

**Press Release**

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024**

**Girls Not Brides Condemns Gborbu Wulomo of Nungua, Nuuno Borketey Laweh Tsuru XXXIII, calls for his arrest and dissolution of the marriage immediately.**

Girls not Brides Ghana Partnership a coalition of over 100 child rights organizations in all the 16 regions of Ghana has a mandate of ending child marriage and all forms of violence against girls in Ghana. The coalition through its National Chairperson, call on Ministers of Gender Children and Social Protection, Minister of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit under the Ghana Police Service and other relevant stakeholders, to ensure adherence to the UN Convention on the Right of the Child 1989 and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1999 and Ghanaian domestic laws on the promotion of the rights of children.

Anecdotally, on 30th March 2024 most citizens of Ghana were disappointed of a worrying and disturbing incident where news broke that Gborbu Wulomo of Nungua, Nuuno Borketey Laweh Tsuru XXXIII Married a 12-year-old young girl as a spiritual wife at a grand ceremony in conformity to their traditional rite. GNB Ghana Partnership finds this tradition as a breach of the fundamental human right of the child.

Ghana as a country has pledged to the international communities to protect its citizens through the ratification of international conventions and protocols to protect women and girls against violence. Article (4) of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) (1993) states that no state should invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration 'in the perpetration of violence against women'. Article (2) of the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights Women also enjoins state to eliminate cultural and traditional conduct that reinforce the belief that discriminate against women including stereotyped gender roles.

Ghana has domesticated these international laws in its laws and prohibit all customary practices which dehumanize or are injurious to the physical and mental well-being of persons in Article 26(2) of the 1992 Constitution. Although the people of Nungua are conforming to their tradition and customs it must be practice according to the provision of the constitution. The constitution provides in Article 26(4) that no child shall be deprived by any other person of medical treatment, education for religious reasons or traditional beliefs. And states the definition of a child to mean any person below the age eighteen years.

Child Marriage is a violation of human rights that robs young girls of their childhood and prospects, and we must work together to stop the said spiritual marriage of the 63-year Wulomo of Nungua to the 12-year-old.

According to UNFPA-UNICEF Global report in 2020, Ghana is home to 2 million Child brides representing 19% of all young women married before their 18th birthday, although child marriage has declined over the last three decade, from 34% in 1993. However, to be able to meet the ambitious goal of ending the practice by 2030, as set out in the Sustainability Development Goal, the traditional marriage between the Wulomo of Nungua should be dissolved with immediate effect.

We therefore call on the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and other relevant stakeholders to act according to the constitution to save the 12-year-old child from this inhumane customary law of the Nungua traditional Area.

The Girls Not Bride Partnership wishes to appeal to the National House of chiefs to exercise the powers conferred to them by the laws of the land in Article 49-55 of the Chieftaincy Act,2008 to harmonize and modify the customary laws of Ghana to conform to the principle of human rights and gender equality.



Girls Not Brides Ghana Partnership National Chairperson

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**GIRLS NOT BRIDES GHANA**

The Ghanaian Partnership to End Child Marriage

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