

A Strategic Plan to Defend the Family

By Sharon Slater

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In order to defend the family we need to understand our opposition. Few people are aware of the ongoing battle over the family and sexual rights occurring regularly at the United Nations, and most people in the world do not understand how what happens at the UN impacts family policies worldwide. Family Watch International works with other likeminded organizations and government leaders to expose threats to the family at the UN and to try to stop them. And while we do not always win our battles, we have met with some key successes, a few of which I will share.

The successes have occurred because when people understand what is really happening, they usually do the right thing. The problem at the UN and elsewhere is that many do not understand what is at stake. They don't understand that there are powerful special interest groups that are literally working to destroy the institution of the family, which they see as an obstacle to sexual freedom.

Since many of these battles over the family and sexual rights occur behind closed doors at the UN, we were surprised when it was reported that one UN official representing the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) publicly declared that the breakdown of the traditional family is a "triumph" for "human rights." He further claimed that high rates of divorce and out-of-wedlock births are not a social crisis, but rather represent a "triumph" of "human rights" against "patriarchy." UNFPA receives millions of dollars annually to promote "family planning," yet it would seem that their underlying goal is to "plan" the traditional family out of existence.

Understanding What is at Stake

Assaults on the family at the UN have come in a number of forms, but they usually ultimately serve one main purpose; they seek to create a right to sex outside of marriage without having to take responsibility for the consequences, even though research shows when sex occurs outside of marriage—it doesn't matter if it is heterosexual, homosexual, premarital or extramarital—the evidence shows that any sexual activity outside of a man/woman marriage, sooner or later, is damaging to the individual, to society, and especially to the institution of the family.

Sadly, what many are trying to promote as a "right" to sexual activity comes at a cost that is much greater than most realize. Indeed, as the traditional family disintegrates, children are hurt, economies decline, and nations are weakened.

Unfortunately, various parts of the UN system including UN committees that monitor treaty compliance, UN agencies, UN negotiations, and the mandates of UN experts called Special Rapporteurs, and in some cases, even the UN delegations of Member States are all being manipulated by sexual rights activists to advance a sexual rights agenda that undermines the family.

Let me give you just a few concrete examples that you may not be aware of:

Misinterpreting UN Treaties to Advance Sexual Rights

Did you know that a UN committee monitoring compliance of UN Member States with a binding treaty called the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, recently issued a statement seeking to reinterpret the words “other status” in that treaty to now somehow magically encompass special protections for “sexual orientation and gender identity” meaning protections for homosexuality and transgenderism.

Last December we worked hard to get the UN General Assembly to reject this bogus interpretation. In the end we won a General Assembly vote that stopped this sneaky attempt to advance sexual rights by just four votes. Had this interpretation been allowed to stand, it would have been used by sexual rights activists to pressure countries around the world to legalize same-sex marriage among other things. That was their plan, and I am certain they will continue to push this plan despite this UN assembly vote.

UN Committees Seeking to Advance Sexual Rights

Did you know that the United Nations CEDAW Committee monitoring the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has pressured seven countries to legalize prostitution,¹ six countries to decriminalize homosexuality and protect “sexual orientation,”² and 66 nations to legalize, remove penalties for, or increase access to abortion,³ even though the CEDAW treaty mentions none of these things?

¹ The Republic of Korea (2007), Kenya (2007), Netherlands (2007), Fiji (2002), Hungary (2002), Uganda (2002), and Saint Kitts and Nevis (2002).

² Brazil (2007), Honduras (2007), Republic of Korea (2007), Sweden (2001), Kyrgystan (1999), México (1998).

³ African countries (17), Latin America countries (20) Caribbean (4) Asian (13) European countries (4) Middle Eastern Countries (4), and Pacific countries (4). These statistics and those in the prior two footnotes were derived from research done by Thomas Jacobson, the UN representative of Focus on the Family, www.focusonthefamily.com.

Though the recommendations of UN monitoring committees are not legally binding, some nations have changed their laws as a result of this kind of pressure from UN monitoring committees.

UN Sex Education Promoting Sexual Rights

Were you aware that last year UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization released a draft document in consultation with UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO called the “International Guidelines on Sexuality Education?” These guidelines called upon nations to teach children they can find sexual pleasure through masturbation beginning at age five. Much of the document promoted respect for “sexual and gender diversity” and “people with diverse sexual expressions.” It stated that teachers are a “trusted source of information” and “have a responsibility to act in the place of parents” and promoted access to safe abortion.

Fortunately, there was enough public outcry, and we were able to conduct briefings with a number of UN Member States about the sexuality guidelines, and they have since been toned down substantially. But the original draft, which can be found on our Web site, clearly reveals what these UN agencies were trying to promote when they thought they could get away with it.

UN Agencies Advancing Sexual Rights

Did you know that UNAIDS, the UN agency charged with trying to stop the AIDS pandemic, is actually seeking to legalize and promote the very behaviors that fuel the AIDS pandemic such as prostitution, homosexuality and sexual promiscuity—even among children? Family Watch was instrumental in getting UN Member States this year and last year to reject a provision endorsing the International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights⁴ created by UNAIDS which calls upon member states to:

- Legalize abortion and same-sex marriage;
- Punish people who criticize same-sex relations;
- Repeal laws against adultery, fornication, oral sex and sodomy; and
- Provide children with explicit sex education.

UN Special Rapporteurs and the Yogyakarta Principles

⁴ The full title of this document is the “International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, as adopted by the Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights.”

Did you know that nine Special Rapporteurs, which the UN considers experts, who have been given a mandate by the UN to study and report on various human rights issues, participated on a team of thirty self-proclaimed “experts” that drafted one of the most radical sexual rights documents in the world called the Yogyakarta Principles?

The Yogyakarta Principles falsely claims that all UN Member States are obligated under international law to protect homosexuality and transgenderism, even to the point of facilitating sex change operations, and that nations must work to change their cultural and religious values in order to embrace various sexual orientations. In essence, it claims that sexual rights trump religious freedom.

One of the UN Special Rapporteurs that helped draft this radical document, Martin Scheinin, tried to advance the Yogyakarta Principles in his report to the UN General Assembly. He also had the audacity to attempt in his report to redefine gender for the whole world as something fluid that can be changed at will.

Fortunately, due to the efforts of a number of UN delegates, led by the African voting bloc, and supported by some Islamic countries and some of the Caribbean states, Scheinin’s report was successfully rejected by a majority vote of the UN Member States.

A statement made by the representative from St. Lucia right before the final General Assembly vote to reject Scheinin’s report, expressed her country’s “opposition to the incorporation of the Special Rapporteur’s personal ideas about what a ‘gender perspective’ means in the context of his mandate” and lamented the fact that the Rapporteur had “(a) exceeded his mandate, (b) unilaterally attempted to change the definition of a universally accepted term, [and] (c) based his definition on premises which do not exist in international human rights law.”

We are grateful to the UN delegates who were willing to push back against these UN “experts” who are seeking to manipulate the UN system to advance their sexual rights agenda. Also of note, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has issued statements in support of the Yogyakarta Principles.

Please beware, sexual rights activists are seeking to get the Yogyakarta Principles endorsed by as many local, state and national government entities as they can. You can read our policy brief outlining more of the radical provisions of this document on Family Watch International’s Web site (www.familywatchinternational.org). One of Family Watch’s main goals is to keep this document from getting more traction.

International Planned Parenthood Sexualizing Children

And for my last example, International Planned Parenthood, the main purveyor of explicit sexuality education in the world, has been distributing its vulgar materials at the United Nations, even handing out their “Healthy, Happy, and Hot” booklet to youth in attendance at a UN conference this year. Their booklet encourages HIV-infected youth to seek sexual pleasure through a number of perverse sexual activities and claims it is a violation of their human rights to have to tell their sexual partners they are infected with HIV. Unbelievably, it tells youth to “talk dirty” to each other and to experiment sexually and have fun. This brochure is readily available on their Web site.

International Planned Parenthood is one of the few non-governmental organizations featured at many UN conferences, and at a conference earlier this year, their written report was one of the main agenda items for the conference. Their representatives can almost always be seen outside the UN negotiations, driving the push for sexual rights through the governments they work closely with.

With these examples, I have only scratched the surface of the multi-pronged assault on the family being perpetuated through various elements within the UN system.

According to the UN Charter, all UN agencies, employees, staff, Special Rapporteurs, committees, etc., are supposed to be accountable to UN Member States. Yet somehow the tables have turned, and many of these UN-created or UN-affiliated entities are trying to make UN Member States accountable to them as they overstep their mandates to promote the sexual rights agenda. In fact, sexual rights activists aggressively seek appointments to all of these UN entities so they can manipulate various parts of the UN system to pressure UN Member States into adopting laws and policies that advance their agenda.

Every year the United Nations holds a series of UN conferences on a number of issues affecting families. At each conference an outcome document is usually produced after intense negotiations on an assigned topic, and usually all nations agree to try to implement the policies outlined in these documents. Some negotiated outcome documents are binding treaties. Others are resolutions or declarations. However, all UN documents negotiated by UN Member States are intended to drive the policies, laws, actions and even the social norms of each Member State.

Lies Perpetuated at the UN that Undermine the Family

To advance their agenda, sexual rights activists have created and perpetuated a series of lies that they seek to enshrine in UN documents to advance their agenda. All of these lies are based on a common objective; they seek to establish a right to any kind of sexual activity, with anyone, of any age or gender, at any time, and demand for governments to pay for any unwanted consequences of their sexual activity.

Here are some of the common lies. Many of them emanate from the UN and trickle down to the national and local levels. See if you recognize any being promoted in your country:

Lie Number 1 – Humans are causing climate change that is destroying the environment and which will eventually destroy our planet’s life-sustaining resources. Therefore, we must limit the number of children being born through contraception and the legalization of abortion. Large families are not only irresponsible, they are dangerous.

Reality – If human behavior impacts climate change, that impact is nominal. History shows that the earth goes through natural patterns of climate change irrespective of human behavior and that the earth is actually cooling rather than heating.

Lie Number 2 – Worldwide, poverty is driven by overpopulation, or in other words, women who give birth to multiple children create poverty.

Reality – People are a nation’s most valuable resource. Nations that have severely limited their population growth and instituted strict population control measures are heading toward economic and social disaster because they do not have enough children to replace and/or support their aging populations. They are committing societal suicide.

Lie Number 3 – Abortion is safer than childbirth, so legalizing abortion is a right-to-life issue for the mother because where abortions are legal, they are safe.

Reality – Once pregnant, women are more likely to experience lasting emotional, physical, and psychological problems by choosing abortion rather than childbirth.

Lie Number 4 – Women are dying and suffering in the world largely because they don’t have access to legal abortion.

Reality – In countries where abortion is the most legally restricted, maternal mortality rates are lower not higher. All abortions, whether legal or illegal, carry risks to the mother.

Lie Number 5 – The AIDS epidemic is spreading because people’s sexual rights are not being respected. Only through legalizing and respecting consensual sexual activity will countries be able to eradicate AIDS. This is because once all sexual behavior is destigmatized, people will be more willing to seek information and treatment.

Reality – AIDS rates have not decreased in countries where high-risk sexual activity that spreads AIDS is more accepted.

Lie Number 6 – Children are sexual from birth and have a right to sexual pleasure. Early sexual activity between children or between adults and children causes no harm. The only harm is caused by cultural taboos that unnecessarily cause people to feel this is wrong.

Reality – Premature sexual activity in children has proven to create a myriad of problems for children that can last well into adulthood.

Lie Number 7 – Sexual rights are human rights and therefore trump religious rights.

There is no such thing as sexual rights. This is a fictitious concept made up by those who seek to promote sexual anarchy. On the other hand, the right to practice one's religion and express one's religious beliefs is enshrined in many international and national laws.

Lie Number 8 – UN international human rights treaties require governments to protect sexual orientation and diverse gender identities and to legalize abortion on demand.

Reality – There is not a single UN treaty that has established a right to abortion or protection for sexual behavior or diverse gender identities. However, sexual rights activists have successfully convinced some countries and courts otherwise.

I wish we had more time to expose and debunk many of the other lies perpetuated by sexual rights activists through the UN system.

We expose and debunk many of these lies and more in our new book *Stand for the Family*.

So what can we do about all this? How can we stop this all out assault on our children and our families?

1. Continue doing what you are doing in your own sphere of influence to protect the family. Don't give up.
2. Attend World Congress of Families conferences where you can network and learn from the efforts of others.
3. Consider having your organization apply to be accredited to the United Nations so you can help us stop sexual rights activists from using the UN to impose their agenda on your country.
4. Create a climate where it is easier for people to stand for the family.

Consider the following experiment on peer pressure conducted at Harvard:

A group of nine college students was seated in a classroom in a semicircle for an experiment in "visual judgment." The facilitator informed them that they would be comparing the lengths of lines shown on two large cards.