

Family, Peace and Sustainable Development

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The family is extremely important for social stability, and relevant to advancing all of the Sustainable Development Goals. How do stable and resilient families foster human development and social peace and prosperity? What family policies are conducive to sustainable development? Panellists in this session will give their perspective on the role of the family in peacebuilding, its impact on social stability and prosperity, and assess challenges in defining family policies for sustainable development.



Moderator: Mr. Heiner Handschin, Director, UPF Office for UN Relations, Geneva

Baron Rajinder Loomba CBE, House of Lords, United Kingdom

Lord Loomba is a philanthropist, the Founder and Executive Chairman of the clothing company Rinku Group. He is a Liberal Democrat Peer in the House of Lords. From humble beginnings after he arrived in the UK in 1962, he built a retail empire with over 400 concessions throughout the country. He has dedicated his life to helping the plight of 245 million widows in the world through his charity, The Loomba Foundation, supported by Cherie Blair as President and Sir Richard Branson as Patron-in Chief.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to this global cause, he was appointed United Nations Founding Champion of the Circle of Widows Rights (June 2013). Lord Loomba has been the recipient of many accolades, including Asian of the Year Award in 1997 and the Forbes India NRI Philanthropy Award in 2012. He focuses on raising awareness and practical solutions for widows and their 500 million dependent children around the world.



Mr. Harry Benson, Research Director, the Marriage Foundation, United Kingdom

Harry Benson has spent the last fifteen years researching, writing and teaching about marriage and family. He taught relationship courses to thousands of couples and is the author and originator of Let's Stick Together, a pioneering relationship book and programme for new parents. His research papers on marriage and family breakdown have made front page news and his findings are regularly cited by media and politicians. He has written a stream of research papers and articles for the Marriage Foundation, a charity launched in 2012 whose aim is to be a voice for marriage. As Research Director, Harry Benson appears regularly in local and national media. He and his wife Kate have six children.

Hon. Inga Bite, Member of Parliament, Latvia :

Mrs. Bite is a lawyer and politician. She worked at the Supreme Court of Latvia until she became a Parliament member in 2011. She was re-elected in 2014. She holds a Master's Degree in Law from the University of Latvia and is currently involved in a doctoral program. As an elected parliamentarian, she has taken stands for the strengthening of the family, the protection of children, the respect of parental authority in children's education, etc.

Hon. Ulviyya Aghayeva, Member of Parliament, Azerbaijan

Mr. Antoine Renard, President, European Federation of Catholic Family Associations, France

Mr. Antoine Renard is French, married and father of three children, engineer and businessman in the railway industry. He is the president of FAFCE, the European Federation of Catholic Family Associations, an NGO with a participatory status at the Council of Europe. FAFCE represents families from 16 countries across Europe and promotes the family and its interests at the European level based on principles such as solidarity, subsidiarity, the common good and freedom of choice. Mr. Renard was a candidate for the political party "Force Vie" for the 2014 European elections.