarily transferred to police custody at the earliest opportunity. Nonetheless, temporary detention arrangements maintained by these departments fall within the NPM's visiting mandate for so long as any restriction on the liberty of the individual subsists.*

3. Types of Visits

The NPM of the HRCSL employs four distinct types of visits to places of deprivation of liberty. Each type serves a specific monitoring purpose and is deployed according to the nature of the oversight objective, prevailing risk conditions, and the operational requirements of the visit.

Type of Visit	Description	Key Characteristic
Regular Visits	Pre-planned, periodic visits conducted to monitor general conditions of detention and assess ongoing compliance with human rights standards.	*Scheduled; systematic in nature*
Ad Hoc Visits	Unannounced visits initiated in response to emerging patterns of ill-treatment, or credible information indicating heightened risk.	*Unannounced; risk-responsive*
Semi-Scheduled Visits	Visits conducted with short advance notice to the facility, balancing operational spontaneity with logistical requirements.	*Short-notice; operationally flexible*
Thematic Visits	Cross-institutional visits focusing on a specific issue or practice across multiple facilities for example, the use	*Issue-focused; multi-facility*

Type of Visit	Description	Key Characteristic
	of solitary confinement, conditions in high-security or immigration detention, or the treatment of women detainees.	

3.1 Regular Visits

Regular visits constitute the backbone of the NPM's systematic monitoring programme. These are pre-planned, periodic visits conducted to assess general conditions of detention, review compliance with applicable domestic and international human rights standards, and track progress on the implementation of prior recommendations. Regular visits enable the NPM to build a longitudinal record of conditions at each facility, facilitating the identification of improvements, persistent deficiencies, or deteriorating trends over time.

3.2 Ad Hoc Visits

Ad hoc visits are unannounced and are initiated in response to credible information indicating heightened risk of torture or ill-treatment, or emerging patterns of concern identified through the NPM's monitoring activities. The unannounced character of these visits is essential to their effectiveness: it ensures that authorities are unable to make preparatory arrangements that might conceal actual conditions or the treatment of detainees. Ad hoc visits may also be conducted in the immediate aftermath of incidents involving alleged ill-treatment, deaths in custody, or other critical events.

3.3 Semi-Scheduled Visits

Semi-scheduled visits are conducted with short advance notice to the facility concerned, typically to accommodate logistical requirements or to facilitate access to specific categories of detainees or institutional records. While departing from the fully unannounced model, these visits retain a significant element of spontaneity by virtue of the limited notice provided and are conducted in circumstances where the risk of preparatory concealment is assessed to be low. They allow the NPM to balance operational flexibility with the practical demands of the visiting process.

3.4 Thematic Visits

Thematic visits are cross-institutional in character and focus on a specific practice, condition, or category of detained persons across multiple facilities. Examples include investigations into the use of solitary confinement or disciplinary isolation, conditions in high-security prisons, treatment of women and girls in detention, mental health care in custodial settings, and procedural safeguards in immigration detention. Thematic visits enable the NPM to generate

comparative data, identify systemic patterns, and develop targeted, evidence-based recommendations directed at structural reform rather than facility-specific interventions alone.

4. The Importance of Unannounced Visits

Unannounced and largely surprise visits constitute a cornerstone of effective NPM monitoring. Their significance derives from several mutually reinforcing considerations.

4.1 Ensuring Authenticity of Observed Conditions

Where advance notice is provided, detention authorities may undertake preparatory measures such as improving the physical state of facilities, relocating particular detainees, or coaching staff that obscure the actual conditions and treatment of persons deprived of their liberty. Unannounced visits eliminate this opportunity and enable the NPM to observe conditions as they genuinely and routinely exist, yielding reliable, unmanipulated data on which monitoring assessments and recommendations can be based.

4.2 Strengthening Accountability

The possibility of an unannounced visit at any time creates a sustained accountability dynamic: detention authorities and staff are aware that the NPM may arrive without prior notice, which serves as a continuing incentive to maintain conditions and practices that comply with human rights standards on an ongoing basis, rather than only in anticipation of scheduled inspections.

4.3 Protecting Detainees

Unannounced visits provide a vital safeguard for persons deprived of their liberty, particularly those who may be subjected to intimidation, reprisals, or coercion to prevent them from communicating their situation to oversight bodies. By arriving without notice, the NPM reduces the risk that detainees will have been subject to advance pressure and maximises the prospect of obtaining candid, voluntary testimony about conditions and treatment.

4.4 Advancing Evidence-Based Reform

Accurate, unfiltered information gathered through unannounced visits is indispensable to the formulation of credible, evidence-based recommendations. It enables the NPM to identify deficiencies whether in physical conditions, procedural safeguards, staffing practices, or institutional culture and to advocate for targeted reforms grounded in observed reality rather than presented appearances. The integrity of the NPM's monitoring output, and the legitimacy of its recommendations, depends fundamentally on the reliability of the information upon which they are based.

CHAPTER 3
Detention Facilities in Sri Lanka: Structure and Functioning

An overview of institutions subject to NPM monitoring across Sri Lanka

1. Sri Lanka Prison System

1.1 Overview and Administrative Structure

Sri Lanka's prison system is administered by the Department of Prisons, operating under the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Legal Reforms. Prison institutions are established to ensure the custody, control, rehabilitation, and reformation of offenders, in accordance with national legislation, constitutional guarantees, and applicable international human rights standards governing the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty.

The prison system comprises several categories of institutions, each serving a distinct purpose depending on the legal status, security classification, and rehabilitative needs of the prisoner population.

1.2 Classification of Prison Institutions

(a) Closed Prisons — 04 Institutions

Closed prisons are high-security institutions designated for convicted prisoners serving long-term or serious custodial sentences.

No.	Prison
1	Welikada Prison
2	Bogambara Prison
3	Mahara Prison
4	Angunakolapelessa Prison

(b) Remand Prisons — 18 Institutions

Remand prisons accommodate unconvicted prisoners who are awaiting trial or the conclusion of court proceedings.

No.	Location	No.	Location
1	Colombo	10	Trincomalee
2	Jaffna	11	Kalutara
3	Anuradhapura	12	Kuruwita
4	Batticaloa	13	Boossa
5	Badulla	14	Monaragala
6	Galle	15	Polonnaruwa
7	Matara	16	Wariyapola
8	Negombo	17	Vavuniya
9	Kegalle	18	New Magazine Prison

(c) Work Camps — 10 Institutions

Work camps focus on rehabilitation through structured labour-oriented programmes and vocational engagement, with the aim of preparing prisoners for social reintegration.

No.	Work Camp
1	Homagama
2	Meetirigala
3	Kandewatta
4	Weerawila *
5	Pitabeddara
6	Hangilipola
7	Wariyapola (under Wariyapola Remand Prison)
8	Kuruwita (under Kuruwita Remand Prison)
9	Kadurugas-ara (Thunkama)

No.	Work Camp
10	Ambepussa *

(d) Open Prison Camps — 02 Institutions

Open prison camps operate under minimum security conditions, with an emphasis on rehabilitation, community engagement, and preparation for reintegration.

No.	Open Prison Camp
1	Pallekelle *
2	Anuradhapura (under Anuradhapura Remand Prison)

(e) Training Schools — 01 Institution

The Training School for Youthful Offenders, Homagama, is dedicated to the education, vocational training, discipline, and rehabilitation of young offenders within a structured custodial environment.

(f) Correctional Centres for Youthful Offenders — 02 Institutions

No.	Correctional Centre
1	Pallansena C.C.Y.O. — Closed Prison and Open Camp
2	Taldena C.C.Y.O. — Open Camp *

> ***Note:*** *Institutions marked with an asterisk (*) are also utilised as centres for drug rehabilitation operations.*

(g) Lock-Ups — 23 Facilities

In addition to the above categories, 23 lock-ups are maintained as short-term detention facilities distributed across various districts. These facilities are subject to NPM monitoring in accordance with the OPCAT visiting mandate.

1.3 Staffing Capacity and Systemic Challenges

Despite the extensive prison infrastructure, the system operates with a significantly constrained staff capacity relative to its detainee population. According to prison statistics for 2023, a total of 185,056 convicted and unconvicted prisoners were admitted to prisons during that year. The total staff strength of the Department of Prisons in the same period stood at 6,183 officers representing a severe imbalance between the detainee population and available custodial personnel.

This structural imbalance presents substantial challenges in maintaining humane conditions of detention, ensuring adequate supervision, providing access to healthcare and rehabilitation programmes, and protecting persons deprived of their liberty from torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Indicator (2023)	Figure
Total prisoner admissions	185,056
Total Department of Prisons staff	6,183
Approximate detainee-to-staff ratio	~30 : 1

In this context, the HRCSL's designation as the NPM under OPCAT acquires particular significance. Prior to this designation, no systematic mechanism existed in Sri Lanka to conduct regular and unannounced visits to places of detention. The HRCSL now fulfils this mandate under challenging operational conditions with limited human and financial resources while being required to monitor a large number of detention facilities across the country and identify the risks faced by persons deprived of their liberty.

2. Children's Homes and Child Care Institutions

2.1 Overview

Sri Lanka's first official Census of Children in Child Care Institutions, conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics in November–December 2019, identified a total of 379 child care institutions operating across the country. Of these, 331 institutions (87.3%) were voluntary children's homes. The Western Province recorded the highest number of child care institutions (121), with the Gampaha, Colombo, and Kalutara Districts reporting 55, 44, and 22 institutions respectively.

2.2 Distribution by Province and Institution Type

The following table sets out the number and types of child care institutions by province, as recorded in the 2019 Census.

Province	Type of Institution	Number of Institutions
Western	**Total**	**121**
	Remand Home	2
	Certified School	2
	Approved School	1
	State Receiving Home	1
	Training and Counselling Centre	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	114
Central	**Total**	**38**
	Remand Home	2
	State Receiving Home	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	35
Southern	**Total**	**31**
	Remand Home	2
	Certified School	2
	State Receiving Home	1
	Detention Home	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	24
	Other	1
Northern	**Total**	**41**
	Remand Home	1
	Safe House	1
	Certified School	1
	State Receiving Home	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	37
Eastern	**Total**	**61**
	Safe House	3
	Certified School	2
	State Receiving Home	1

Province	Type of Institution	Number of Institutions
	Training and Counselling Centre	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	54
North-Western	**Total**	**36**
	Remand Home	1
	State Receiving Home	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	34
North-Central	**Total**	**15**
	Remand Home	2
	Certified School	1
	State Receiving Home	1
	Training and Counselling Centre	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	8
	Other	2
Uva	**Total**	**17**
	Remand Home	2
	Certified School	1
	State Receiving Home	1
	Training and Counselling Centre	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	9
	Other	3
Sabaragamuwa	**Total**	**19**
	Remand Home	2
	State Receiving Home	1
	Voluntary Children's Home	16
All Provinces	**Grand Total**	**379**

Source: Census of Children in Child Care Institutions, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka, 2019.

2.3 Categories of Child Care Institutions

Remand Homes

Established under Chapter III of the Children and Young Persons Ordinance, Remand Homes provide temporary detention for child suspects and child victims pending the conclusion of court proceedings. These institutions are designed as short-term facilities and are not intended for long-term accommodation.

Safe Homes

Also established under Chapter III of the Children and Young Persons Ordinance, Safe Homes provide temporary accommodation and protection for child victims and child suspects requiring a place of safety. These facilities are currently limited to the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Certified Schools

Children convicted under the Children and Young Persons Ordinance may be admitted to Certified Schools for a period of up to three years for institutional correction. Children in need of care and protection may also be admitted to these institutions for the same maximum period.

State Receiving Homes

State Receiving Homes provide care and protection for orphaned, abandoned, and destitute children aged 0–5 years. One such institution is established in each of the nine provinces. Children in these homes are considered for adoption or alternative care placements. Where no suitable placement is available, they may be transferred to Voluntary Children's Homes for continued care and education. These homes operate under the Orphanages Ordinance and the Child Development Centre Charter.

Approved Homes

Approved Homes function in a manner similar to Certified Schools and are established for the rehabilitation of child offenders convicted under the Children and Young Persons Ordinance.

Detention Homes

Detention Homes are established under the House of Detention Ordinance to provide care and protection to vagrant and street children. Sri Lanka currently has one Detention Home, located in the Galle District. Children are referred to this facility under both the House of Detention Ordinance and the Vagrants Ordinance.

Training and Counselling Centres

These institutions provide psychosocial care, therapeutic support, and vocational training for children who have experienced abuse, exploitation, or severe trauma. They aim to support recovery and equip children with skills for productive social reintegration.

Voluntary Children's Homes

There are 331 Voluntary Children's Homes operating across Sri Lanka, established under the Orphanages Ordinance and the Child Development Centre Charter to provide care and protection to orphaned, abandoned, and destitute children up to 18 years of age. Although operated by voluntary organisations, all admissions, care arrangements, and reintegration decisions are overseen by the relevant Provincial Departments of Probation and Child Care Services, under the direct supervision of Provincial Commissioners of Probation and Probation Officers. Children are generally admitted for a period of three years, with placement decisions made by the Placement Committee.

2.4 NPM Monitoring Priorities — Children's Homes

The HRCSL places particular emphasis on monitoring child care institutions within its NPM visiting programme, given that children constitute one of the most vulnerable groups deprived of their liberty. Continuous, independent oversight of these institutions is essential to ensure compliance with the principle of the best interests of the child, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) particularly with respect to children in conflict with the law and those in need of care and protection. NPM visits to children's institutions assess conditions of care, disciplinary practices, access to education and healthcare, family contact, complaint mechanisms, and overall institutional culture.

3. Tri-Forces Detention Facilities

Detention facilities operated by Sri Lanka's Tri-Forces the Army, Navy, and Air Force warrant particular attention within the NPM framework on account of their limited accessibility to independent oversight. The physical conditions of detention in these facilities, including adequacy of space, ventilation, access to natural light, sanitation, and healthcare, must be assessed against applicable international human rights standards, including the Mandela Rules and the OPCAT framework.

The inherent restriction on access to military detention facilities for independent oversight bodies elevates the risk of torture, ill-treatment, or other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. The limited transparency of these facilities makes regular, systematic NPM monitoring particularly critical in order to prevent violations, identify risks, and ensure that all persons detained by military authorities are treated in a manner consistent with their fundamental rights and dignity. The NPM is empowered under its mandate to access these facilities and to assess compliance with applicable standards, irrespective of the authority operating the place of detention.

4. Elders' Homes and Residential Care Institutions

Older persons represent one of the most vulnerable groups in society and are entitled to care, protection, and dignity in old age. Loneliness, neglect, inadequate care, and institutional abuse can have severe and compounding effects on the mental and physical well-being of elderly persons residing in institutional settings.

The State of Sri Lanka has established specialised residential care facilities for older persons, governed primarily under the Protection of the Rights of Elders Act, No. 9 of 2000. The HRCSL places particular emphasis on monitoring Elders' Homes within its NPM visiting programme to ensure that residents are provided with a safe, dignified, and torture-free living environment, consistent with applicable domestic and international human rights standards.

NPM visits to these facilities assess the adequacy of staffing levels and qualifications, the availability and quality of healthcare services, the provision of psychosocial support and recreational activities, physical conditions and safety, the existence of accessible complaint mechanisms, and the protection of residents from all forms of neglect, abuse, and ill-treatment. Safeguarding the dignity and physical and psychological well-being of older persons during the final stages of their lives is a fundamental obligation of the State and an integral part of the NPM's monitoring mandate.

5. Drug Rehabilitation Centres

Persons undergoing compulsory drug rehabilitation in Sri Lanka may be deprived of their liberty within state-operated or state-regulated centres. Such facilities fall squarely within the NPM's visiting mandate under OPCAT, as individuals in these settings are held without full freedom of movement under State authority or with State consent. Three principal State authorities administer drug rehabilitation services in Sri Lanka.

5.1 National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB)

The NDDCB is the primary statutory authority responsible for the prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of persons with drug dependency in Sri Lanka. The Board currently operates four Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres:

- Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre — Central Province, Kandy
- Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre — Southern Province, Galle

- Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre — Navadiganthaya, Nittambuwa
- Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre — Western Province, Thalangama

These centres provide integrated treatment and rehabilitation services for persons affected by drug addiction and their families, with a focus on the development of life skills, positive behavioural change, and psychological and spiritual rehabilitation.

5.2 Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services administers rehabilitation programmes for persons affected by drug addiction, with an emphasis on psychosocial recovery and sustainable social reintegration. Programmes include psychological approaches, psychotherapy, guidance and counselling, medical treatment, meditation, and vocational training. Accommodation, food, and medical facilities are provided free of charge throughout the rehabilitation period.

The Department currently operates one Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre:

- **Jayaviru Samadhi Rehabilitation Institute** — a leading state institution for the treatment and rehabilitation of persons with drug dependency, with a particular focus on youth.

5.3 Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation

The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation functions under the Ministry of Justice and is responsible for the rehabilitation, treatment, counselling, and social reintegration of persons referred for rehabilitation, including those affected by drug dependency. The Bureau implements structured rehabilitation programmes combining behavioural modification, vocational training, education, discipline, and psychosocial support, with the overarching aim of enabling beneficiaries to reintegrate productively into society.

The Bureau currently operates two Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres:

Centre	Description
Kandakadu Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre	A primary state-operated rehabilitation institution providing residential programmes focusing on behavioural modification, counselling, vocational training, and social reintegration. Beneficiaries receive accommodation, food, healthcare, and vocational development opportunities.
Senapura Rehabilitation	An affiliated rehabilitation institution providing treatment

Centre	Description
Centre	through counselling, psychosocial support, vocational and educational programmes, and recreational activities aimed at personal development and successful reintegration.
Reintegration Centre – Vavuniya	A residential reintegration facility established to facilitate the transition of rehabilitated beneficiaries back into society. The centre provides psychosocial support, life-skills development, vocational guidance, and community based reintegration programmes to promote sustainable social and economic inclusion.

5.4 Drug Rehabilitation Centres within the Prison System

The prison system also operates designated treatment and rehabilitation facilities for persons convicted of drug-related offences. These facilities combine correctional management with treatment, counselling, vocational training, and rehabilitation programmes.

The designated rehabilitation facilities function within several prisons, including Ambepussa, Dumbara(Female Section), Pallekele Open Prison and Kandewatte. As these institutions involve varying degrees of restrictions on personal liberty, they fall within the monitoring mandate of the National Preventive Mechanism under OPCAT.

5.5 Volunteer Drug Rehabilitation Centres

In addition to state operated centres, a number of voluntary-sector drug rehabilitation facilities operate across the island, providing counselling and rehabilitation-based recovery services. These centres play a significant supplementary role within the national rehabilitation framework, particularly in underserved and rural areas where access to formal treatment facilities may be limited.

6. Asylum Seeker and Immigration Detention Facilities

Asylum seekers are individuals who have fled their countries of origin due to fear of persecution, armed conflict, violence, or serious human rights violations, and who seek international protection in a country of refuge. Unlike recognised refugees, whose status has

been formally determined, asylum seekers are persons whose claims for protection remain pending. Their treatment and rights are governed by international human rights principles, including the principle of non-refoulement which prohibits the return of any person to a country or territory where they may face persecution, torture, or other serious harm.

Sri Lanka is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention; however, international human rights obligations applicable to all persons within Sri Lanka's jurisdiction including UNCAT, the ICCPR, and the OPCAT framework extend to the treatment of asylum seekers and migrants held in immigration detention. These facilities accordingly fall within the NPM's visiting mandate.

The principal detention and holding facilities that have been identified in connection with asylum seekers and migrants in Sri Lanka are as follows:

No.	Detention / Holding Facility	Location & Particulars
1	Mullaitivu Air Force Camp Detention Centre	Mullaitivu Utilised to hold Rohingya asylum seekers who arrived in December 2024.
2	Mirihana Detention Centre	Colombo Immigration detention facility regularly used for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants under immigration laws.
3	Welisara Detention Centre	Welisara, Colombo Immigration detention facility referenced in reports concerning the conditions of detention of migrants and asylum seekers.

Given the particular vulnerability of asylum seekers and migrants in detention who may lack access to legal representation, consular assistance, information about their rights, or complaint mechanisms — these facilities warrant systematic monitoring by the NPM. Visits should assess conditions of detention, length of detention, access to asylum procedures, treatment by custodial staff, and the availability of appropriate support services.

CHAPTER 4
National Preventive Mechanism Monitoring Visits — 2022 to 2025

NPM Activities and Achievements 2022–2025

During the 2024 financial year, the HRCSL prioritised increasing the effectiveness and reach of its NPM activities. A total of 146 institutional visits were conducted nationwide. These visits covered a wide range of custodial settings, enabling the NPM to assess conditions, engage privately with detainees, review records, and identify areas requiring reform.

Visits

NPM Monitoring Visits — 2022

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
01	Prisons	07
02	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	01
03	Counter Terrorism Investigation Division (TID)	04
04	Colombo Crime Division (CCD)	01
05	Immigration Detention Centres	03
06	Women Detention Centre	01
07	Police Stations (No. of Routes)	01
	TOTAL	**18**

NPM Monitoring Visits — 2023

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
01	Prisons	11
02	Drug Rehabilitation Centres	01
03	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	01
04	Counter Terrorism Investigation Division (TID)	01
05	Children's Homes	11

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
06	Young Offenders Correctional Centres	01
07	Women Detention Centre	05
08	Detention Centre for Homeless Persons	01
09	Police Stations (No. of Routes)	02
	TOTAL	**34**

In the years 2022 and 2023, the NPM operated under significant constraints due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by Sri Lanka's severe economic crisis. These challenges greatly affected operational capacity — particularly transportation, financial resources, staffing, and logistical support required for regular monitoring visits.

Despite these difficulties, the NPM continued its mandate within available resources, prioritising urgent interventions and maintaining engagement with relevant authorities to ensure the protection of the rights of persons deprived of liberty. The experience highlighted the importance of strengthening institutional resources to ensure continuity of preventive monitoring mechanisms during periods of national crisis.

NPM Monitoring Visits — 2024

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
01	Prisons	43
02	Homes for Disabled Persons	07
03	Drug Rehabilitation Centres	12
04	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	01
05	Counter Terrorism Investigation Division (TID)	02
06	Colombo Crime Division (CCD)	01
07	Detention Centres of Tri Forces	02
08	Children's Homes	40
09	Young Offenders Correctional Centres	03
10	Immigration Detention Centres	02
11	Mental Health Hospitals	07

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
12	Elders' Homes	07
13	Police Stations (No. of Routes)	19
	TOTAL	**146**

These visits facilitated comprehensive oversight of detention practices and ensured adherence to procedural safeguards and custodial standards across the country.

NPM Monitoring Visits — 2025

No.	Institution	No. of Visits
01	Prisons	20
02	Homes for Persons with Disabilities	05
03	Drug Rehabilitation Centres	05
04	Criminal Investigation Department (CID)	01
05	Counter Terrorism Investigation Division (TID)	01
06	Illegal Assets & Intellectual Property Investigation Unit (PCID)	01
07	Detention Centres of Army	03
08	Detention Centres of Navy	02
09	Detention Centres of Air Force	01
10	Children's Homes	42
11	Young Offenders Correctional Centres	01
12	Immigration Detention Centres	04
13	Mental Health Hospitals	02
14	Elders' Homes	06
15	Women Detention Centre	02
16	Detention Centre for Homeless Persons	01
	TOTAL	**98**

Capacity Strengthening and Preventive Awareness

Beyond inspections, the NPM also prioritised capacity-building and awareness among custodial staff. Guidance provided during visits included training on international standards, gender-sensitive and child-sensitive practices, non-discriminatory treatment, safe restraint methods, and proper documentation. Such engagement contributes to fostering a culture of prevention, accountability, and respect for human dignity in all detention and care settings.

Key Human Rights Issues Identified and Interventions

1. Prisons

1.1 Overcrowding and Its Human Rights Implications

NPM inspections revealed that prisons across Sri Lanka continue to operate far beyond their official capacity. This overcrowding has been significantly worsened by the "Yukthiya" operations, resulting in a sharp increase in arrests related to drug offences. Many detainees are persons who use drugs and should, in line with international standards for treatment of drug use disorders and public health standards, be placed in community-based treatment and rehabilitation programmes rather than punitive detention.

Overcrowding contributes to poor sanitation, inadequate access to medical care, increased violence, and diminished living conditions — all of which contravene the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) and undermine the dignity of detainees.

1.2 Increasing Number of Unconvicted Persons in Detention

NPM teams observed a notable rise in the number of remand prisoners and suspects held in detention facilities. Despite Article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which guarantees the presumption of innocence, unconvicted detainees are often held in the same conditions as convicted prisoners.

There is no differentiated treatment in terms of accommodation, access to activities, or visitation rights. Many suspects reported having no understanding of their charges, case progress, or court dates, and some had no access to legal representation. The lack of clear information and procedural safeguards violates Articles 9 and 14 of the ICCPR, which guarantee fair trial rights and protection against arbitrary detention.

1.3 Detainees Unable to Access Bail

NPM visits identified cases where detainees had been granted bail by the court but remained in custody simply because no family member or responsible party was available to process their release. These individuals, legally entitled to liberty, remain unnecessarily detained, amounting to a violation of their fundamental rights to liberty and freedom from arbitrary detention.

The absence of a State-supported mechanism to facilitate bail for vulnerable persons results in prolonged and unlawful deprivation of liberty.

1.4 Lack of a Mechanism for Long-Term Detainees

The NPM found that detainees serving long-term sentences often have no structured pathway or review mechanism for release, rehabilitation, or reintegration. Effective correctional systems globally operate on principles of custody, care, and rehabilitation, yet Sri Lanka lacks a coherent framework for sentence review and reintegration planning.

This gap contradicts international norms, including the Mandela Rules, which emphasize individualized rehabilitation plans and preparation for social reintegration.

1.5 Limited Access to Legal Assistance

A significant number of detainees reported that they do not have access to legal representation and are unaware of court processes or legal options available to them. The inability to seek timely legal advice exacerbates stress, prolongs detention, and undermines the detainees' right to a fair trial.

This directly violates Article 14 of the ICCPR, which guarantees the right to legal assistance and the right to be informed promptly of charges.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Prisons (2024)

1	Addressed allegations of torture, ill-treatment, and illegal detention by promptly intervening with prison and police authorities and seeking official reports.
2	Ensured access to legal assistance for prisoners, particularly those unable to afford bail or legal representation, through coordination with the Legal Aid Commission.
3	Intervened in cases involving under-18 detainees held in prisons, engaging probation and law enforcement authorities to ensure compliance with juvenile justice safeguards.
4	Raised concerns on prison conditions, including overcrowding, sanitation, water supply, food quality, ventilation, and infrastructure deficiencies, and recommended corrective measures.
5	Advocated for adequate medical and mental health care, including access to doctors, medicines, counselling services, and emergency medical facilities within prisons.
6	Highlighted staff and administrative shortcomings, such as cadre shortages, training gaps, and lapses in record-keeping, including the maintenance of torture registers.
7	Safeguarded the rights of foreign national prisoners by intervening with prison authorities to ensure humane treatment and equal access to services.

8	Promoted accountability and compliance with standards by following up on responses from prison authorities and monitoring the implementation of recommended actions.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Prisons (2025)

1	Addressed allegations of torture, ill-treatment, and illegal detention by promptly intervening with prison and police authorities and seeking official reports.
2	Improved detention conditions by recommending renovation of cells, enhancement of ventilation and lighting, upgrading sanitation facilities, and ensuring access to clean drinking water.
3	Strengthened monitoring and accountability mechanisms by advising the maintenance of Torture/Assault Registers and proper documentation of inmate complaints.
4	Enhanced access to justice by liaising with the Legal Aid Commission to facilitate bail applications, expedite delayed judicial proceedings, and ensure uninterrupted online court hearings.
5	Intervened in individual cases requiring urgent attention, including hospitalisation of inmates, facilitation of specialised medical treatment, and protection of inmates facing security threats.
6	Improved prison healthcare services by recommending recruitment of full-time doctors, psychiatrists, and counsellors, and ensuring adequate stocks of essential medicines.
7	Promoted mental health and psychosocial support by advocating for structured counselling services and psychiatric care within prison institutions.
8	Advanced rehabilitation and reintegration efforts by recommending expansion of vocational training programmes, educational facilities, recreational activities, and introduction of wage systems for working detainees.
9	Protected the rights of vulnerable groups, including female inmates, breastfeeding mothers, children of inmates, elderly prisoners, and persons with disabilities, by recommending appropriate facilities and safeguards.
10	Strengthened institutional capacity by urging the filling of cadre vacancies, improving staff welfare facilities, providing training on human rights standards, and enhancing security systems such as CCTV and body scanners.
11	Ensured dignified visitation procedures by recommending measures to protect privacy during family visits and improve visitor management systems.
12	Conducted follow-up engagement with relevant authorities, including the Department of Prisons and the Ministry of Justice, to monitor implementation of recommendations and promote systemic reforms.

2. Children's Homes and Juvenile Detention Facilities

2.1 General Conditions and Missed Opportunities

While the State provides accommodation, education, nutrition, and basic services in Children's Remand Homes, Certified Schools, and Protective Care Institutions, the NPM observed that many children are not benefiting effectively from these opportunities. Structural weaknesses, inadequate programming, and weak psychosocial support undermine the rehabilitative purpose of these institutions.

2.2 Children Under 18 Detained in Adult Prisons

NPM teams identified cases where children under 18 were held in adult detention facilities, contrary to the Children and Young Persons Ordinance, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Beijing Rules.

Many of these children were unaware of their legal status, and in some cases, police investigations and court procedures were found to be inadequate or mishandled. The detention of children with adults exposes them to violence, abuse, and psychological harm, constituting a severe violation of child protection standards.

2.3 Impact of Broken Family Structures

A large proportion of children in State care come from fractured or unstable family environments. Background reports revealed common patterns such as parental separation, abandonment, domestic violence, substance abuse, or parental involvement in criminal activity.

These vulnerabilities heighten children's risk of entering conflict with the law and impede their emotional and social development. According to the CRC, the State has an obligation to provide special protection and support for children deprived of a family environment.

2.4 Children Involved in Drug Use or Drug-Related Offences

The NPM found that some children in detention were involved in drug use or drug transportation under the influence or coercion of adults. Many children lacked awareness of the legal consequences and long-term harm associated with drug-related activities.

The absence of targeted prevention programmes or early intervention mechanisms increases the risk of reoffending and fails to uphold the child's right to protection from exploitation.

2.5 Lack of Professional Counselling and Psychosocial Support

Across multiple children's homes, NPM teams observed a significant shortage of trained counsellors and psychologists. Children in conflict with the law often require trauma-informed care, behavioural interventions, emotional support, and structured reintegration planning.

The lack of comprehensive counselling services undermines their rehabilitation and violates the CRC's requirement for psychological recovery and social reintegration for children exposed to neglect, exploitation, or conflict with the law.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Children's Homes (2024)

1	Safeguarded the rights and best interests of children in care by intervening in cases involving protection concerns, neglect, and inadequate care arrangements.
2	Addressed child protection and welfare gaps by raising issues related to accommodation, nutrition, sanitation, clothing, and overall living conditions with relevant authorities.
3	Ensured access to education and development opportunities by intervening on matters related to school attendance, teacher availability, skills development, and recreational facilities.
4	Advocated for adequate health and psychosocial support, including access to medical care, counselling services, and specialised support for children with disabilities or special needs.
5	Strengthened safeguarding and accountability mechanisms by recommending the maintenance of proper records, including incident registers and torture/ill-treatment logs where applicable.
6	Promoted child-friendly administration and staffing, highlighting the need for trained, gender-sensitive, and language-appropriate staff within children's homes.
7	Addressed privacy, dignity, and non-discrimination concerns, including issues related to documentation, religious practices, communication with families, and prevention of stigmatisation.
8	Enhanced inter-agency coordination by engaging the Department of Probation and Child Care Services, education authorities, health services, and divisional secretariats to ensure effective follow-up.
9	Ensured continued oversight and follow-up, monitoring responses received and the implementation of recommended corrective measures to improve standards of care.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Children's Homes (2025)

1	Addressed concerns relating to child protection and safety by intervening with Probation Commissioners, Social Services Departments, and Divisional Secretariats to ensure proper care, supervision, and protection of children in institutional settings.
2	Prevented inappropriate detention and placement of children by recommending that children be placed in suitable centres according to age, gender, and nature of offence, and advising that children should not be detained in prison facilities.

3	Strengthened counselling and psychosocial support services by urging recruitment of qualified counsellors and facilitating counselling programmes through Divisional Secretariats and relevant authorities.
4	Improved access to healthcare services by recommending regular medical check-ups upon admission, weekly visits by doctors, recruitment of full-time medical officers, and provision of specialist services (including paediatric and psychiatric care).
5	Enhanced education and vocational training opportunities by advocating for structured educational programmes, extra classes for public examinations, inclusion of NVQ certification in vocational training, and introduction of skill-development initiatives suited to current labour market demands.
6	Promoted non-discrimination and dignity of children by recommending that identity cards indicate only residential addresses and not the name of the institution, thereby preventing stigma and social exclusion.
7	Upgraded living conditions and infrastructure by recommending renovation of buildings, improvement of sanitation and hygiene facilities, establishment of libraries and recreational spaces, and installation of CCTV systems for child protection.
8	Ensured adequate staffing and institutional capacity by urging authorities to fill approved cadre vacancies, recruit security officers (including female officers where necessary), appoint drivers, and strengthen overall administrative support.
9	Improved nutrition and welfare standards by recommending provision of balanced and nutritious meals, disability allowances, and other social welfare benefits for eligible children.
10	Strengthened monitoring and record-keeping mechanisms by advising maintenance of proper personal files, admission records, medical reports, and registers for allegations of abuse or ill-treatment.
11	Enhanced security and safeguarding procedures by recommending medical examinations upon admission, proper body-check procedures, prevention of unauthorised external access, and development of systems to manage aggressive behaviour safely and professionally.
12	Conducted follow-up engagement and coordination meetings with Probation Services, Provincial Councils, Health Authorities, and Social Services Departments to monitor implementation of recommendations and promote systemic improvements in child care institutions.

3. Key Human Rights Issues in Drug Rehabilitation Centres

The following key issues were identified across drug rehabilitation centres during the monitoring period:

1	Torture, Ill-Treatment, and Abuse — Reports of harassment, intimidation, and physical abuse by staff, with excessive force used as punishment rather than therapy. Absence of formal systems to record or investigate abuse and no independent oversight of staff conduct.
2	Inadequate Healthcare and Psychological Support — Serious shortage of full-time doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and trained counsellors, leading to delayed or insufficient treatment with minimal focus on mental health care, trauma support, and relapse prevention.
3	Poor Living Conditions — Water shortages, unsafe drinking water, poor sanitation, overcrowding, and lack of adequate ventilation, lighting, and cooling systems.
4	Staff Shortages and Capacity Gaps — Significant lack of medical personnel, counsellors, and security staff, combined with unfilled positions and insufficient training in addiction treatment and human rights.
5	Lack of Effective Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programmes — Vocational and skill-development programmes are limited, poorly implemented, and not tailored to individual needs. Weak planning for reintegration, including job placement and community support.
6	Weak Oversight, Accountability, and Complaint Mechanisms — Centres often lack confidential complaint systems, proper documentation, and external monitoring, while staff misconduct frequently goes unpunished.
7	Safety and Security Concerns — Poor physical infrastructure including boundary walls and CCTV systems. Internal violence, lack of supervision, and inadequate emergency responses.
8	Lack of Inclusivity and Accessibility — Facilities often fail to accommodate persons with disabilities, address gender-specific needs, or provide tailored programmes for vulnerable groups.
9	Structural and Policy-Level Gaps — Poor coordination among key authorities, delays in reforms, and lack of comprehensive policies prioritising rehabilitation over punishment.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (2024)

1	Implemented a "zero tolerance policy on torture" in centres such as Senapura and Kandakadu, alongside efforts to establish formal reporting and oversight mechanisms to prevent and address abuse.
2	Expanded medical visits, deployed full-time doctors, and planned recruitment of psychiatrists, psychologists, and counsellors, with initiatives for trauma-informed

	mental health care and relapse prevention.
3	Addressed water shortages, improved sanitation, ventilation, lighting, and cooling systems, and worked to reduce overcrowding while optimising infrastructure use.
4	Recruited medical and security staff and provided training in addiction treatment, rehabilitation, and human rights standards.
5	Implemented vocational and skill-development programmes, developed individualised rehabilitation plans, and strengthened reintegration support including job placement and community assistance.
6	Introduced confidential complaint systems, improved documentation and monitoring of incidents, and carried out external inspections with strengthened accountability frameworks.
7	Upgraded boundary walls and installed CCTV systems, while enhancing emergency response protocols and supervision to prevent violence.
8	Planned accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities, recruited female officers for women's centres, and developed programmes for vulnerable groups such as youth and women.
9	Enhanced coordination among authorities, implemented rehabilitation-focused reforms, and worked to bridge gaps between legal standards and on-ground practices.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (2025)

1	Improved facility conditions and extended the rehabilitation period to allow longer treatment cycles, focusing on basic infrastructure and programme duration.
2	Introduced age-appropriate admissions, vocational training, medical screening, nutritious food provisions, staff recruitment, and library facilities — combining health, rehabilitation, and reintegration objectives.
3	Prepared system-level planning (SOR), recruited staff with accommodations, introduced risk allowances, implemented rehabilitation programmes, and repaired CCTV systems.
4	Established a proper rehabilitation facility framework where centres were previously not functioning as rehabilitation centres.
5	Infrastructure and Facility Upgrading — Improved buildings, established functioning rehabilitation centres, and extended programme duration.
6	Human Resources — Recruited counsellors and staff, provided risk allowances and incentives to attract and retain trained personnel.
7	Programme Development — Introduced rehabilitation programmes and vocational training with provisions for structured therapy and outcome evaluation.

8	Health and Intake Screening — Conducted medical screening upon admission and improved nutritional standards.
9	Reintegration Support — Provided vocational training and educational resources with structured follow-up pathways.

4. Key Human Rights Issues in Asylum Seekers Detention Centres

As part of its mandate as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), the HRCSL monitors places of detention and engages with issues relating to the protection and treatment of vulnerable persons, including asylum seekers and refugees. In carrying out this role, the Commission assesses conditions of detention, safeguards against ill-treatment, and the protection of fundamental rights in line with domestic and international human rights standards.

Key human rights issues affecting asylum seekers in Sri Lanka during the reporting period include:

1	Arbitrary and prolonged detention under general immigration laws due to the absence of a dedicated asylum framework.
2	Lack of a national refugee protection policy and non-ratification of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.
3	Inadequate detention conditions, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and persons with disabilities.
4	Limited access to adequate healthcare, including the absence of female medical personnel for women and children.
5	Poor sanitation, nutrition, and unsuitable living conditions in facilities not designed for long-term civilian accommodation.
6	Restrictions on communication and limited access to external humanitarian organisations and specialised service providers.
7	Insufficient access to legal assistance, education, livelihoods, and psychosocial support.
8	Risks relating to the principle of non-refoulement, including concerns regarding the return of asylum seekers to situations of persecution or harm.
9	Lack of accurate and consistent data on refugee and asylum seeker populations, affecting coordination and protection measures.
10	Limited public awareness and social understanding regarding refugee rights and protection obligations.
11	Weak institutional coordination and the absence of clear procedures for the identification, screening, and protection of asylum seekers.

12	Concerns regarding the protection of human rights defenders and civil society actors engaged in refugee and asylum-related advocacy.

The HRCSL, in its capacity as the NPM, undertook several interventions relating to the protection and treatment of asylum seekers and refugees during the reporting period. These interventions focused on monitoring conditions of detention, safeguarding the rights of vulnerable individuals, and advocating for humane and rights-based approaches in line with international human rights standards.

HRCSL Intervention Highlights — Asylum Seekers Detention Centres

1	Conducted monitoring visits to detention and holding facilities where asylum seekers were accommodated, including the Mullaitivu Air Force Camp following the arrival of Rohingya asylum seekers in December 2024.
2	Assessed conditions of detention, including access to food, shelter, sanitation, healthcare, communication facilities, and the overall suitability of facilities for civilian populations.
3	Identified and documented protection concerns affecting vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and persons with disabilities.
4	Engaged with relevant State authorities, security officials, and administrative officers to address immediate humanitarian and protection concerns.
5	Advocated for improved living conditions and access to specialised healthcare services, including the provision of female medical personnel for women and children.
6	Recommended that asylum seekers be transferred to facilities more suitable for long-term civilian accommodation rather than military-controlled detention environments.
7	Facilitated dialogue and stakeholder consultations with Civil Society Organisations, humanitarian actors, and UNHCR representatives, including discussions held in commemoration of World Refugee Day 2025.
8	Highlighted systemic legal and policy gaps relating to refugee protection in Sri Lanka, including the absence of a dedicated asylum framework and the risks of arbitrary detention.
9	Advocated for adherence to the principle of non-refoulement and the protection of asylum seekers from return to situations where they may face persecution, violence, or serious human rights violations.
10	Recommended the development of a comprehensive national asylum and refugee protection policy aligned with international human rights standards and humanitarian principles.

CHAPTER 5
Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM)

5.1 Introduction

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) provides a comprehensive operational framework for the systematic implementation of preventive monitoring functions under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT). The SOP ensures consistency, accountability, transparency, and professionalism in all activities undertaken by the NPM, particularly in relation to the monitoring of places of detention.

The SOP establishes uniform procedures for planning, conducting, reporting, and following up on visits to detention facilities. It further provides operational guidance to ensure that all monitoring activities are aligned with international human rights standards as well as national legal obligations. The overall objective is to strengthen preventive mechanisms against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment through structured and consistent field interventions.

5.2 Purpose of the SOP

The purpose of this SOP is to establish a standardized framework for all operational activities of the National Preventive Mechanism. Specifically, it aims to:

- Ensure systematic planning, execution, documentation, and follow-up of monitoring visits in a consistent manner across all detention settings.
- Strengthen accountability, transparency, and professional integrity in all preventive monitoring processes.
- Provide clear operational guidance to officers engaged in field activities.
- Enhance coordination with detention authorities and relevant government institutions.
- Support evidence-based reporting, ensuring that findings and recommendations are properly documented and acted upon in a timely manner.

5.3 Scope of the SOP

This SOP applies to all functions and activities undertaken by the National Preventive Mechanism, including:

- Both scheduled and unscheduled visits to all places of detention.
- Follow-up visits conducted to assess the implementation of recommendations issued by the NPM.
- Thematic monitoring exercises, data collection processes, documentation, and information management activities.
- Engagement and dialogue with detention authorities and policymakers.
- Preparation and dissemination of reports and recommendations.

The scope extends to all places where persons are deprived of liberty, including prisons, police stations, rehabilitation centres, immigration detention facilities, and any other similar institutions.

5.4 Legal and Institutional Framework

The SOP is grounded in the following legal and institutional foundations:

- The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT).
- The Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act No. 21 of 1996.
- The mandate of the National Preventive Mechanism under the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.
- Applicable national legislation governing detention and custodial institutions.
- Relevant international human rights standards including the Convention against Torture (UNCAT) and related United Nations guidelines.
- Guidance and recommendations issued by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT).

All activities carried out under this SOP are expected to be fully consistent with Sri Lanka's obligations as a State Party to OPCAT.

5.5 Key Principles of Operation

The operational framework of the NPM is guided by a set of core principles that define its preventive mandate:

- Preventive Orientation: Focusing on the prevention of torture and ill-treatment rather than responding after violations occur.
- Independence and Impartiality: Ensuring that monitoring is free from external influence and bias.
- Confidentiality: Strictly maintaining confidentiality in relation to all sensitive information, particularly detainee identities and testimonies.
- Constructive Dialogue: Promoting cooperation with relevant authorities rather than confrontation.
- Regularity of Visits: Conducting visits on a regular and, where necessary, unannounced basis to enhance effectiveness.
- Do-No-Harm: Strictly observing the principle that no intervention exposes detainees or staff to risk, retaliation, or adverse consequences.

5.6 SOP Structure and Procedures

5.6.1 Planning of Visits

The planning of visits is carried out through a structured and systematic process, encompassing the following steps:

- An annual monitoring plan is developed based on risk analysis, previous findings, thematic priorities, and emerging concerns within detention settings.
- Institutions are selected for visits considering factors such as vulnerability, overcrowding, complaint patterns, and geographic representation.
- Monthly operational schedules are prepared to implement the annual plan effectively.
- Multidisciplinary teams are assigned based on the nature of each visit.
- Relevant background information from previous reports and recommendations is reviewed prior to fieldwork.
- Visit objectives and supporting tools such as checklists and documentation formats are prepared to guide the monitoring process.

5.6.2 Conducting Visits

Visits are conducted in accordance with a standardized methodology that ensures consistency and comprehensiveness:

- Each visit begins with an entry meeting with the head of the institution, during which the purpose and scope of the visit are explained.

- A systematic inspection of the facility follows, covering all relevant areas including accommodation, sanitation, kitchens, medical units, and other essential service areas.
- Private interviews are conducted with detainees in a confidential setting without the presence of custodial staff.
- Interviews are also held with staff to understand operational challenges and institutional practices.
- Relevant records and registers are reviewed to verify compliance with procedural requirements.
- Careful observation is maintained throughout the visit regarding physical conditions, treatment of detainees, and access to essential services.
- The visit concludes with an exit meeting during which preliminary observations are communicated to the management without disclosing sensitive or individual-specific information.

5.6.3 Post-Visit Procedures

Following each visit, the monitoring team undertakes the following steps:

- An internal debriefing is conducted to consolidate findings and ensure accuracy of recorded information.
- Observations are systematically categorized into thematic areas such as health, safety, legal safeguards, and living conditions.
- A comprehensive report is drafted, incorporating findings, analysis, and recommendations in a structured format.
- The draft report undergoes internal review to ensure accuracy, neutrality, and consistency with established standards.
- Final approval of the report is provided by the Director acting as the NPM Focal Point before formal submission to relevant authorities.

5.6.4 Reporting and Communication

The reporting and communication process involves the following:

- Reports are formally submitted to the relevant authorities within established timelines.
- Key recommendations are communicated directly to the heads of institutions concerned to facilitate immediate attention where necessary.
- In cases involving systemic issues, thematic reports may be submitted to relevant ministries and oversight bodies for broader policy consideration.

- All documentation is securely stored in both physical and digital formats to ensure confidentiality and data integrity.
- Where appropriate, anonymized findings may be disseminated to support transparency and awareness while maintaining strict confidentiality standards.

5.6.5 Follow-up Mechanism

The NPM implements a structured follow-up mechanism to ensure effective implementation of its recommendations:

- A centralized system is used to track the status of all recommendations issued following visits.
- Relevant authorities are requested to provide written updates on actions taken.
- Follow-up visits are conducted where necessary to verify implementation on the ground.
- Dialogue meetings are organized with stakeholders to address challenges and promote compliance.
- Compliance assessment reports are prepared to evaluate progress.
- In cases where systemic issues persist, matters are escalated to higher policy levels for further action.

5.7 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities within the NPM are clearly defined to ensure effective implementation of its mandate:

- Director (NPM Focal Point): Provides overall leadership, coordination, and approval of reports while guiding the strategic direction of the mechanism.
- Monitoring Officers: Responsible for conducting field visits, collecting data, and preparing initial observations.
- Legal and Research Officers: Support the process by analyzing findings, providing legal interpretation, and contributing to report drafting.
- Medical or Technical Experts: Engaged where necessary to assess specific conditions related to health or infrastructure.
- Administrative Staff: Provide logistical and communication support and manage records and scheduling.

All personnel are expected to uphold professional integrity and comply strictly with the SOP.

5.8 Confidentiality and Ethical Standards

Confidentiality and ethical conduct are fundamental to the work of the NPM. All personnel are required to adhere to the following standards:

- Protect the identity and personal information of detainees at all times.
- Ensure that sensitive institutional information is not disclosed outside authorized channels.
- Obtain voluntary participation and respect informed consent throughout the monitoring process.
- Ensure that no action taken during visits exposes detainees or staff to retaliation or harm.
- Maintain professional neutrality, respect, and ethical behavior at all times.

Any breach of these standards is subject to administrative review and appropriate action.

5.9 Monitoring and Evaluation of SOP

The SOP itself is subject to periodic review to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness:

- Annual evaluations are conducted to assess operational performance and identify areas for improvement.
- Lessons learned from field operations are incorporated into revisions of procedures and tools.
- The SOP is updated in line with evolving international standards and guidance issued by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture.
- Internal audits are conducted to assess compliance with established procedures and

Chapter 6
Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The 2022–2025 period marks a significant phase in the operational consolidation of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka. Through expanded institutional visits, strengthened monitoring tools, and the development of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), the NPM has enhanced its capacity to carry out systematic, preventive oversight of places of deprivation of liberty. These efforts reflect Sri Lanka's continued commitment to fulfilling its obligations under international human rights frameworks particularly the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

Despite these institutional advancements, the findings of NPM visits reveal that serious and recurring human rights concerns persist across multiple categories of detention facilities. Overcrowding, inadequate healthcare, poor sanitation, limited access to legal assistance, and insufficient rehabilitation services remain widespread. These issues are further compounded by staff shortages, weak institutional coordination, and resource constraints all of which collectively undermine the ability of authorities to ensure humane and dignified conditions of detention.

The report also highlights systemic vulnerabilities affecting specific groups, including children, women, persons with drug dependence, and individuals with mental health conditions. The continued placement of children in inappropriate detention settings, the lack of adequate psychosocial support services, and the limited availability of structured rehabilitation and reintegration programmes indicate that the system remains predominantly custodial rather than rehabilitative.

A central challenge identified throughout the reporting period is the gap between recommendation and implementation. While the NPM has actively engaged with relevant authorities through dialogue and follow-up, many of the issues identified are repetitive in nature suggesting that corrective actions are either delayed or insufficiently enforced. This underscores the need for stronger accountability mechanisms, improved inter-agency coordination, and sustained institutional commitment to reform.

At the same time, important progress has been achieved. The introduction of standardised procedures, monitoring tools, and capacity-building initiatives represents a meaningful step towards more consistent, evidence-based oversight, providing a foundation upon which further measurable improvements can be built.

> *While Sri Lanka has established a functioning and increasingly structured preventive mechanism for the protection of persons deprived of liberty, substantive progress in detention conditions and practices remains uneven. Achieving meaningful and lasting reform will require a shift from reactive, short-term interventions toward systemic, well-resourced, and rights-based approaches that prioritise prevention, rehabilitation, and accountability.*

Strengthening implementation, investing in professional capacity, and aligning practice with both national and international standards will be essential to ensuring that the rights and dignity of all individuals deprived of liberty are fully respected and protected.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Strengthening Implementation and Accountability

I. Establish a formal follow-up mechanism with clear timelines and reporting obligations for all institutions receiving NPM recommendations.
II. Introduce a compliance monitoring framework, including periodic progress reviews and public reporting on implementation status.
III. Strengthen coordination between the HRCSL and relevant stakeholders to ensure timely and effective execution of corrective measures.
IV. Develop independent complaint and investigation mechanisms within all detention facilities to address allegations of torture, ill-treatment, and abuse.

Recommendation 2: Addressing Overcrowding and Arbitrary Detention

I. Promote the use of non-custodial measures for minor and drug-related offences in line with international standards.
II. Establish a state-supported bail assistance mechanism to prevent prolonged detention of individuals unable to meet bail conditions.
III. Ensure strict separation of remand and convicted prisoners, as required under international human rights norms.
IV. Introduce case management and digital tracking systems to reduce delays in judicial proceedings and prevent unnecessary detention.

Recommendation 3: Improving Healthcare and Mental Health Services

I. Ensure the deployment of full-time medical officers in all major detention and rehabilitation facilities.
II. Strengthen mental health and psychosocial support services, including the recruitment of psychiatrists, psychologists, and trained counsellors.
III. Implement mandatory medical screening upon admission and periodic health assessments for all detainees.
IV. Guarantee the continuous availability of essential medicines and access to emergency medical care.

Recommendation 4: Enhancing Rehabilitation and Reintegration

I. Develop and implement structured, evidence-based rehabilitation programmes — particularly for persons with drug dependence and young offenders.
II. Introduce individualised rehabilitation plans that address psychological, social, and vocational needs.
III. Strengthen vocational training and education programmes, ensuring alignment with nationally recognised certification systems such as NVQ.
IV. Establish post-release reintegration mechanisms, including employment support, community-based follow-up, and social assistance.

Recommendation 5: Protection of Vulnerable Groups

I. Ensure that children are not detained in adult facilities under any circumstances and are placed in appropriate, child-friendly environments.
II. Strengthen child protection systems by recruiting trained counsellors, psychologists, and social workers in all child care institutions.
III. Introduce gender-sensitive approaches in women's detention facilities, including access to healthcare, privacy, and protection from abuse.
IV. Improve accessibility and services for persons with disabilities, elderly detainees, and individuals with mental health conditions.

Recommendation 6: Improving Living Conditions and Infrastructure

I. Upgrade detention facilities to meet minimum international standards relating to accommodation, sanitation, ventilation, lighting, and access to clean water.
II. Address overcrowding and infrastructure deficiencies through renovation, expansion, and better allocation of existing facilities.
III. Ensure the provision of adequate nutrition, hygiene supplies, and safe living environments in all institutions.
IV. Install and maintain CCTV systems and security infrastructure to enhance safety and accountability.

Recommendation 7: Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Training

I. Fill existing cadre vacancies and ensure adequate staffing levels across all detention and care institutions.
II. Provide regular training programmes for staff on human rights standards, prevention of torture, and professional conduct.
III. Enhance capacity-building initiatives for officers working with vulnerable populations, including children and persons with drug dependence.
IV. Introduce performance evaluation systems linked to compliance with human rights standards.

Recommendation 8: Enhancing Access to Justice

I. Expand legal aid services within detention facilities to ensure timely access to legal representation.
II. Facilitate uninterrupted access to courts, including through reliable online hearing systems where applicable.
III. Ensure detainees are informed of their legal rights, charges, and scheduled court proceedings.
IV. Strengthen collaboration with the Legal Aid Commission to support vulnerable detainees.

Recommendation 9: Strengthening Monitoring and Data Systems

I. Operationalise the standardised checklist and grading system to ensure consistent, evidence-based monitoring across all institutions.

II. Develop a centralised data management system to track conditions of detention, health and rehabilitation outcomes, and complaints and incidents of abuse.

III. Utilise data to inform policy decisions, guide resource allocation, and support targeted interventions.

References

Bureau of Rehabilitation Act, No. 2 of 2023 (Sri Lanka), Parliament Bill / Act, 6280 <https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6280.pdf> **accessed 17 November 2025**

Children and Young Persons Ordinance < https://www.srilankalaw.lk/c/190-children-andyoung-persons-ordinance.html> accessed 17 November 2025

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, GA Res 39/46, UN Doc A/RES/39/46 (10 December 1984, adopted; entered into force 26 June 1987)

Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment Act, No. 22 of 1994 <https://www.lawnet.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/Law%20Site/4-stats_1956_2006/set5/1994Y0V0C22A.html> accessed 17 November 2025

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), GA Res 61/106, UN Doc A/RES/61/106 (13 December 2006, adopted; entered into force 3 May 2008)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), GA Res 44/25, UN Doc A/RES/44/25 (20 November 1989, adopted; entered into force 2 September 1990)

Data presented ae based on inquiries and investigations undertaken by the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) during the year 2024.

Department of Census and Statistics, *Census of Children in Child Care Institutions 2019: Final Report* (Department of Census and Statistics 2021) xxi https://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/en/OtherCensusandSurveys/CensusReports/CensusofChildreninChildCareInstitutions2019Final.pdf

Department of Prisons, *Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka 2024* (Statistics Division, Prisons Headquarters, **PXX1**, 2024) 45 http://prisons.gov.lk/web/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/prison-statistics-2024.pdf accessed 15 May 2026.

Department of Prisons, *Prison Statistics of Sri Lanka 2024* (Statistics Division, Prisons Headquarters, **P11**, 2024) 45 http://prisons.gov.lk/web/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/prison-statistics-2024.pdf accessed 15 May 2026.

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka Act, No. 21 of 1996< https://www.hrcsl.lk/about/hrcsl-act/> accessed 17 November 2025

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, *Statistics on NPM Visits 2024* (HRCSL November 2024) < https://www.hrcsl.lk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/statistics-on-NPM-visits2024%20pdf> accessed 17 November 2025

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, *Statistics on NPM Visits 2025* (HRCSL February 2026) https://www.hrcsl.lk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Statistics-on-NPM-Visits-2025.pdf accessed 17 November 2025

International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance Act, No. 5 of 2018 (Sri Lanka), Gazette, Suppl to Part II, 23 March 2018, 05-2018 E <https://www.srilankalaw.lk/gazette/2018_pdf/05-2018_E.pdf> accessed 15 November 2025

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), GA Res 2200A (XXI), UN Doc A/RES/2200A(XXI) (16 December 1966, adopted; entered into force 23 March 1976)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other*

Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2004) https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/policy-and-methodological-publications/istanbulprotocol-manual-effective-0 accessed 17 November 2025

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (2004) https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/policy-and-methodological-publications/istanbul-protocol-manual-effective-0 accessed 17 November 2026.

Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, GA Res 57/199, UN Doc A/RES/57/199 (18 December 2002, adopted; entered into force 22 June 2006).

Prevention of Terrorism Act, No. 48 of 1979 as amended by Act, No. 12 of 2022: Section 9A of the Act <https://www.vertic.org/media/National%20Legislation/Sri%20Lanka/LK_Prevention_of_Terrorism_(Temp_Provisions).pdf> accessed 17 November 2025

Prisons Ordinance https://www.srilankalaw.lk/revised-statutes/alphabetical-list-ofstatutes/937-prisons-ordinance.html accessed 17 November 2025

Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, *General Comment No 1 (2024) on Article 4 of the Optional Protocol (Places of Deprivation of Liberty)* UN Doc CAT/OP/GC/1 (4 July 2024) https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/catopgc1-general-comment-no-1-2024-article-4

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)* (ebook, March 2016) UNODC.

United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture (SPT), ‗Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture' OHCHR https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/spt accessed 18 November 2025

United Nations, *United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Noncustodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)* (adopted 21 December 2010, UN GA Res 65/229, annex) (ebook, March 2015) UNODC

United Nations, United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (‖Beijing Rules‖) GA Res 40/33, UN GAOR, 40th sess, Supp No 53, UN Doc A/40/53, annex (29 November 1985)

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
No.14, R. A. de Mel Mawatha, Colombo 04,
Sri Lanka.
Hotline 1996
Telephone +94 11 2505595
Fax +94 11 2505541
Email: sechrcsl@gmail.com
Web: www.hrcsl.lk