Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Our joint submission with the Cordelia Foundation and the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture covers a number of human rights concerns in Hungary, covering several important areas, including the situation of vulnerable migrants and asylum seekers, conditions of detention, and access to justice and the rule of law.

Given the limited time today, I will focus on three issues related to healthcare and access to healthcare.

The first issue is the assessment of asylum seekers and the identification of vulnerabilities.

Under EU law, medical treatment and support for special needs should follow the identification of vulnerabilities, often referred to as a vulnerability check.

But if there is no systematic screening, this mechanism simply never activates.

People arriving in Hungary may have experienced war, torture, persecution or sexual violence. They may have injuries, serious mental health problems, or long-term effects of torture and trauma. Without proper screening, these conditions may simply remain unidentified and untreated.

This is particularly concerning because Hungarian law does not fully recognise people with mental health conditions as vulnerable in its definition of vulnerability.

This creates a serious gap between the needs of asylum seekers and the protection they should receive under EU and international law, including the right to health.

In situations where a person is dependent on the authorities for access to healthcare, denying necessary care can also raise serious concerns under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits inhuman or degrading treatment.

Our recommendation is therefore clear: Hungary should establish a mandatory and standardised health and vulnerability assessment for asylum seekers, and ensure that everyone identified as vulnerable is actually referred to and receives the healthcare and support they need.

The second issue is access to healthcare in practice. Healthcare is one of the most critical unmet needs for migrants and asylum seekers in Hungary.

The system is highly centralised, and access outside Budapest can be extremely difficult. Psychiatric and psychological support is particularly limited, with around 40 child psychiatrists in the entire country. In some parts of the country, people face waiting lists of several months or even longer.

For asylum seekers, access during the procedure is often limited mainly to emergency care. This means that people may wait for years without access to important preventive screenings or other necessary treatment.

Language is another major barrier. Even when healthcare is technically available, people may struggle to explain their symptoms or understand their diagnosis and treatment without qualified interpretation.

We therefore recommend that asylum seekers and foreign nationals have access to essential healthcare regardless of their insurance status. This should include preventive screenings, check-ups, necessary treatment and surgery, as well as mental health and psychosocial support.

And this support must also include proper interpretation.

The third issue is healthcare and independent monitoring in detention.

Independent monitoring of detention conditions has been absent for years.

Cordelia can sometimes access detention facilities through lawyers working with partner NGOs, but permission is inconsistent. This makes access irregular and unpredictable.

At the same time, regular visits by NGOs and UNHCR were discontinued, leaving people in detention without sufficient independent oversight.

This is particularly concerning because healthcare in detention also remains limited. Detainees may face difficulties receiving prescribed medication or accessing appropriate psychiatric and psychological support. In particular, psychological support and rehabilitation are often not available. For survivors of torture and people who have experienced severe trauma, this can have serious consequences.

Without proper psychological support, their rehabilitation is interrupted or even prevented. Their mental health may deteriorate, and in the most serious cases, the lack of support can put lives at risk, including through an increased risk of suicide.

We therefore recommend a clear and consistent legal framework that guarantees access to detention facilities for NGOs and independent monitors, without arbitrary authorisation. For survivors of torture and severe trauma, healthcare and psychological support are not additional services. They are an essential part of recovery and rehabilitation.

Without them, we risk further harm, worsening mental health, and in the most serious cases, loss of life.

Thank you.