

President
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Your Excellency,

I'm writing to you today, because I'm concerned about report that still every year thousands of girls across Burkina Faso are subjected to early and forced marriage. The majority of them are married off as early as 11 years old so that their parents can benefit from the dowry. Girls who are forced to marry by their family are rarely sent to school and have little or no education. The risks associated with such marriages are many for girls. Most of them suffer sexual violence and frequently endure egregious violations of their sexual and reproductive rights. Their bodies are physically immature and are at risk of death during childbirth, or experiencing life threatening and life changing health conditions. A 13-year-old girl told Amnesty International she walked more than 160 km over three days to escape from being forced by her father to marry a 70-year-old man who already had five wives.

During your first term in office you promised to eradicate forced and early marriages. In November 2015, Burkina Faso finalized a National Strategy to End Child Marriage by 2025.

Please ensure that the National Strategy to End Child Marriage by 2025 is fully implemented and follow through with your commitment to review the Code of Family and Persons to raise the minimum legal age of marriage for boys and girls to 18, in line with the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other international and regional human rights instruments.

Please re-commit to ensuring that early and forced marriages are eradicated in Burkina Faso.

Yours sincerely,

Copy:

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