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**WITNESS STATEMENT OF** **D523**

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I, **D523** usually resident at **DPA**, whose date of birth is **DPA** (although the Home Office say it is **DPA**), make this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006. I declare that the contents are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I wish to state as follows:

1. I have prepared this statement with the help of my representatives at Duncan Lewis Solicitors (DL) over a number of sessions. I have found it difficult to prepare this statement as I sometimes struggle recalling specific dates and details and I sometimes get confused with timelines. This statement is what I can remember to the best of my knowledge.
2. In summary I am a refugee from Afghanistan who arrived in the United Kingdom in 2007 as a child and I was granted leave to remain until 14 December 2009 (when it was deemed that I was 17.5 years old). I had a traumatic journey to the UK as a child in 2007 where I was beaten and sexually threatened over the course of around six months as I journeyed overland. I have a history of traumatic experiences as a child in Afghanistan. The First-tier Tribunal did not believe my account of these experiences. I have spent periods of time in the UK homeless. I have been detained by the Home Office under immigration powers on three occasions: on 27 February 2017 for a period of six weeks, on 28 March 2019 for a period of almost four months and 23 April 2020 for a period of two months. These experiences have had a serious effect on my mental well-being. I have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, severe depression, paranoid schizophrenia, and generalised anxiety disorder and I have struggled with substance misuse. I have recently been accepted to be a refugee by a judge of the First-tier Tribunal who allowed my appeal.
3. When I was deemed to have almost reached adulthood, my leave expired and I had to claim asylum. However, my asylum claim was refused and an appeal was rejected on 17 August 2010. Once my appeal rights were exhausted I was not entitled to any financial support or accommodation and I began sleeping rough. Prior to being detained in February 2017 I had

courtyard and refusing to go inside at lock up because we were upset and believed the officers were treating us badly.

- b. I do not accept that myself, or any other detainees, charged or ran at staff.
- c. During the protest myself and many other detainees telephoned the police because we believed we were being treated unfairly and without human rights. While we were protesting we could see a police van arrive and the officers go to reception. I do not think the police officers were allowed to enter the centre and I am not sure what happened next.
- d. At around 2130 some detainees started heading back to the cells.
- e. At around 2300 myself and six or seven other detainees decided to go back into our cells, which left two men protesting on the courtyard.
- f. Shortly after I got back to my cell five or six officers appeared – I remember their faces but not their names. They were yelling and telling me I was going to ‘*the block*’ (the CSU) for being the main instigator of the protest. I denied it and said I would not go. They asked me if I would walk or if they would have to take me and I said they would have to take me. I remember one officer used a technique to get me lying on my stomach on the floor. I remember one officer had their hand on my head pushing my face into the floor, one officer had their hands around my neck and were squeezing really tight, one officer was squeezing my arms and hands behind my back, one officer was taking my legs and making them straight. Then all the officers lifted me up and carried me like a plank. I remember someone shouting ‘*keep your head down*’ and I remember there was still a hand on the back of my head to keep me looking down, and someone was holding my hands behind my back (I do not recall if handcuffs were used on me or not), someone was holding my belly and someone holding my legs and they carried me all the way to the CSU. My cellmate at the time (I cannot recall his name) witnessed this.
- g. After I arrived in the CSU I had red marks on my neck, my arms and hands. To this day my neck still clicks and I wonder if it is from this rough treatment.
- h. I was not asked to fill out a form where I could give my account of what happened. I understand that my healthcare records state that someone from healthcare came to check up on me for any injuries but I do not recall this. I also understand from my records that I was placed on constant watch but I do not recall this or why this happened.