



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

EXPERT CONSULTATION

The violations and abuses of human rights rooted in harmful practices related to accusations of witchcraft and ritual attacks

18-19 July 2022, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Room XIX

PROGRAMME

Day 1 – 18 July

09:30 - 10:00 Registration

10:00 - 10:15 Opening by OHCHR (Mona Rishmawi, Chief RoLNDB) & Ambassador of Kenya

10:30-13.00

Session 1: Interconnection between human rights and HPAWR

Moderated by Hon Mwaura, Isaac - Senator, Kenya

Speakers:

1. Miti-Drummond, Muluka-Anne– Independent Expert, Rights of Persons with Albinism - (video message)
2. Xanthaki, Alexandra - UN Special Rapporteur, Cultural Rights
3. Malher, Claudia – Independent Expert, Rights of Older Persons (online)
4. Madhu, Mehra - Partners for Law in Development, India
5. Garcia, Ana Dols – OHCHR Geneva

Discussion points:

-Where to draw the line between HPAWR and the right to exercise different types of religion or belief, to preserve the right to freely manifest a religion or belief, individually or in community with others, including for persons belonging to religious minorities?

-When does the law consider that a religious practice violates the rights of others - to the extent that it amounts to a harmful practice?

-When do these harmful practices constitute crimes in national contexts?

-How and where do we draw the line between a cultural practice (through rituals) and the harm that person concern could suffer and protected from?

-Given the three types of manifestation that the expert meeting wishes to consider, how can a clear line be drawn on what has been legally defined as witchcraft and ritual attacks in international and national laws - and how do these laws assess the harm?

11:50-12:00

Concluding session 1

12:00 - 13:00

Group work: summarizing and highlighting conclusions of session 1 (offline)

13:00-15:00

Lunch /networking session:

15:00-18:00

Session 2: Drivers, manifestations, and emerging forms of HPAWR

Moderated by Forsyth Miranda

Speakers:

1. Kelkar, Govind - GenDev Centre for Research and Innovation, India
2. Spence, Samantha - Staffordshire University, UK
3. Cumes, Aura - Anthropologist, Guatemala - (online)
4. De Leon Ceto, Miguel - Univesidad Rafael Landivar, Guatemala

Discussion points:

- *Determinants of HPAWR in all regions*
- *Commonalities in their manifestations and impact on the lives of the most at-risk groups among women and children*
- *Mitigating strategies*

15:50-17:00

Concluding session 2

17:00-18:00

Group work: summarizing and highlighting conclusions of session 2 (offline)

19:30 Group diner (self-paid) on voluntary basis

Day 2 – 19 July

10:00-13:00

Session 3: - Preventive measures to HPAWR

Moderated by Nyanyuki Joan

Speakers:

1. Forsyth, Miranda - Australia National University, Australia
2. Mezmur, Benyam Dawit – UN Committee on the Rights of the Child/ ACERWC, Ethiopia
3. Rinchen, Chopel- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child/ SAIEVAC, Nepal

4. Habana, Boniface - Pan African Parliament, South Africa – (online)

5.-Baker, Charlotte– University of Lancaster, UK - (online)

Discussion points:

- *Discuss how rights based and gender social norms could be established to uphold practices in the society with positive impact on the identity and social cohesion without causing harm?*

- *Regulations and interventions of practitioners in the area, to which extent this is possible? What actions and standards could apply? What are the promising practices in terms of legislation, policies, budget, data collection at all levels?*

- *Which stakeholders have a role to play? What is the role of policy makers, national human rights institutions? What could we learn from human rights mechanisms, and regional mechanisms? What could State entities, all stakeholders do better?*

11:50-12:00

Concluding session 3

12:00-13:00

Group work: summarizing and highlighting conclusions of session 3 (offline)

15:00-18:00

Session 4:

Response to and support measures for survivors of HPAWR

Moderated by Mezmur Benyam Dawit

Speakers:

1. Nyanyuki, Joan - African Child Policy Forum, Ethiopia

2. Mbasha, Joseph – HelpAge, Tanzania

3. Kebe, Aminata – OHCHR Dakar

4. Tzeggai, Maken – OHCHR Geneva

Discussion points:

- *What are the challenges in prosecution of perpetrators of violence and rejection? Of body cutting and of traffickers, where law exist? And in reparations, where necessary? How can they be overcome?*

- *How to address challenges of evidence, including in context of rituals attacks, and of coercion through witchcraft for the purpose of trafficking?*

- *What measures are in place to ensure gender responsive and child -friendly protection measures for survivors and witnesses of HPAWR?*

16:45-17:00

Concluding session 4

17:00-18:00

Closing Session - The way forward

Moderated by OHCHR (Hannah Wu, Caroline Ouaffo Wafang)

Presentation of the main conclusions of the expert consultation, and discussions on the main highlights and recommendations of the report to the Human Rights Council.