

# UN General Assembly to adopt historic resolution on child, early and forced marriage

*On Thursday 20th Nov 2014*

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## MEDIA ADVISORY

**What:** The first substantive UN General Assembly resolution on child, early and forced marriage is set to be adopted

**When:** Friday 21 November 2014

**Where:** New York, UN General Assembly 3rd Committee

**Why it matters:** Child marriage holds back 15 million girls a year, or about 41,000 a day, denying them fundamental rights and undermining their future. If there is no reduction in child marriage, 1.2 billion girls will marry as children by 2050 – equivalent to the entire population of India.

The resolution marks the first time that UN member states have agreed upon substantive recommendations for the steps that States, international organisations and others must take to address the problem. The resolution situates the issue firmly within the post-2015 development agenda, recognising the need to give due consideration to the inclusion of a target to end child, early and forced marriage in the final framework.

[Download the full text of the resolution](#)

**Media contacts**

Interviews are available with members of *Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage*

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Statement of Heather B. Hamilton, Global Coordinator, *Girls Not Brides*:

*“Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage* welcomes this historic UN resolution. The resolution demonstrates the broad international consensus that urgent action is needed to end child marriage, a practice that hold back 15 million girls a year, or about 41,000 a day, denying them fundamental rights and undermining their future. If there is no reduction in child marriage, 1.2 billion girls will marry as children by 2050 – equivalent to the entire population of India.

“The resolution marks the first time that UN member states have agreed upon substantive recommendations for the steps that countries, international organisations and others must take to address the problem. It also situates child marriage firmly within the post-2015 development agenda, recognising the need for a target to end child, early and forced marriage to be included in the final framework.

“The passage of a UN resolution does not mean that we will end child marriage tomorrow, but resolutions are important in setting global norms. This is a firm statement from the international community that we have to act on child marriage if we’re to ensure equality and reduce global poverty.”

## Background

The [UN Resolution on Child, Early and Forced Marriage](#) was adopted on 21 November with the broad-based, cross-regional co-sponsorship of 116 countries. It was introduced and led by the Governments of Canada and Zambia. It builds on last year's resolutions in the General Assembly and Human Rights Council, which were procedural resolutions calling for reports and further consideration of the issue. UN resolutions are always important in setting global norms, so this is a firm statement from the international community that child marriage will not be tolerated.

The resolution recognises that child, early and forced marriage:

- Is a practice that severely impairs girls and women's human rights and is a threat to their health, education, economic and social status;
- Is inherently linked to deep-rooted gender inequalities, norms and stereotypes; and,
- Is itself a barrier to development and helps to perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

More importantly, it's the first time that countries have agreed on the steps that they – and partners in international organizations and civil society – should be taking to address the problem, including, *inter alia*:

- Enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies to end the practice;
- Develop and implement holistic, comprehensive and coordinated responses and strategies in cooperation with stakeholders, including civil society; and
- Promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls, including their right to education and to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality.

The resolution also encourages continued UN action on the issue and specifically recognizes the need to include clear commitments to child, early and forced marriage in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

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