

WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

TUESDAY 31ST MARCH 2009

JUSTICE

Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Mr. Michael Wills):

The Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), which the UK ratified in December 2003, requires states party to establish a “national preventative mechanism” to carry out a system of regular visits to places of detention in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

OPCAT provides that a national preventative mechanism may consist of one body or several. The Government intend that the requirements of OPCAT be fulfilled in the UK by the collective action of existing inspection bodies.

I am designating the following bodies to form the UK NPM. If it is necessary in future to add new inspection bodies to the NPM, or if bodies within the NPM are restructured or renamed, I will notify Parliament accordingly.

England and Wales

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP)

Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB)

Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA)

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Healthcare Inspectorate of Wales (HIW)

Children’s Commissioner for England (CCE)

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)

Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)

Scotland

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS)

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS)

Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (MWCS)

The Care Commission (CC)

Northern Ireland

Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB)

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI)

Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)

Northern Ireland Policing Board Independent Custody Visiting Scheme
(NIPBICVS)