Module 7:

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UN POLICE:
APPREHENSION, ARREST AND DETENTION

OVERVIEW

In Module 7 we will present international standards relating to arrest and detention.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

• Be able to explain the key principles of international standards on juvenile justice with regards to arrest and detention.
• Be able to explain alternatives to police custody.
• Be able to explain international standards regarding conditions of detention.
• Be able to advise host State police forces on the application of international standards.

ACTIVITIES

• PowerPoint presentation.
• Group Work on case studies.
• Debriefing.
• Quiz.

LEARNING HANDOUTS

• UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules) – introduced in module 6.
• UN Rules on the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (Havana Rules).
• UN Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.
• UN Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime.
• UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms.
• Case Study 1.
• Case Study 2.
• Case Study 3.

FACILITATION TIME

2 hours
The competencies taught in this module are relevant notwithstanding the specific mandate attributed in the different missions, although they must be approached according to the established mandate:

- **Operational support mandate**: Patrols (in POC sites, IDP camps, joint operations with UN military, etc.), investigating cases, crime prevention, technical and tactical advice to host State police, joint operations, working on trafficking and boarder control, working on organized crime, etc.
- **Institutions’ building mandate**: Assisting police reform and restructuring, advising and training host State police on community policing and other methods, monitoring, sensitization projects, etc.
- **Executive mandate**: (e.g. Kosovo, East Timor), safeguard law and order, facilitating the launch of a new domestic police service, etc.

Hence, despite the different mandates, child protection factor remains applicable in all contexts. It should be adapted to the specific mandate of the mission, but is relevant to all mentoring and capacity building roles played by the UN Police.

**SLIDE 1: Learning Outcomes**

The international community has developed and adopted guidelines relating to the treatment of children during arrest and detention. In this module, we will explore those international guidelines and look at possible scenarios that you may encounter in your deployment.

Some UN peacekeeping missions have executive mandates, and UN Police are asked to take responsibility for all policing duties. In most cases, however, UN Police are mandated only to advise, guide and mentor host State police. In both cases, it is crucial for UN Police to know not only their specific mandate and the national legislation of the host country but also understand and apply international guidelines in the arrest and detention of children.

As we have seen in Module 1, children are more vulnerable than adults to all sorts of threats. The international community recognizes that they need more protection, including in criminal processes, in addition to the legal rights awarded to adults.

In many post-conflict settings, the police or armed forces must deal with issues that would in more normal circumstances be the responsibility of other actors, for example social services (children living in the streets, drug use, etc.).

Slides 2 to 6 present international standards relating to arrest of children. Slides 7 and 8 present DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations. Slides 9 and 10 present standards on conditions of detention for children. Finally, slide 11 describes the international standards in police custody of children and alternatives to detention.
**SLIDE 2 and 3: International Standards of Arrest**

The Beijing Rules\(^1\) that we have introduced earlier also establish standards for arrest of children. The general principle is stated in Rule 5:

“The juvenile justice system shall emphasize the well-being of the juvenile and shall ensure that any reaction to juvenile offenders shall always be in proportion to the circumstances of both the offenders and the offence.”

This Rule is based on the principle of the best interests of the child, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that:

“The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.”\(^2\)

In terms of standards for arrest, the Rules state that:

- Each country should establish an age of criminal responsibility, based on culture and age of maturity (Rule 4 and CRC). It is important to make the difference between the age of majority, which is 18 year-old according to international standards and the age of criminal responsibility, which would be established by national legislation and would be lower than 18 years. The Rules do not specify a minimum age for criminal responsibility but the internationally accepted recommendation is 12 years old. This means that below the minimum age, a child should not be arrested or prosecuted for any crime. However, the host State police will be bound by the host State’s national law, even if the age of criminal responsibility is lower than 12.
- The child’s parents or guardian must be notified of the child’s arrest as soon as possible (Rule 10). International standards also normally recommend that the child’s parents or guardian be allowed to attend any interview with the child. Of course, police officers need to exercise their judgment on a case by case basis. In some circumstances it may not be desirable for the parents to attend, for example when the police suspect the parents to have mistreated the child in any way, whether through physical or sexual violence.

**SLIDES 4 to 6: International Standards of Arrest – Other issues to consider**

The point below showed on slide 4 could generate discussions with regards to preventive detention as a measure of protection for the child, it is important to refocus the participants to the two key messages on child protection: detention as last resort and the best interests of the child.

“Preventive detention should only be applied when it is in the best interests of the child, for example when the child is in danger or poses an immediate danger to others or to self”

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2 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 37 (b)
Other international norms must be considered when arresting a child. Those include:

- The age of the child should be verified as soon as possible. This can be done using the child’s statement, a testimony of the child’s parents, the child’s birth certificate or identification card, the medical opinion of a physician, etc. When in doubt whether the suspect is an adult or a child, he/she should be treated as a child.

- The child should be charged within 24 hours (or less if the law of the country so provides) or be released. In any case, the child should not stay in police custody more than 24 hours.

- Preventive detention should only be applied when it is in the best interests of the child. Examples could include the child being in danger or posing a grave threat to the public or to himself/herself.

- The arrest procedures should be proportional to the situation and the age of the child. Children should not be subjected to any police brutality, violence or torture. In particular, the use of firearms, electric shock weapons and violent methods to apprehend and arrest children are prohibited and measures should be adopted to limit and guide the use of force and instruments of restraint by the police while apprehending or arresting children. For example, a child should not be handcuffed if he/she does not pose a threat to the arresting police officers. If children must be searched, this should be done in a manner that respects their privacy and dignity. In all circumstances, the minimum amount of force necessary to ensure the safety of both the child and the police officers should be used (proportional use of force). This is a fundamental human rights that shall apply to all, not only to children.

- The child should be informed of his or her rights and prompt access to legal aid during police interview and custody should be ensured, in a confidential manner.

- Any alleged incident of violence against children by the police should be independently investigated and reported in a timely manner.³

SLIDE 7 and 8: DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations

In your role as UN Police officers it is important to know that the new policy on child protection in United Nations peace operations, drafted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operation, state in its article 29.1 and 29.2 on detention of children by UN Peacekeepers that:

“The apprehension and/or detention of a child by United Nations military or police peace operations personnel shall only be used as a measure of last resort, for the shortest possible period of time, and in line with international norms and standards in relation to the deprivation of liberty of children. In all decisions, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration and alternatives to detention shall be prioritized;

At no time shall a child aged 14 years or below be apprehended and/or detained by United Nations military or police peace operations personnel. Children between the ages of 14 and 18 years shall be handed over within a maximum of 48 hours from United Nations peace operations personnel to government child protection authorities or humanitarian child protection actors for interim care until the time of family reunification or other durable solution;”

Distribute the handout “Draft DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations” (2017) and ask the participants to read it prior to deployment.

At all time during your deployment within a UN Peacekeeping mission you must adhere to these highest standards of integrity and shall implement and respect the principles enshrined in the international norms and standards on the protection of children in peace operations.

Distribute the handout “UN Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice” to learners and asked them to read Strategy XII.

**SLIDE 9 and 10: Pre-trial Detention**

The Tokyo Rules⁵, Articles 6.1 to 6.3, the Beijing Rules and the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (“Havana Rules”)⁶, Rules 17 and 18 address pre-trial detention in cases involving children. Beijing Rule 13 and Havana Rules 17 and 18 state that:

- Pre-trial detention of children should only be used as a measure of last result and for the shortest possible time.
- Alternative measures to detention of children should be used whenever possible.
- Children must be detained separately from adults at all times during pre-trial detention.
- Girls and boys must be detained separately.
- Accused children must be detained separately from convicted children.
- Children in pre-trial detention should be provided with protection and care.
- Pre-trial detention shall last no longer than necessary to achieve the objectives.

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Article 37 (d) of the CRC states that:

“Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.”

In addition, article 40 (3b) of the CRC states that:

“Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings [should be used], providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programs and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.”

The international standards on justice for children are unfortunately not implemented at the same level in every country. To address challenges that you may encounter during your mandate, especially in fragile States, the mastering of these international standards will help significantly in your role of influence to ensure compliance of the host State police. Moreover, building strong relationships with the local law enforcement authorities can facilitate your advocacy work on various subjects and can make a difference (e.g. encourage adherence to international standards, speed up of judicial process, support the implementation of alternative measures, etc.). However, during the course of your mandate you will most probably witness breaches of these international standards and it will be compulsory that the situation be reported to the UN Police child protection focal point or to the CPAs for advocacy advises and further actions that could involve other mission components as appropriate.

SLIDE 11: Alternatives to Police Custody and Preventive Detention

In line with the principles expressed in Beijing Rule 13, several alternatives to police custody and preventive detention are available to police officers. For example:

- Alternatives to police custody and preventive detention:
  - Permitting the child to remain free until a verdict is issued.
  - Placing the child under house arrest / supervision of parents or guardian.
  - Placing the child in an open facility.
  - Referring the child to social services/supervision.

It is important to note that in conflict and post-conflict contexts, some of these alternatives may be harder to implement. This is for the same reasons that diversion measures may face challenges, as we have seen in the first part of this module. As conflict disrupts and destroys family and community
structures, support systems for children weaken. However, such contexts can also provide an opportunity to develop new alternatives.

It is also very important to note that the host State police will apply the local laws. What we are presenting here are international standards, some of which are binding on states, which carry an important weigh as they are recognized international good practices. It must be said however that most international standards applicable to justice for children are not open to adoption and are therefore not binding. This may not give them as much legal application in given countries, but these standards still carry an important moral and practical international importance. UN Police personnel should be familiar with in their advocacy and mentoring. Your role as UN Police Officers will be to advise the host State police on international norms and their implementation in the national context. In executive missions, you will be asked to apply local laws but act based on international standards of child-friendly policing techniques.

SLIDE 12: Diversion vs Alternatives to Detention

Alternatives to detention exist at each stage of the judicial process. Alternatives to detention include:

- Diversion measures:
  - Issuing a verbal warning to the child.
  - Imposing a fine on the child or the child’s parents.
  - Compensating the victims of the offence.
  - Requiring the child to perform community service.
  - Surrendering the child to his/her parents or those that have guardianship rights over the child.

If the alternative is applied before sentencing, the child does not get a criminal record.

At the point of sentencing, the judge will decide which alternative he or she wants to use depending on what is available in the national legislation. While sentencing is obviously not the duty of police officers, they may be asked to conduct follow up activities with children who are placed outside of detention facilities.

- Alternative to detention in sentencing measures:
  - Placing the child under house arrest.
  - Placing the child in an open facility.
  - Imposing a conditional suspended sentence (probation).
  - Issuing a suspended verdict.
  - Community work.

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SLIDE 13: Treatment of children in police custody

When it is necessary to place a child in police custody, police detention facilities should be adequate to receive the child. In no case should children be placed in a holding space with adults, and male and female children should be detained separately from each other. Police officers should ensure that children in custody receive any medical attention they may need and provide enough food and water for the period of the detention. In addition, children should not be held for intelligence gathering purposes but for judicial reasons only even in conflict zone.

In mission areas, it is often the reality that police stations are poorly equipped and that there is no physical facilities to hold children separately from adults. This can be due to police stations having been destroyed by conflict or natural disaster, or lack of resources. UN Police and other mission components can help with advocacy to allocate resources for police stations to include separate holding facilities for boys and girls.

SLIDE 14: International Standards of Detention of Children

The Havana Rules also detail how juvenile detention facilities should be organized and managed, and the rights of children detained in those facilities. The general principle is stated in Rule 32:

“The design of detention facilities for juveniles and the physical environment should be in keeping with the rehabilitative aim of residential treatment, with due regard to the need of the juvenile for privacy, sensory stimuli, opportunities for association with peers and participation in sports, physical exercise and leisure-time activities.”

Detention facilities must be set in a way that minimizes the negative impact that detention has on children and aim at facilitating their reintegration into society after release.

SLIDE 15: International Standards of Detention of Children

In keeping with the principle stated in Rule 32, other rules set out international standards in more details, as follows:

- Rules 38 to 42 on right to education and vocational training in juvenile detention centers.
- Rules 43 to 46 on rights to work and remuneration.
- Rule 47 on right to recreation activities.
- Rule 48 on right to practice religion.
- Rules 49 to 55 on right to appropriate medical care.
• Rule 59 emphasizes the right of the child to remain in contact with his or her family while in detention.

Distribute the handout “UN Rules on the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty” to learners and encourage them to read the full text in their own time.

Group work on case studies

Time required: 55 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>For introduction of exercise and instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>For group work</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>For group presentations and discussion</td>
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Divide learners into six groups.

Distribute Case Study 1 to two groups and Case Study 2 to another two groups and Case Study 3 to the two last groups.

Ask groups to read their case study and answer the questions. They can write their answers on a flipchart if available.

Give 20 minutes for group work.

Case Study 1

On 16 February, the Central African Police in Bangui received a call informing them about an NGO vehicle reported as stolen and seen parked in a Seleka militia stronghold. The police arrested three individuals who were dismantling the vehicle for parts. The three individuals were taken to the local police station, where they were put in a cell. One of the suspects told the police officers that his name was Aboubacar and that he was 16 years old.

On 21 February, you and your colleague from UNPOL visit the police station. You find the three individuals in one cell. Aboubacar looks very sick and he tells you that no one is taking care of him and that he wants to see his parents.

You have a discussion with the police station commander about this case. He tells you that the police has no funds for medication for all detainees. He also tells you he does not believe Aboubacar is a minor, as he is tall and looks older than 16. He also tells you he is sure the boy is a member of the
Seleka. They took statements from all three suspects and plan to refer the case to the prosecutor the next day.

Questions:

1. Based on international standards, what should the police have done differently in this case?
2. Who would you report this case to in the UN mission?

Case Study 2

You are stationed in Gao in Mali as UNPOL. One day, you come to a police station and you meet a colleague from the host State police who is finishing her shift. She tells you she just arrested a young boy for theft. This is the story she tells you:

“I was patrolling in the market when I heard shouting. I noticed that a small crowd had formed and went to investigate. I saw a boy lying on the ground at the center of the crowd. I managed to disperse the crowd and get to the boy. I asked around what had happened and several people in the crowd accused the boy of stealing a handbag. I noticed the handbag on the ground next to the boy. I picked it up as evidence.

I helped the boy get up and asked him if he was injured. He told me his name was Ali, that he was 14 years old and that the crowd had started to beat him up before I intervened, so he had some pain in his left leg and foot. I was afraid that the crowd would become violent again, so I pressed him on to take him away quickly. He told me it hurt him to walk.

On the way to the police station, I decided to stop at the medical center to have Ali examined. I asked him if that was alright with him and he said yes. A nurse saw him and said he only had bruises. Then I took him to the police station where I put him in the communal cell, where a few other suspects were held. I immediately called his parents and they promised to come in the next two hours.

Then, I had other duties and could not return to this case for an hour. The parents had still not arrived. I went to see Ali in the cell. He told me he wanted to see his parents and know what would happened to him. I told him to wait and gave him water and some food.

Another hour passed and still no sign of the parents. As my shift was about to finish, I decided to interrogate Ali then. I brought him to the interview room and started asking him about his version of the story but he refused to answer any of my questions. I thought his refusal to answer was like a confession, so I recommended that his case be referred to the prosecutor.”

Then, your colleague asks for your opinion of her actions. As she is not familiar with procedures for arresting children, she would appreciate your advice.
Questions:

1. Based on international standards, what did the officer do well?
2. What should the officer have done differently?

Case Study 3

You are stationed in Nyamilima in the East part of DRC as UNPOL. One day, you are patrolling with a colleague from the host State police, which is also the only representative for the area, who is telling you about a case that happen this morning. He tells you he arrested a young girl for association with the armed group controlling the area. This is the story he tells you:

“I was patrolling in the street when a girl of about 12 years old jump in front of me and asked for my help, as she was on the run trying to escape the armed group. She said she was abducted a year ago and given to a General to become his wife. She was scared that they found her and beat her for having escaped. She was hurt on her right leg and was bleeding.

I then took her to my house to hide her as there is no police station, medical facility in the area, as you know, and it will take a two day walk to reach the closest one. I putted a cloth from the kitchen on her wound and then ask her to answer my questions on the armed group in exchange for hiding her. She became agitated and did not want to provide any information. As I was scared that she will escape during my absence before I could have valuable information on the General, I locked her up in the small shed beside the house with water and a piece of bread and told her that he will come back in a couple of hours.”

Then, your colleague asks for your opinion of his actions. As he is not familiar with procedures for arresting children, he would appreciate your advice.

Questions:

1. Based on international standards, what would you advise or done to address this case?
2. What should the officer have done differently?

➡️ After 20 minutes, ask the learners to come back in plenary. Each group designates one presenter who will read the case study aloud and summarize the group’s answers to each question.

➡️ Ask the two groups who worked on Case Study 1 to present. After the two presentations, ask learners to share their comments and questions.
Use the possible answers below to complete the discussion. The answers listed are for guidance and groups may have phrased their own answers differently. The important aspect is that the correct answers go in the same direction as the ones provided.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

Case Study 1:

1. Based on international standards, what should the police have done differently in this case?
   - They should have verified Aboubacar’s age upon arrival at the station, as he claimed to be 16;
   - They should have immediately informed his parents, who could also have proved his age;
   - If possible, they should have placed him in a separate cell from the two other (adult) suspects;
   - If applicable under local legislation, they should not have kept Aboubacar in custody for more than 24 hours before charging him with a crime;
   - If applicable under local legislation, they should have called a social worker and offered Aboubacar legal counsel;
   - They should have ensured that Aboubacar’s parents, the social worker and a lawyer be present during the recording of his statement;
   - From what the commander told you, it seems that Aboubacar’s right to be presumed innocent was not really respected, as the commander has made up his mind about his guilt;
   - They should have provided medical attention to Aboubacar, as he is clearly sick;
   - If Aboubacar is indeed a child, they should refer the case to the juvenile prosecutor and not the adult prosecutor, if the local legal system has juvenile prosecutors.

2. Who would you report this case to in the UN mission?

   You should inform the Child Protection Advisor responsible for the area. Depending on the composition of the peacekeeping mission, you may also want to contact the DDR Section; they will be able to help the child if he wants to demobilize from the Seleka.
Case Study 2:

1. Based on international standards, what did the officer do well?
   - She protected Ali from the crowd and stopped the aggression. Then, she took him away quickly to ensure his safety.
   - She took him to the medical center so he could receive medical attention; she asked his opinion before she did that.
   - She contacted Ali’s parents immediately.
   - She offered Ali water and food while he was in custody.

2. What should the officer have done differently?
   - She should have put Ali in a cell separated from adults.
   - She should have not left the boy in the cell for two hours and should have inform him of the procedure that would be followed, and answer his questions in line with international best practice and domestic legislation.
   - She should have not interrogated Ali without his parents, as he had requested their presence and they had promised to come. She should have transferred the case to the officer coming on duty, who could have waited for the parents’ arrival.
   - She should have not recommended the referral of the case to the prosecutor without exploring all the possibilities for implementing diversion measures (if those are applicable under local legislation).
   - She should have not assumed that Ali was guilty without giving him the presumption of innocence.

Ask the two groups who worked on Case Study 3 to present. After the two presentations, ask learners to share their comments and questions.

Use the possible answers below to complete the discussion. The answers listed are for guidance and groups may have phrased their own answers differently. The important aspect is that the correct answers go in the same direction as the ones provided.

Case Study 3:

1. Based on international standards, what would you advise or done to address this case?
   - Advise host State police about international standards on detention of children:
     - The best interests of the child shall be taking into consideration in all interventions.
     - Ensure that the child receives medical care first, psychosocial distress should also be address by appropriate services (try to reassure the child and refer the child to the
appropriate professional (social worker)) or the case shall be referred to the community leader or civil society for provision of urgent medical and psychosocial care.

- The child should not be interrogated without her consent or the presence of her parents, guardian or legal consult.
- The child should not be detained or only as a last resort, the child should be immediately released from the shed.
- Every efforts should be made to contact the parents or guardians.
- The police officer should have contacted UN Police child protection focal point or CPA for advice immediately.

❖ To address this case UNPOL Officer should:
   - Report orally and in writing to CPA as soon as possible or to UN Police child protection focal point or to Human Rights officer in charge if there is no CPA, or to local NGOs from the child protection system.
   - Verify if there is a need to support in transporting the child to other authorities or medical facility.
   - Coordinate with partners as requested by the Child Protection Advisor for the following steps in the DDR process after the provision of medical and psychosocial care.

2. What should the officer have done differently?

❖ He should have tried to attend to the child’s medical needs first, or contacting the community leader or civil society present in the area for advice on appropriate medical resources.
❖ He should have thought of alternative measures instead of detaining the child.
❖ He should have tried to confirm the age of the child.
❖ He should have informed the child of her rights to legal aid in case of interview.
❖ He should have tried to reassure the child and verify if the parents are living in the area to inform them.
❖ He should have tried to contact local NGO of the child protection system in the area for her to receive appropriate psychosocial care and be directed to any DDR program, UN Agency or INGO for assistance and family tracing.
❖ He should have tried to contact partners immediately, transfer the case to social services as soon as possible.
❖ He should have taken into consideration the concept of do no harm, the officer could be accused of illegal detention, abuse and exploitation, even if it was not his or her intention. Keeping the child at his private place and confining the child to a locked room is against code of conduct and international standards.

SLIDE 16: Questions?

☞ Ask learners if they have questions on the content of this module. It is important to allow sufficient time to answer all questions.
The key messages slides summarise the important take away that connect with the objectives of the module as described at the beginning of the session. Ask learners what the key messages are before showing the slide with the possible answers. It will help them synthesise and integrate the key concepts taught throughout the module and it will help you in assessing the learning and concentrate on gaps or inaccuracies.

Ask the following questions in plenary. Encourage learners to discuss. Then, complete the discussion with the suggested answers presented in the next slides.

What are the key messages of this module?

The key messages are:

1. In exceptional situations, the mission’s mandate may include operational support to apply apprehension, arrest and detention, while most mandates focus on supporting reforms, restructuring and capacity building efforts of host State police in these actions.
2. Detention (including preventive detention) should only be applied as a measure of last resort.
3. International standards exist to guide UN police’s mentoring role to the host State police in regards to the apprehension, arrest and detention of children (Beijing Minimum Standards, the UN Model strategy and the Havana Rules).
4. These international standards relate to, for instance, the length of detention, the assessment of the age of the child, the right of the child to silence, the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty, and the right to maintain a regular contact with his or her family and access to a legal representative.
5. Diversion measures include: Issuing a verbal warning to the child, imposing a fine on the child or its parents or compensating the victims of the offence.
6. Alternatives to detention include: Placing the child under house arrest, placing the child in an open detention facility or imposing a conditional suspended sentence (probation).

Distribute the end of module quiz to learners and gives them 10 minutes to answer the questions. Then distribute the answers for auto-correction. Ask learners to work in pairs and correct each other's answers.