



## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHILD MARRIAGE: "STRENGTH IN UNITY, GIRLS ARE NOT BRIDES - A GLOBAL YOUTH PARTNERSHIP TO END CHILD MARRIAGE", 19th - 23rd MAY 2016, TEMASEK HOTEL, MELAKA, MALAYSIA



The **five-day** event was organized by World Youth Foundation, an "NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations," in collaboration with Ministry of Women, Family & Community Development Malaysia, Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia and various other agencies. The prevalence of child marriage is primarily attributed to extreme poverty in poor countries.

**World Youth Foundation's Chairman, Hon. Senator Tan Sri (Dr.) Mohd Ali Rustam** said poor parents in such countries assumed they were reducing their burden when they married off their children but they were unaware of the ordeals their children had to suffer.

"After the marriage, children were sold and beaten by their husbands who may also be poor, so the problem will not end if poverty is not eradicated first," he told reporters here Friday.

**Earlier he opened the Foundation's five-day 'International Conference on Child Marriage' which was attended by about 80 participants representing 22 countries including Kenya, Bangladesh, India, Singapore and Malaysia.**



Mohd Ali said apart from poverty, the level of education was another factor which caused child marriage as the lack of education made an individual to be influenced by the surroundings and was unable to evaluate between good and bad.

In this regard, Mohd Ali urged all parties to work together to eradicate child marriage. He said child marriage was a dangerous practice which threatened the lives and future of young girls throughout the world. "Child marriage violates the human rights of children which we should be protecting," he said.

He was speaking at the **International Conference on Child Marriage which was held from 19th - 23rd May 2016 at Temasek Hotel, Melaka, Malaysia** with the theme **"Strength in Unity, Girls are Not Brides - A Global Youth Partnership to End Child Marriage"**. World Youth Foundation's Chairman, Hon. Senator Tan Sri (Dr.) Mohd Ali Rustam also said based on a report by Girls Not Brides, an international NGO, almost half of the girls in South Asia are married before they reach their 18th birthday. Each year, 15 million girls are married before the age of 18. **That is 28 girls every minute.**



Various papers were presented by distinguished speakers focusing on specific sub-topics, and delegates also shared best practices. Delegates submitted sustainable commitments (SCs) - pledging to carryout time based projects within their own settings within six month of the event. The projects include the Global HeForShe campaign, capacity building workshops and panel discussions with multistakeholders, children and youth delegates among others.

Delegates also adopted a Youth Action Plan which will serve as a guideline to follow-up activities for participants in their respective communities. The Youth Action Plan will be shared with UN agencies, the Beyond 2030 secretariat, governments and NGOs.

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## **UNILEVER CEO PAUL POLMAN: GENDER EQUALITY CAN TRANSFORM OUR ECONOMY**



Unilever CEO Paul Polman recognizes the importance of empowering women. In a candid discussion with his son Sebastian for The Huffington Post's parent-child interview series Talk To Me, the Dutch entrepreneur shared his thoughts on gender equality. "In this world, not everyone has the same opportunities - the right to education, the right to a job, the right to food," he said. "And one of the

biggest possibilities that we have globally is to give equal rights to men and women. If we would just invest not more, but the same in women and girls as we invest in men, the global economy could be bigger by about 28 trillion in the next 15-20 years alone." More info at [here](#).

## REGISTER NOW TO ATTEND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL YOUTH FORUM

Learn about the HRC, network and engage!  
**Your voice matters!**

**Human Rights Council Youth Forum**

Friday 10 June 2016 / 9:00 - 17:00

Palais des Nations, room XVIII  
Geneva, Switzerland

Register now:  
<https://hrcyouthforum.eventbrite.com>

Not in Geneva? you can still make your voice count throughout our online consultation: <https://goo.gl/qpiL0L>

The World YWCA and the YMCA Switzerland will convene a Youth Forum on Friday 10 June 2016 at the Palais des Nations, room XVIII before the start of the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva. What is the purpose of the HRC Youth Forum? What will happen during the day? HRC constitutes one of the most important international mechanisms responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and yet youth participation is very limited. There

are no institutionalized processes in place ensuring that youth voices are listened to and sufficiently incorporated into its ways of work. Read more at [here](#).

## WOMEN IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION



Disasters kill more women than men, and hit women's livelihoods hardest. According to UN reports, 60 per cent of all maternal deaths take place in humanitarian settings and all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls spike during disasters and conflict. Experience and research show that when women are included in humanitarian action, the entire community

benefits. Despite this, women and girls are often excluded from decision-making processes that shape the response strategies that affect their ability and that of their community to recover from crisis. Women must be included in decision-making about the forms of assistance, means of delivery, and the provision of the protection and economic and social empowerment opportunities they need so they can be agents of change. Read more at [here](#).

## WIN A TRIP TO COP22: UNFCCC VIDEO CONTEST!



Starting today, you are invited to tell the world how you are shaping a more sustainable future by entering the second annual [Global Youth Video Competition on Climate Change](#). The competition, which is being run by [Television for the Environment \(tve\)](#) and

is part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's Action for Climate Empowerment and Momentum for Change initiatives, will culminate in a high-profile awards ceremony in November 2016 at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP22) in Marrakech, Morocco. Young people between the ages of 18 and 30 can enter via the [tve awards website](#) until 1 August 2016. "Young people are taking action on climate change and the environment and we want to hear and see what they are up to in order to inspire the UN and everyone across the globe-so whether it's leading a divestment campaign at university campus; running a sustainable business or broadcasting programmes on climate change via a village radio station, send us your amazing videos, get noticed internationally and maybe be one of this year's winners," said Nick Nuttall, UNFCCC Spokesperson. See more at [here](#).

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## NEW YOUTH COMPACT TO RESHAPE HUMANITARIAN WORK



The first World Humanitarian Summit convened by UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon and hosted by the Government of Turkey, which took place on 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul, saw a strong emphasis on the urgent need to address the needs and safeguard the rights of young people and engage them in humanitarian response efforts. The Summit brought together some 9000 participants from 173 Member States, including 55 Heads of State and

Government, representatives from the private sector, civil society, NGOs, media and academia, as well as youth advocates and activists, to inspire and reinvigorate a commitment to humanity and initiate a set of concrete actions and commitments aimed at enabling countries and communities to better prepare for and respond to humanitarian crises. Read more at [here](#).

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## EVEN BOTTLED WATERS HAVE DANGEROUS FLUORIDE: HERE ARE THE ONES TO AVOID!



You may have heard about some of the buzz surrounding fluoride. Its negative effects, according to research, appear to have become severe. The downsides of fluoride use have been brought to light and are now being discussed worldwide. Fluoride is found in many public water products, and may pose some serious health threats. If you're a bottled water connoisseur, you'll want to read on. Experts have been arguing for years

about whether or not fluoride in drinking water is toxic to humans. Recent studies have finally shown evidence that it is. Extremely high levels of fluoride have been shown to cause neurotoxicity in adults, resulting in negative impacts on memory and learning. Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health and China Medical University in Shenyang combined 27 studies, finding strong indications that fluoride also adversely affects cognitive development in children. See more at [here](#).

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## EVENTS

### THE FUTURE OF PEACE SUMMIT

Website: <https://globalpeace.splashthat.com/>

### FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD 14)

Website: <http://unctad14.org/EN/Pages/Home.aspx>

## **SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2016**

Website: <http://www.haw-hamburg.de/en/ftz-als/veranstaltungen/sustainable-development-research2016.html>

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