

Selected UN Special Procedures reports presented at the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council

The UN Special Procedures reports listed in the table below were presented at the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council (HRC, 19 June – 14 July 2023). The themes and findings of these reports cover some of the key issues central to ending child, early and forced marriage and unions (CEFMU). In three cases, as outlined below, *Girls Not Brides* members provided submissions in advance of the HRC interactive dialogues on the reports, highlighting the critical links between the focus of the report and child marriage.

Report title	Summary of report	Further information
Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (A/HRC/53/21)	<p>This report examines the widespread and systematic discrimination girls and women in Afghanistan are subjected to under the Taliban. The report emphasizes that the Taliban’s discriminatory and misogynistic policies and harsh enforcement methods constitute gender persecution and an institutionalised framework of gender apartheid.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 18-20 of the report.</p>	<p>Girls Not Brides members’ written statement submitted in advance of the interactive dialogue on the report.</p>

<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education on securing the right to education: advances and challenges (A/HRC/53/27)</p>	<p>This report examines achievements – particularly on how the right to education is understood today and the obligations it entails – and contemporary and emerging issues that need to be considered to ensure the right to education for all, today and in the future. The report makes the case for education as a public and common good and for understanding the right to education as a right to life-long learning within a system that links formal, non-formal and informal spaces for education.</p> <p>It looks at key elements of the right to education, including: the right to learn, the right to life-long learning, a right to free quality education, the shift from an equal right to education to the right to equitable and inclusive education, a right to participate in educational life, a right to public education, a right to educational freedoms, not reducing education to schooling, and the right to be safe in education.</p> <p>It also unpacks the legal obligations for realising the right to education, highlighting the obligations to: fully implement the right to education, financing education, regulating private actors, controlling the digitalisation of education, recognising the role of teachers, and enforcing education availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on page 21 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>Girls Not Brides members' written statement submitted in advance of the interactive dialogue on the report</p>
<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on refugee protection, internal displacement and statelessness (A/HRC/53/28)</p>	<p>This report highlights states' obligations to ensure effective access to international protection for trafficked persons, and persons at risk of trafficking. It highlights obligations on states to prevent trafficking in internal displacement and refugee settings, to ensure effective access to asylum, compliance with the principle of non-refoulement. It emphasises the urgency of eliminating statelessness, as an important measure to prevent trafficking in persons, especially children.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 18-19 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>The focus of the Special Rapporteur's report to be presented at UNGA 2023 will be on strengthening accountability for trafficking in persons in the context of conflict.</p>

<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change on providing legal options to protect the human rights of persons displaced across international borders due to climate change (A/HRC/53/34)</p>	<p>This report examines various international, regional and national legal and policy approaches to address the displacement of people across international borders due to climate change. It concludes that there is a deficit in legal protection for such people and makes a number of recommendations on how this legal deficit can be resolved, including for the development of an optional protocol to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to protect the human rights of persons displaced across international borders due to climate change.</p> <p>This report notes that as an interim measure, nations should develop national legislation that provides humanitarian visas for persons displaced across international borders due to climate change. It also calls for parties to the Paris Agreement to develop funding arrangements to assist persons displaced across international borders due to climate change to address their vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on page 19 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>The focus of the Special Rapporteur’s report to be presented at UNGA 2023 will be on enhancing climate change legislation, support for climate change litigation and advancement of the principle of intergeneration justice</p>
<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences on custody, violence against women and violence against children (A/HRC/53/36)</p>	<p>This report demonstrates how the discredited and unscientific pseudo-concept of parental alienation is used in family law proceedings by abusers as a tool to continue their abuse and coercion and to undermine and discredit allegations of domestic violence made by mothers who are trying to keep their children safe. It also shows how the standard of the best interest of the child is violated by imposing contact between a child and one or both parents and by prioritising it, even where there is evidence of domestic violence.</p> <p>Predominantly as a result of the lack of training and gender bias and of access to legal support, the custody of children may be awarded to perpetrators of violence, despite evidence of a history of domestic and/or sexual abuse, thus often resulting in revictimisation of survivors of such violence. The risks of such consequences are compounded for women from groups who have been marginalised.</p> <p>This report also underlines that the use of parental alienation is highly gendered and frequently used against mothers, and custody decisions made in favour of the parent who claims to be alienated may continue to expose the child to lasting harm. It elaborates on</p>	<p>Girls Not Brides members’ written statement submitted in advance of the interactive dialogue on the report</p> <p>The focus of the Special Rapporteur’s report to be presented at UNGA 2023 will be on the nexus between violence against women and girls, discrimination in</p>

	<p>systemic issues that lead to additional barriers to justice. Judges and evaluators need to move away from focusing on the identification of behaviours that are contested within the discipline of psychology and towards a focus on the specific facts and contexts of each case.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 19-20 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>nationality laws, and statelessness</p>
<p>Report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (A/HRC/53/37)</p>	<p>This report concludes that freedom of religion and belief and freedom from violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity are fully compatible under international human rights law. What constitutes actions contrary to the human rights of LGBT persons is not religion, it is the way some religious narratives are deliberately used to justify violence and discrimination. The report examines: violence and (indirect) discrimination against LGBT persons in the name of religion or belief (including as enshrined in law) and access to spirituality for LGBT persons.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 20-21 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>The focus of the Independent Expert’s report to be presented at UNGA 2023 will be on colonialism and sexual orientation and gender identity</p>
<p>Report of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls on gendered inequalities of poverty: feminist and human rights-based approaches (A/HRC/53/39)</p>	<p>This report focuses on poverty and socioeconomic inequality as outcomes of systemic failures that violate multiple human rights of girls and women. It analyses the cross-cutting conditions of gendered socioeconomic inequality and examines the structural discrimination and drivers within political, economic, cultural and social systems which cause, perpetuate and deepen girls’ and women’s experiences of poverty and inequality. It draws attention to the deficiencies of dominant economic models and methods in accurately capturing, measuring and addressing the impact of poverty and socioeconomic inequality on the rights and substantive equality of girls and women, and it highlights promising alternative approaches.</p> <p>This report concludes that too little attention has been paid to the reduction of socioeconomic inequalities as a prerequisite for effective action to address poverty. Full use and implementation of international human rights frameworks and instruments would enable states and other duty bearers to create sustainable, feminist and human rights-based</p>	<p>The priority theme of the 68th session on the Commission on the Status of Women in 2024 will be: ‘Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective’</p>

	<p>economies. A feminist human rights framework focusing on women’s human rights allows specific forms of structural discrimination to be redressed and draws attention to the responsibilities of states and other actors to take targeted steps to address inequalities in the distribution of power, resources and entitlements and to advance collective and individual human rights, including the right to development.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 18-21 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	
<p>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health on digital innovation, technologies, and the right to health (A/HRC/53/65)</p>	<p>This report analyses the impact of digital innovation and technologies on the right to health, including on the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of facilities, goods and services. It also focuses on digital innovation and technologies and the right to sexual and reproductive health, and on the impact of digital technologies on privacy and the use of data.</p> <p>This report highlights that digital technologies can perpetuate racism, sexism, ableism or discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, among others. It notes the obligations of states and private actors – including businesses and technology companies – in this context of rapid growth of technological innovation as it relates to the right to health.</p> <p>Recommendations are included on pages 17-20 of the report.</p> <p>Full summary available here</p>	<p>The focus of the Special Rapporteur’s report to be presented at UNGA 2023 will be on food, nutrition and the right to health</p>

NOTE: The session also included an annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women, held on 30 June 2023. This comprised of a morning panel focused on gender-based violence against women and girls in public and political life (see [oral statements](#)) and an afternoon panel on social protection: women’s participation and leadership (see [oral statements](#)).