



Florence Model United Nations

Research Guide

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Committee: SOCHUM

Topic: Addressing the practice of forced child marriage and trafficking

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I. Introduction

To this day, human trafficking and child marriage remains an issue as it is a critical human right violation affecting the lives of millions of children globally. Minors are deprived of fundamental rights that expose them to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Issues such as gender inequality, poverty, economic motives and cultural traditions cause the victims of such issues, young girls, to be deprived of opportunities, freedom and education. Although efforts have been made to fight these injustices, the United Nations deems it necessary and urgent to develop more effective policies that call for global intervention and community awareness regarding this matter. The debate of this topic uncovers and showcases the causes, consequences and thus solutions that will help resolve and advocate for a future of an environment of dignity and safety for children to grow up in.

II. Definition of Key Terms

- **Human Trafficking** – The illegal trade of individuals for exploitation, including forced labor, sexual slavery, or marriage.
- **Sex Trafficking** – The coercion, fraud, or force used to exploit individuals for commercial sex, often involving minors.
- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** – Harmful acts directed at individuals based on gender, including forced marriage and domestic abuse.
- **Forced Marriage** – A marriage conducted without the free and full consent of one or both parties, often involving coercion, threats, or violence.

III. General Overview

Forced child marriage occurs when one or both parties, usually under the age of 18, are married without their full and free consent. Many of these marriages are arranged by families due to economic hardship, cultural traditions, or social pressures. The issue further deepens once married; child brides often face domestic violence, early pregnancies, and limited access to education or employment, trapping them in cycles of poverty and dependency.

Human trafficking involves the illegal trade of humans for exploitation, including forced labor, sexual slavery, and even coerced marriage. Vulnerable children are often the targets and victims of human trafficking. Young individuals are promised a future of work and safety whilst receiving the opposite: abuse, child marriage and exploitation.

Both these issues can be attributed to 3 factors: Corruption, lack of law enforcement and lack of adequate education. IGOs, NGOs and activists are working to address these issues by implementing stronger legal frameworks, raising awareness, and providing support to survivors. Nonetheless, eliminating these harmful and abusive practices requires a coordinated global effort, including empowering communities, enforcing laws, and addressing the root causes such as poverty and discrimination.

It is the role of the social, cultural and humanitarian committee to address both these issues by focusing on raising awareness, and promoting more meaningful and effective policies in our clauses to bring a stop to this violation of basic human rights.

IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views

Nations in favor of child marriage with the highest percentage of underage marriage. % of women married under the age of 18:

- a) Niger – 75%**
- b) Bangladesh – 50%**
- c) Chad – 60%**
- d) Central African Republic – 61%**
- e) South Sudan – 52%**
- f) Ethiopia – 40%**

V. Relevant UN Documents and Articles

- a. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948) – Article 16**
- b. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979) – Article 16**
- c. Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery (1956) – Defines practices such as forced marriage as forms of slavery.**
- d. UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015) - Goal 5.3 - 8.7**

VI. Conclusion

It is the role of the social, cultural and humanitarian committee of the United Nations to present all member nations with necessary regulation to assist in solving these issues. The areas that should be addressed in order to reach substantial conclusions are addressing corruption, respecting human rights and fighting poverty. Tens of millions of women are still targets and victims to this issue and are being deprived of their own freedom and choice, making a difference will involve greatly empowering advocacy to promote societal changes in the LEDCs where these issues are a more common phenomenon.

VII. Bibliography

- https://www.unodc.org/unodc/frontpage/2024/July/explainer_-_understanding-child-trafficking.html
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