The Commissioners are seriously concerned at the impact of systematic reductions to legal advice, assistance and representation for children and their parents/carers in important areas such as prison law, immigration, private family law, and education.

The roles of the Commissioner for England and Scotland have been strengthened since 2008: the remit of CCE now centres upon the promotion and protection of children’s rights with particular regard to the UNCRC. The Children’s Commissioner in Scotland has been given additional powers by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

In Northern Ireland there has been little progress in relation to the UNCRC since 2008. Few policies or pieces of legislation refer to the UNCRC, and only a very limited number of Child Rights Impact Assessments have been conducted.

The Scottish Government, however, did not support proposals for the full incorporation of the Convention into Scottish law, or otherwise advance enforceable legal protections for children’s rights.

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 places a duty on Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when exercising their functions. The Measure requires a Children’s Rights Scheme which sets out the arrangements by which the Government will comply with their duty.

The Scottish Government, however, did not support proposals for the full incorporation of the Convention into Scottish law, or otherwise advance enforceable legal protections for children’s rights.

In Northern Ireland there has been little progress in relation to the incorporation of the UNCRC since 2008. Few policies or pieces of legislation refer to the UNCRC, and only a very limited number of Child Rights Impact Assessments have been conducted.

The Scottish Government, however, did not support proposals for the full incorporation of the Convention into Scottish law, or otherwise advance enforceable legal protections for children’s rights.

The UK State Party should sign and ratify the Third Optional Protocol to the UNCRC on a Communication Procedure.

A formal UK mechanism should be put in place to ensure that all the devolved nations are routinely and comprehensively involved in international human rights reporting mechanisms, including active participation in UK delegations to international human rights bodies.

The UK State Party and the devolved governments should fully and expressly incorporate the UNCRC and its Protocols in their legislation.