

UN CELEBRATES WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

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Today the United Nations is holding a high-level meeting celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Too bad it is such a sham. But this is nothing new.

In 1995, the Catholic League was denied a request to be recognized as an NGO (non-governmental organization) by the UN Representative on Accreditation, NGO Status; we sought to participate in the Fourth World Conference on Women. We are a legitimate Catholic organization, listed in the *Official Catholic Directory*. Catholics for Choice is a pro-abortion, anti-Catholic entity, yet it was granted NGO status. That was a sham.

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Holy See delegation, led by Harvard law professor Mary Ann Glendon, succeeded in stopping a challenge to the proposition that the family is the basic unit in society. Those who railed against the Holy See sought to elevate alternative life styles such as cohabitation and homosexual liaisons to the status of family. Thus did they make a sham of the objective meaning of the family.

The latest sham is having Sima Bahous preside over the 30th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. She is Executive Director of UN Women and Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations. The purpose of the anniversary celebration is to advance "gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls." Choosing Bahous to lead this effort is a curious choice given the status of women in her home country, Jordan.

To begin with, the United Nations primarily views women rights

as revolving around three main topics—abortion, contraception, and LGBT ideology. This has nothing to do with the most basic hardships experienced by women in most parts of the world. Rather, it reflects the ideological preferences of the highly secular Western nations.

If Bahous were truly an advocate for women, it would not have taken two months to condemn the kidnapping, rape and murder of innocent Israeli women by jihadists in the aftermath of the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Moreover, if Bahous actually listened to what Jordanian women wanted, she would change her focus. The status of women in Jordan is pathetic.

- In August of 2017, Jordan finally repealed a law that allowed rapists to skirt justice for their crimes. According to Article 308 of the Jordanian legal code, which was adopted in 1960, a man who raped a woman could avoid punishment for his crime if he married her for three to five years. After a contentious debate, the Jordanian parliament voted to repeal this barbaric law.
- Similarly, while Jordan moved to criminalize “honor killings,” several legal loopholes allow this practice to continue. An “honor killing” is a sanctioned murder of an individual perceived to have brought dishonor to the family. Typically the victims of these savage attacks are women, and this is common in Muslim countries. Under the current Jordanian penal code, judges can impose mitigated sentences if the families of the female victims do not support the prosecutions of the male attacker. Additionally, the penal code allows men to kill or attack their wives or other female family members if they catch them in the act of adultery or in an “unlawful bed” and receive a reduced sentence.
- Jordanian women face unequal treatment when it comes to marriage.
 - If a woman wishes to marry before she turns 30,

- she needs the permission of her male custodian, usually her father. Without the custodian's consent, she will be barred from marrying.
- Further, Jordanian women are not allowed to marry non-Muslim men.
 - Additionally, Jordanian women who marry non-Jordanian men cannot automatically pass their citizenship on to their children.
 - Likewise, Jordanian women face unequal treatment in family courts. In Jordan, family-related matters are handled by Sharia courts using Islamic law, and, unsurprisingly, women do far worse than men under this legal code.
 - Jordanian women generally receive less inheritance under Sharia law than their male family members.
 - Likewise, Jordanian mothers have limited custody over their children. All decisions regarding the raising of children are made by the fathers.
 - Conversely, if a father chooses to abandon his children, a mother has very little recourse. Paternity in Sharia courts is determined by a father claiming the child—there is no authority for mandating a paternity test. If a father refuses to acknowledge the child as his own, then he has no obligation to care for the child. Of course, women do not have this option.
 - In termination of a marriage, Jordanian men essentially have access to no-fault-divorce. A man can simply pay back his wife's dowry to end the union. Jordanian women, on the other hand, must show cause for why the marriage should be ended.

There are so many real problems facing women the world over, yet the UN is bent on addressing abortion and the LGBT agenda, matters of interest only to Western elites. Thus have they made a sham of the conference.