

United Nations Human Rights Council
26th session
19 June 2014
Item 6, Consideration of UPR reports

CONSIDERATION OF THE UPR REPORT OF YEMEN

Thank you Mr President.

Save the Children speaks on behalf of the Yemeni NGOs coalition, a civil society advocacy network of 43 national organisations working for children's rights.

1. *Early marriage*

The Yemeni NGOs coalition welcomes the acceptance of all the UPR recommendations¹ on early marriage that call on Yemen to set the minimum age of marriage at 18 years for both genders, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and as recommended in Yemen's National Dialogue Conference.

This is a pressing issue that needs urgent action from the Government. Indeed more than 365 women per 100,000 live births die as a result of early marriage, early pregnancy and early delivery and the related postpartum complications which is considered the leading cause of maternal mortality in Yemen. A study implemented in four governorates by the Ministry of Public Health and Population in 2012 found that 73.6% of girls mentioned health concerns associated with early marriage and early pregnancy; 30.5% had to drop out of schools, 86% of them have suffered from social problems and 90% became pregnant and have been subjected to various risks during pregnancy, especially those aged between 15 - 17 years. We therefore call on the Government to take swift action to implement the recommendation(s) by 2015, in particular to amend the Personal Status Act to set the minimum age for marriage to be 18 years old and to introduce measures to ensure full compliance with the law before the issuance of marriage contracts.

2. *Children's Rights and violence against children*

The YNGOs coalition welcomes the acceptance of UPR Recommendations 115.48 and 115.49 on the promotion and protection of the rights of vulnerable groups of the population, particularly children, women and persons with disabilities, particularly in the context of the upcoming constitutional review process.

An area where more progress is needed is the protection of children against all forms of corporal punishment. It is a deep rooted practice in the home and at schools in Yemen as it is seen as an acceptable disciplinary act. Although the Ministry of Education explicitly banned corporal and verbal punishment in schools by decree in 2012, the ban is not being enforced due to the absence of legal texts to prohibit, criminalize and punish the perpetrators. We call on the Government to amend Decree No. 246 to include penalties for perpetrators and a complaint mechanism for victims to report violations.

Thank you.

¹ Recommendations n°115.13, 115.15, 115.68, 115.74, 115.96, 115.97, 115.100, 115.101, 115.102, 115.103, 115.104, 115.105, 115.106, 115.107 and 115.108