

No One Left Behind

A United Nations Human Rights Council parallel event focusing on stemming child, early and forced marriages and conversions of religious minority women and girls

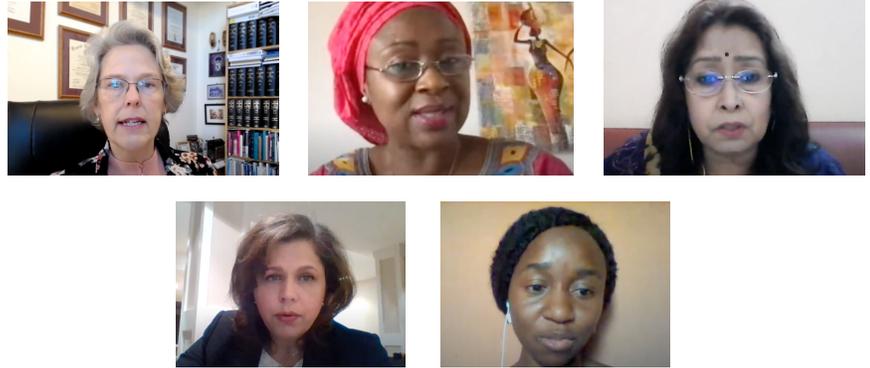
Speakers

- Ann Buwalda, Moderator (Executive Director, Jubilee Campaign)
- Hon. Mama Fatima Singhateh (United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children)
- Hon. Mangla Sharma (Member, Pakistan Hindu Council; Member, Provincial Assembly of Sindh)
- Fatima Njoku (Advocacy Director, Stefanos Foundation)
- Ghada Melek (Board of Directors, Coptic Solidarity)

Objectives

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime released a report in October 2020 documenting the association between human trafficking and force marriages. This parallel event was convened to complement the report and highlight the vulnerabilities of religious minority women and girls that are kidnapped, forcibly married, and forcibly converted, with a specific focus on Egypt, Pakistan, and Nigeria.

The aims of this event are to provide regional examples to policymakers on how forced marriage of children and women is a form of trafficking in persons. We also wish to highlight existing and evolving best practices to address the issues and encourage states to take steps to uphold their commitments to CEDAW and the ICCPR as they relate to minority women and girls.



Key Messages

- Religious conversions made under duress constitute a violation of human rights.
- A girl who is a double victim of forced marriage and forced conversion may experience conditions inside the marriage which could meet international legal definitions of slavery and slavery-like practices, including domestic servitude.
- Public and international pressure and accountability is effective in returning the abducted girls to their normal lives, as well as in ending impunity for perpetrators.

Recommendations

- There is a need for the international community and national governments to collect data on the cases of abduction and forced marriage of minority women and girls and put pressure for a change in the pattern of impunity.
- All states and countries, regardless of traditions, need to enact laws that criminalize forced conversion and forced marriages of children - if they have not done so already - and work to see them implemented.
- There needs to be a priority in joint projects focusing on combatting human trafficking that focuses on minority groups which are the most targeted when it comes to forced religious conversions and marriages.
- Ensure assistance is allocated to constructing and staffing shelters for trafficking victims to help these women and girls cope and rehabilitate.
- Assist governments in educating the security, judicial, and relevant government officials, to not arrest and charge trafficking victims with prostitution