

United Nations Human Rights Council

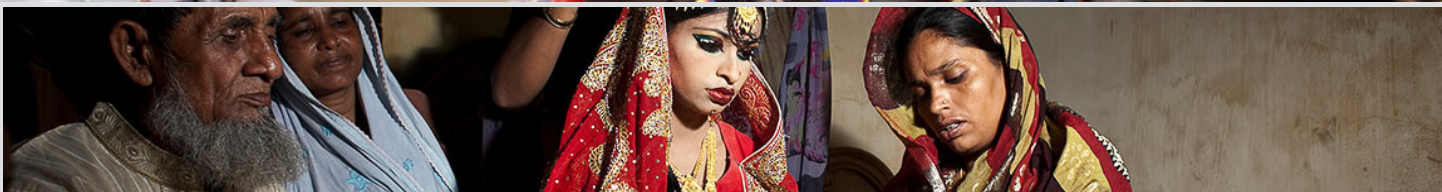


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Letter from the Director

Hello and welcome to MUNI XXII! My name is Fran Tao and I am very honored to serve as your director in this year's Human Rights Council. I am a senior studying political science and psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. This will be my fourth year on the MUNI Dais. In addition to Model UN, I am very involved with aviation and I am an FAA licensed commercial pilot.

This year, we will be debating child marriage, contemporary slavery, and the safety of journalists. These are pressing topics that threaten human rights each day. This guide only provides you with a direction and resources on where you can find more information. It is up to your own research to determine your country position or any additional data on the issues.

I am eager to see you come up with some viable solutions and paths to ultimately help solve these problems. I am excited and I look forward to working with all of you. Feel free to email me (ftao3@illinois.edu) if you have any questions. Stay warm.

Sincerely,

Fran Tao
Director, UNHRC

Topic A: Child Marriage

Overview

Child marriage, defined as a formal marriage or informal union before age 18, is a reality for both boys and girls, although girls are disproportionately the most affected. Child marriage is widespread and can lead to a lifetime of disadvantage and deprivation. UNICEF data released in 2014 show that while prevalence has decreased slightly over the past three decades, rates of progress need to be scaled up dramatically, simply to offset population growth in the countries where the practices are most common.

Worldwide, more than 700 million women alive today were married as children. More than 1 in 3 – or some 250 million – were married before 15. Girls who marry before they turn 18 are less likely to remain in school and more likely to experience domestic violence. Young teenage girls are more likely to die due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth than women in their 20s; their infants are more likely to be stillborn or die in the first month of life. While data from 47 countries show that, overall, the median age at first marriage is gradually increasing, this improvement has been limited primarily to girls of families with higher incomes. But without far more intensive and sustained action now from all parts of society, hundreds of millions more girls will suffer profound, permanent, and utterly unnecessary harm.

Where prevalent, child marriage functions as a social norm. Marrying girls under 18 years old is rooted in gender discrimination, encouraging premature and continuous child bearing and giving preference to boys' education. Child marriage is also a strategy for economic survival as families marry off their daughters at an early age to reduce their economic burden.¹ Most efforts and global attention are directed to girl brides. However, we cannot overlook the fact that boys are also victims of child marriage.

Past efforts

Marriage before the age of 18 is a fundamental violation of human rights. Many factors interact to place a girl at risk of marriage, including poverty, the perception that marriage will provide 'protection', family honor, social norms, customary or religious laws that condone the practice, an inadequate legislative framework and the state of a country's civil registration system. Child marriage often compromises a girl's development by resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, interrupting her schooling, limiting her opportunities for career and vocational advancement and placing her at increased risk of domestic violence. Child marriage also affects boys, but to a lesser degree than girls.

Violence against women and girls is a global scourge that affects millions of women every year. In fact, it is estimated that one in three women and girls experience violence in their lifetime. Child marriage is a manifestation of that violence.

¹ https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58008.html

In many cases parents feel it is in their daughter's best interest to marry at a young age: they believe marriage will protect her against physical or sexual assault. Yet, this belief is often mistaken. Child marriage puts women and girls at increased risk of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout their lives.

Here are five reasons why this violation of girls' most basic rights should prompt action:

1) WE WILL NOT END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS AS LONG AS GIRLS MARRY AS CHILDREN

There is a growing and vocal movement of people around the world determined to put a stop to violence against women and girls. The scale of child marriage means that we cannot hope to achieve this without addressing a practice that leaves girls vulnerable to many different forms of violence. Globally, 700 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday. Without concerted action, this number will grow: the total number of women married in childhood could increase to over 1.2 billion by 2050.

2) CHILD BRIDES ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Girls who marry as children are particularly at risk of violence from their partners or their partners' families. They are consistently more likely to be beaten or threatened by their husbands than girls who marry later. The greater the age difference between girls and their husbands, the more likely they are to experience intimate partner violence.

Often married to much older men, child brides are more likely to believe that a man is sometimes justified in beating his wife than women who marry later. Globally, 44% of girls aged 15-19 think a husband or a partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife or partner in certain circumstances. In Africa and the Middle East, this figure is above half.

3) MARRYING YOUNG SUBJECTS GIRLS TO INSIDIOUS FORMS OF VIOLENCE – EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

Child brides often suffer emotional pressure from their families, and husbands or in-laws can limit their ability to make decisions about their own lives and bodies. Forced sexual initiation and early pregnancy often have long lasting effects on the mental health of child brides for years after.

Evelyn, from Liberia, was just 15 when she was forced to marry. Early on, she found it difficult to assert her wishes about whether or when to have a baby and she soon realized that, were she to use some form of contraception, her husband would leave her. She constantly lives in fear that he'll find out. Growing evidence from sub-Saharan Africa shows that girls who marry early are at greater risk of contracting HIV/Aids or other sexually transmittable diseases. For instance, in Uganda, the HIV rate for adolescent girls between 15 and 19 was higher for married

girls (89%) than for unmarried girls (66%).

4) CHILD BRIDES ARE MORE LIKELY TO DESCRIBE THEIR FIRST SEXUAL EXPERIENCE AS FORCED

Child brides rarely have a say in whom, whether or when to marry. Melka, from Ethiopia, was 14 when she came home from school to discover she was to be married that day to an elderly man in her community. “After the wedding”, she recalls, “they took me to his house in the next village. He started pushing me towards the bedroom. I didn’t want to go inside, but no one would listen to me”.

Melka is not alone in her situation. A study in northern Ethiopia revealed that 81% of child brides interviewed described their sexual initiation as forced. In India, they were 3 times as likely to report being forced to have sex than girls who married later. Studies have also found that child brides typically continue to experience non-consensual sex throughout their marriage.

5) ACTION ON CHILD MARRIAGE WILL SEND THE CLEAR MESSAGE THAT VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS AND WOMEN CAN NEVER BE EXCUSED IN THE NAME OF TRADITION OR CULTURE

When girls marry before 18, their lives are all too often marked by an unspoken, yet very real, kind of violence; one that is happening, as Ela Bhatt of the Elders describes, “with the consent of society”.

“Despite the progress we have made”, Archbishop Desmond Tutu blogged, “this world remains a cruel and arbitrary one for too many women and girls” who are subjected daily to violence commonly accepted as tradition in many societies.

A complex practice of which the causes cannot be generalized, child marriage relies on a core assumption: that women and girls are somehow of lesser value. This often leads to situations where acts of violence against girls are easier to justify. Countering the normalization of violence in the lives of girls and women forced to marry early is one of the greatest challenges ahead in our efforts to stop gender-based violence. It will take courage, determination and coordinated action from all sectors of society to bring it to an end.²

Cohabitation – when a couple lives ‘in union’, as if married – raises the same human rights concerns as marriage. When a girl lives with a man and takes on the role of his caregiver, the assumption is often that she has become an adult, even if she has not yet reached the age of 18. Additional concerns due to the informality of the relationship – in terms of inheritance, citizenship and social recognition, for example – may make girls in informal unions vulnerable in different ways than girls who are married.

² <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-is-child-marriage-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

The issue of child marriage is addressed in a number of international conventions and agreements. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, for example, covers the right to protection from child marriage in article 16, which states: “The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage....” The right to ‘free and full’ consent to marriage is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that consent cannot be ‘free and full’ when one of the parties involved is not sufficiently mature to make an informed decision about a life partner. Although marriage is not mentioned directly in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, child marriage is linked to other rights – such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to protection from all forms of abuse, and the right to be protected from harmful traditional practices – and is frequently addressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Other international agreements related to child marriage are the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.³

Devoted agencies

UNICEF

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is committed to efforts to end child marriage and is able to use its global leadership position, its mandate to provide data and evidence on child marriage, and its broad field-based programming in various sectors to bring about change on this issue. In 2012, UNICEF was instrumental in organizing the inaugural International Day of the Girl Child, which had child marriage as its theme. The event raised awareness of the issue and helped refocus attention on this harmful practice.

Empowering girls and women and ensuring girls and boys are healthy is at the core of UNICEF’s mission. Because UNICEF works across multiple sectors, and because it works both with high-level decision makers as well as with grassroots community organizations, it is uniquely positioned to identify and address some of the systemic and underlying factors that pose a challenge to reproductive health, rights and gender equality.⁴

Girls Not Bride

Girls Not Brides was initiated in September 2011 by The Elders, a group of independent global leaders working together for peace and human rights, as part of their efforts to more attention to the harmful practices that hold girls and women back, and to encourage and empower others to work to create a world without child marriage. Girls Not Brides became an independent charity in 2013. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Mrs Graca Machel and Sonita Alizadeh are Girls Not

³ <http://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/>

⁴ https://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58008.html

Brides Global Champions and advocates to end child marriage.

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 650 civil society organizations from over 85 countries committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. Members are based throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas. They share the conviction that every girl has the right to lead the life that she chooses and that, by ending child marriage, we can achieve a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future for all. Stronger together, Girls Not Brides members bring child marriage to global attention, build an understanding of what it will take to end child marriage and call for the laws, policies and programs that will make a difference in the life of millions of girls.⁵

UNFPA

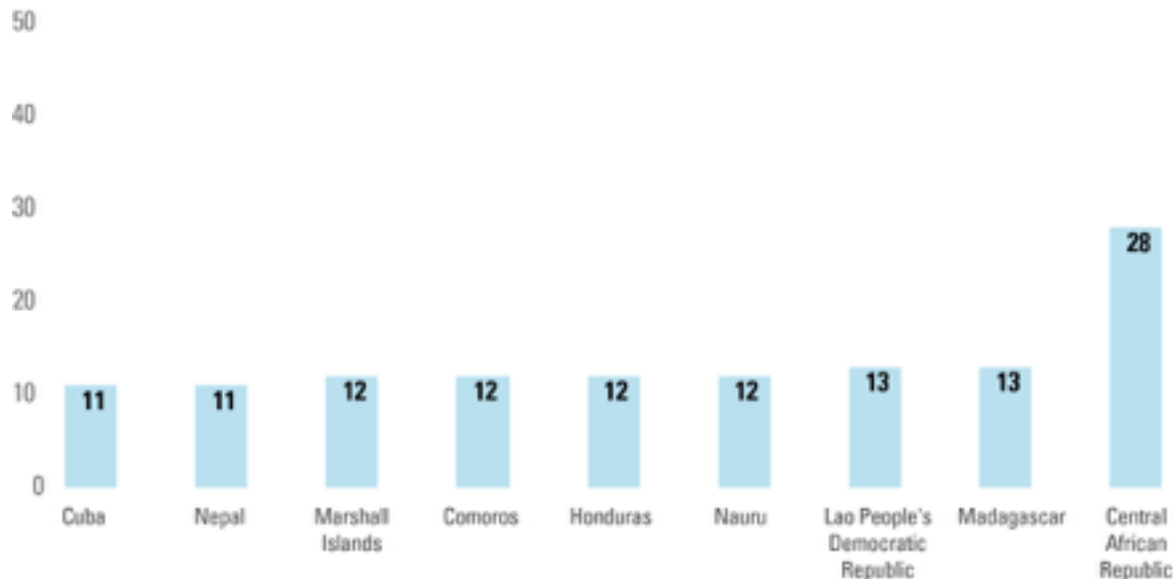
The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) promotes legislation and programs designed to end child marriage. UNFPA also supports evidence-based, girl-centered investments that empower girls with the information, skills and services they need to be healthy, educated, and safe, helping them make a successful transition to adulthood. UNFPA also works to support the needs of married girls particularly in family planning and maternal health.

UNFPA is committed to delivering concrete solutions to child marriage, with an emphasis on efforts that can be scaled-up and produce measurable results. UNFPA works with governments and civil society partners, at all levels, to promote and protect the human rights of girls, including assisting with the development of policies, programs and legislation to address and curtail the practice of child marriage. Many of these efforts, such as *the Action for Adolescent Girls program* and *the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Program to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage*, empower girls to know their human rights, including their right to choose, as adults, whom to marry.⁶

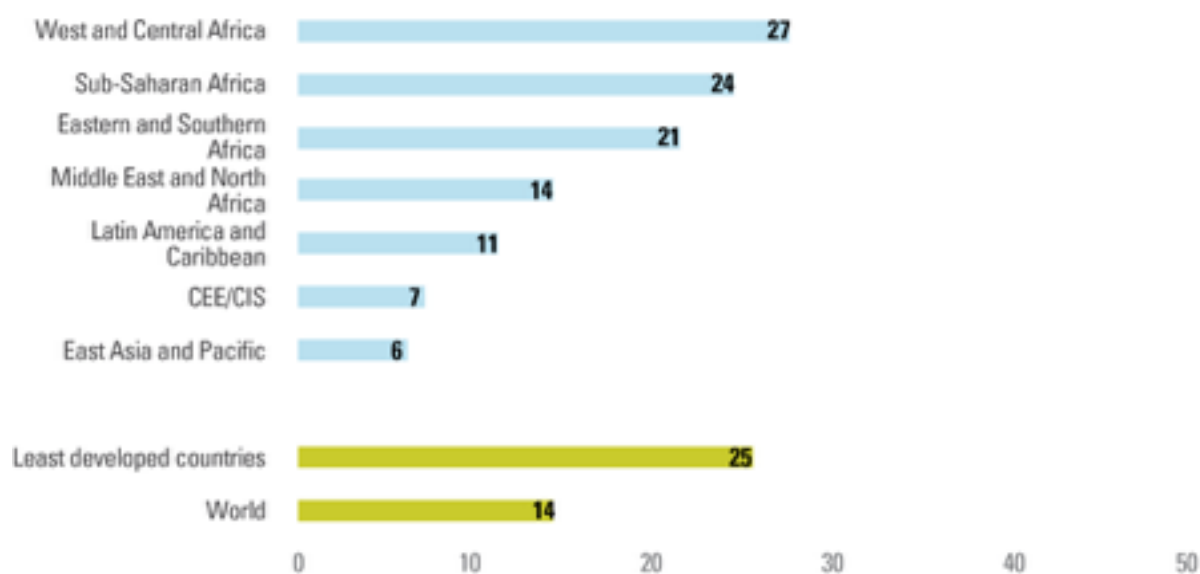
⁵ <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/about-girls-not-brides/>

⁶ <http://www.unfpa.org/child-marriage>

Related data



Percentage of men aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union by age 18, in the nine countries where prevalence rates for child marriage are above 10 per cent⁷



⁷ UNICEF global databases, 2016, based on DHS and MICS, 2007–2014.

Percentage of girls aged 15 to 19 years who are currently married or in union, by region⁸

What can we do as UNHRC

On Thursday 2 July, 2016, the United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously adopted a resolution (A/HRC/29/L.15) co-sponsored by over 85 States to strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, a practice that affects 15 million girls every year. The resolution is the first-ever substantive resolution on child marriage adopted by the Council. It recognizes child marriage as a violation of human rights “that prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of violence” and that has “wide ranging and adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to education, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health”. The resolution also recognizes child marriage as a “barrier to sustainable development” that “helps to perpetuate the cycle of poverty”.⁹

The United Nations Human Rights Council acts as a recommender to other agencies. It functions as an agency that provides suggestions and goals to other agencies. It also regularly monitors countries’ current standing in their human rights promotion efforts. We, as the HRC, can utilize this opportunity to collaborate with other agencies and encourage countries to take realistic actions.

QARMAs

1. What can be done to tackle the root causes of child marriage?
2. What current mechanisms within the UN can we adopt as new forms of actions?
3. How can we revise current programs for more efficient application?
4. Does a certain country have a policy that the UNHRC can learn from and apply to all other countries?

⁸ UNICEF global databases, 2016, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys, 2010-2015. Estimates are based on a subset of 104 countries covering 61 per cent of the global population of girls aged 15 to 19. Regional estimates represent data covering at least 50 per cent of the regional population. Data coverage was insufficient to calculate a regional estimate for South Asia.

⁹ <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/press-release-human-rights-council-adopts-resolution-to-end-child-early-and-forced-marriage/>

Topic B: Contemporary forms of slavery

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights
and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Overview

In May 2014, the Human Rights Council appointed Ms. Urmila Bhoola as Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences. Article 4 of the UDHR states that ‘No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms’.

Slavery was the first human rights issue to arouse wide international concern yet it still continues today and slavery-like practices also remain a grave and persistent problem. The mandate on contemporary forms of slavery includes but is not limited to issues such as: traditional slavery, forced labor, debt bondage, serfdom, children working in slavery or slavery-like conditions, domestic servitude, sexual slavery, and servile forms of marriage. As a legally permitted labor system, traditional slavery has been abolished everywhere, but it has not been completely eradicated. It can persist as a state of mind- among victims and their descendants and among the inheritors of those who practiced it –long after it has formally ended. Contemporary forms of slavery often involve hidden populations, some of whom perform illicit work. Slavery often occurs in isolated areas and access can be challenged or compromised when workers are involved in illegal activities, when they are geographically isolated, or when they work in violent or politically unstable countries or regions. The majority of those who suffer are the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalized social groups in society. Fear, ignorance of one’s rights and the need to survive do not encourage them to speak out.

In order to effectively eradicate slavery in all its forms, the root causes of slavery such as poverty, social exclusion and all forms of discrimination must be addressed. In addition, we need to promote and protect the rights of all especially the most vulnerable in our society. Where human rights violations have already been committed, we are called upon to help restore the dignity of victims.¹⁰ A stream of evidence presented to United Nations human rights bodies, notably the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, as well as studies and the findings of special rapporteurs, give an accurate picture of current slavery-like practices. The descriptions which follow are drawn from these official sources. They also reveal that there are no clear distinctions between different forms of slavery. The same families and groups of people are often the victims of several kinds of modern slavery-for example, bonded labor, forced labor, child labor or child prostitution-with extreme poverty as a common linking factor.

¹⁰ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Slavery/SRSlavery/Pages/SRSlaveryIndex.aspx>

Forms of Contemporary Slavery

Child labor

Child labor is in great demand because it is cheap and because children are naturally more docile, easier to discipline than adults, and too frightened to complain. Their small physique and nimble fingers are seen as assets by unscrupulous employers for certain kinds of work. It often happens that children are given jobs when their parents are sitting at home, unemployed.

There are children between seven and ten years of age who work twelve to fourteen hours a day and are paid less than one-third of the adult wage. Child domestic servants not only work long hours for a pittance but are particularly vulnerable to sexual as well as other physical abuse. At the extreme fringe, children are kidnapped, held in remote camps, and chained at night to prevent their escape. They are put to work on road-building and stone-quarrying. Child labor, often hard and hazardous, damages health, deprives children of education and the normal enjoyment of their early years. Non-governmental organizations have proposed an international timetable for the wiping out of the worst forms of child exploitation. They suggest that: All forced labor camps be eliminated within 12 months; Children be excluded from the most hazardous forms of work, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the ILO, by 1995; All forms of labor for children under 10 outlawed by ILO Convention No. 138 be eliminated, and that those regarding children in the 10-14 age group be halved by the year 2000.

Children in armed conflict

Forcible recruitment of children into military service has been reported in many parts of the world. The consequences are devastating. Many have died or been disabled in armed operations, while others have been interrogated, tortured, beaten, or kept as prisoners of war.

The traffic in persons, sexual exploitation

The recruitment, clandestine transport, and exploitation of women as prostitutes, and the organized prostitution of children of both sexes in a number of countries is well documented. A link has been established in some places between prostitution and pornography--particularly involving children--and the promotion and growth of tourism.

Sale of children

Unscrupulous go-betweens have found that large profits can be made by arranging the transfer of children from poverty-stricken homes to people with means without guarantees and supervision to ensure that the child's interests will be protected. In such cases, financial gain for the parents as well as the intermediaries takes on the character of trading in children.

Debt bondage

Debt bondage can hardly be distinguished from traditional slavery because it prevents the victim from leaving his job or the land he tills until the money is repaid. Although in theory a debt is repayable over a period of time, a situation of bondage arises when in spite of all his efforts, the

borrower cannot wipe it out. Normally, the debt is inherited by the bonded laborer's children. Sharecropping is a familiar way of leading borrowers into debt bondage.

Apartheid and colonialism

Apartheid is not simply a racial discrimination problem to be solved through education and political reform. In essence, apartheid has dispossessed the black population of South Africa by imposing a quasi-colonial system. Through coercive measures, the labor of the indigenous peoples has been harnessed for the profit of white investors.

By suppressing the human rights of entire populations, apartheid and other forms of colonialism have the effect of collective or group slavery. A pernicious quality is that the subject peoples have no choice: they are born into a state of slavery and have very little, if any, means of appeal against it.

Slavery: a state of mind

As a legally-permitted labor system, traditional slavery has been abolished everywhere but it has not been completely stamped out. There are still reports of slave markets. Even when abolished, slavery leaves traces. It can persist as a state of mind, among its victims and their descendants and among the inheritors of those who practiced it, long after it has formally disappeared.

Past efforts

Since its beginning in 1919, the International Labor Organization has been concerned about the situation of workers subjected to forced labor. The fact that in today's world there are still children, women and men in slave-like conditions, is an affront to all people and nations everywhere. The right to be free of forced labor is both a fundamental labor right, as well as a human right. Yet, with 178 countries having ratified the Forced Labor Convention of 1930 and 175 countries having ratified the Abolition of forced labor Convention of 1957, the scourge still exists. The numbers are staggering: 21 million women, men and children trapped in forced labor around the world, generating USD 150 billion in illicit profits for those who exploit them. Forced labor takes many forms, including commercial sexual exploitation, debt bondage or traditional slavery, and is present in many sectors, such as agriculture, construction, domestic work or fishing.

The Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery* has the general responsibility in the United Nations for the study of slavery in all its aspects. Meeting for the first time in 1975 as the Working Group on Slavery, the group was renamed in 1988. The Working Group consists of five independent experts¹¹ chosen on the basis of fair geographical representation from the

¹¹ In 1990, the members of the Working Group were: Fatma Zohra Ksentini (Algeria) (chairperson/rapporteur), Ion Diaconu (Romania), Asbjorn Eide (Norway), Waleed M. Sadi (Jordan), Suescun Monroe (Colombia).

membership of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. The group meets for one week each year and reports to the Sub- Commission.

In addition to monitoring the application of the slavery conventions and making a review of the situation in different parts of the world, the group selects a theme for special attention each year. In 1989, the theme was prevention of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and in 1990, eradication of the exploitation of child labor and debt bondage. The 1991 theme is the prevention of the traffic in persons and exploitation of the prostitution of others. Programs of national and international action to deal with the problems raised by the first two themes have been drafted by the Working Group, which expects to receive reactions to its proposals from governments and a wide range of organizations. In 1992, the Working Group expects to evaluate its study of the three themes and to take up the idea of an international pledging conference to help put an end to the exploitation of child labor.

Current attempts

2016 has been a significant year in advancing fundamental principles and rights at work. Working with governments, social partners and communities, the ILO FUNDAMENTALS Branch has helped those who cannot organize and bargain collectively, those suffering from discrimination, and those who are trapped in child labor and forced labor. There is much more to be done, and we look forward to accelerating progress and coordinating action towards our common goals over the coming years.¹² The ILO Forced Labor Protocol¹³ that was adopted in 2014 has now entered into force. The Protocol's provisions on remedies and compensation is a powerful instrument – if used effectively – to provide justice to the many victims of forced labor and make it less profitable to those tempted to use forced labor.

Experience shows that ending slavery and forced labor requires a balanced and integrated approach. This is why the fight against forced labor is closely linked to the combat against child labor, against discrimination and in favor of freedom of association and collective bargaining. These mutually reinforcing fundamental principles and rights at work form part of an integrated approach to realizing the goal of decent work for all. Under Target 8.7 of the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) world leaders committed to “take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labor in all its forms.”¹⁴

Among proposals for future action, the Working Group has recommended that a voluntary or trust fund be created which would make it possible for more directly-concerned organizations to take part in the Working Group's activities; Where child labor might be involved-as in the

¹² <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm>

¹³ http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3174672

¹⁴ http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_536773/lang--en/index.htm

making of carpets-the product should bear a special mark certifying that children have not been employed. Consumers should be alerted to demand products so marked; Information campaigns for the boycotting of goods produced on the basis of exploited child labor be launched; A seminar or workshop on debt bondage be organized by ILO in co-ordination with other United Nations bodies; United Nations organs, specialized agencies, development banks and other intergovernmental bodies avoid the involvement of bonded labor in development projects with which they are concerned, and contribute to its elimination; States co-operate in drawing up a convention on inter-country adoption as proposed at the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

Devoted agencies

ILO

The ILO with its global membership – governments, employers' and workers' organizations – is fully supporting the achievement of this ambitious target, as well as providing support to Alliance 8.7, the global partnership to achieve SDG Target 8.7. I am confident that by 2030 we will be able to say we have defeated slavery.

The ILO has adopted two conventions which require the ratifying States to suppress and not to make use of any form of forced or compulsory labor. Convention No. 29 of 1930 prohibits forced labor in most of its forms, and Convention No. 105 of 1957 forbids its use for development. Each has received more than 100 ratifications. The ILO 1973 Minimum Age Convention is designed to prevent the exploitation of child labor. It sets the minimum age for work at not less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and in any case not less than 15 years (14 years for developing countries), and for work "likely to harm health, safety or morals" at not less than 18 years.

Governments report to the ILO on the steps they take to comply with these international legal instruments. The reports are examined by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and by the International Labor Conference, and any problems are followed up until they are resolved. The ILO also carries out an active program of technical assistance to combat child labor, bonded labor, and other unacceptable forms of exploitation. Additionally, the ILO supplies information to the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery; in return, the proceedings of the Working Group throw light on the extent to which ILO conventions are being observed and on cases where ILO may offer assistance in solving problems.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has confirmed at Working Group hearings that sex exploitation, debt bondage, the sale of children, and the condition of apartheid all present grave risks to the mental health and social development of the children involved. Exploitation for sexual ends also adds to the risk of spreading HIV/AIDS.

In addition to an offer to study the problem of child prostitution and develop approaches on prevention and the treatment of health hazards, the WHO and its regional offices are in a position to provide technical support for specific projects. Guidelines are also being prepared by WHO on the issue of trafficking in human organs for transplantation purposes.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Slavery and slavery-like practices have been the subject of meetings and reports prepared under UNESCO auspices. As one example, UNESCO has sponsored a study by the International Catholic Child Bureau on the protection of minors from pornography.

In 1988, a UNESCO meeting studied the effects of armed conflict on children and recommended action to protect and promote their rights in such situations. In 1991, UNESCO organized a meeting on the 1949 Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. The aim was to make proposals to improve implementation of the Convention.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The FAO's approach relates to servitude of children and debt bondage in connection with existing forms of land tenure. FAO activities which promote people's participation and give assistance to small farmers' organizations are seen as effective counter-measures to debt bondage.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The role of UNICEF is crucial to international strategies to deal with contemporary forms of slavery. UNICEF arranged massive support for the adoption and rapid ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and organized the World Summit for Children in New York in September, 1990.

The Summit approved at the highest political level a Declaration and Plan of Action for the Survival, Protection and Development of children in the 1990s. In the Plan of Action, states are committed to work to ease the plight of millions of children who live under especially difficult circumstances such as orphans, the homeless, refugees, displaced persons, victims of war and natural/man-made disasters, children of migrant workers, etc. and other socially disadvantaged groups, like child workers or youth trapped in the bondage of prostitution, sexual abuse, disabled children, juvenile delinquents, and victims of apartheid and foreign occupation.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

A standing group of UNHCR monitors the situation of refugee children and the particular problems they encounter. Guidelines to UNHCR field offices on refugee children include the issues of recruitment in armed conflict and the adoption of unaccompanied minors.

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

Problems akin to slavery which affect women in particular receive continued attention from the Commission on the Status of Women, and have been featured in debates, resolutions, and recommendations of the World Conferences of the United Nations Decade for Women in Mexico

City, Copenhagen, and Nairobi. The Commission submits information to the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch

In its study of child victimization, including trafficking in and the sale of children, this branch of the United Nations identifies four fields of counteraction by the machinery of justice. These are prevention; treatment and redress for victims; legal sanctions for alleged offenders; and treatment and rehabilitation of offenders.

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

INTERPOL provides information on slavery-like practices to the Working Group under a co-operative arrangement with the United Nations. Information included in the report of the 1988 International Symposium on Traffic in Human Beings, where child pornography was discussed. The symposium urged law enforcement agencies to give priority to investigations into the international market for pornographic material with the emphasis on the welfare of the child. It was recommended that prevention of the sexual abuse of children should be included in the public awareness campaigns of law enforcement agencies. INTERPOL is making a study of ways to improve international co-operation in preventing and punishing offences against minors, and will communicate the results to the Working Group.

QARMA

1. What can we utilize within the UN to further combat contemporary slavery?
2. What actions can we take as UNHRC to address the supply chain and mechanism of slavery?
3. What action plans currently adopted by the UN can we revise or abandon?
4. How can we create action plans to disincentivize slavery?

Topic C: The Safety of Journalists

Overview

In the past 22 years, more than 1055 journalists have been killed worldwide. Figures compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists, an international non-governmental organization that promotes press freedom globally, show that the vast majority of journalists are not killed because of the life-threatening situations in which they find themselves, but are murdered outright because of their reporting. Very few of those murders are investigated and in almost ninety percent of cases no one is prosecuted.

UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay is unequivocal: “Sound, bold and independent journalism is vital in any democratic society... It is the lifeblood that fuels the full and informed participation of all individuals in political life and decision-making processes.”

Past efforts

The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity is a worldwide framework which aims to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations. Through a concerted approach between a range of civil society organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and governments as well as local media houses and journalist associations, the plan seeks to assist countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favorable to freedom of expression and information, and supporting their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles.

As part of its work on safety and protection of journalists, International Media Support is taking an active role in the implementation of the UN Plan of Action. As a first step, the implementation of the plan takes place in five pilot countries, Iraq, Nepal, Pakistan, South Sudan, and Mexico. Each of these five countries will see the plan implemented in the coming months and years.

Devoted agencies

UNESCO actively promotes the safety of those who produce journalism and believes that they have the right to work free from the threat of violence and to ensure the freedom of opinion and expression for all.

In the past 10 years, more than 800 journalists and media workers have been killed – the majority of them are not war correspondents. Attacks on media professionals are often perpetrated in non-conflict situations by organized crime groups, militias, security personnel, and even local police, making local journalists among the most vulnerable. These attacks include murder, abductions, harassment, intimidation, and illegal arrest and detention.

Most abuses against media professionals remain uninvestigated and unpunished. This

impunity perpetuates the cycle of violence against journalists, media workers, and citizen journalists. The resulting self-censorship deprives society of information and further impacts press freedom. The killing of journalists and its impunity directly impacts the United Nations' human rights based efforts to promote peace, security, and sustainable development

Raising Awareness

Since 1997, UNESCO's Director-General has condemned the killings of journalists as per Resolution 29 of the 29th UNESCO General Conference and, beginning in 2008, has presented a biennial Report on The Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity to the International Program for Development of Communication (IPDC) Council. The numbers are alarming. In 2012 alone there were 121 journalists killed – almost twice as many killings than in previous years.

UNESCO has championed The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity which was further endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board on 13 April 2012. The plan provides a framework for the UN to work on this issue with all stakeholders including national authorities, local and international NGOs, media houses, and academia. Most recently, UNESCO's 191st Executive Board adopted the UNESCO Work Plan on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity in April 2013, which further complements the organization's existing work in the field already in line with the UN Plan of Action and emphasis on South-South cooperation.

Cooperation is also reinforced with the Office of Special Procedures including the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, and other regional Rapporteurs including Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa (AUC), Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, Organization of the American States (OAS), and the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

QARMA

1. What forms of actions can we take to further ensure the safety of journalists?
2. What steps can we take as UNHRC to spread the importance of journalism safety?