

AT WHAT PRICE?

TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SURROGACY:

Preventing the Exploitation and Commodification of Women and Children

Event on the sidelines of the 56th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Holy See and the Caritas in Veritate Foundation



18 June 2024



13h00 - 14h00



Palais des Nations, Room XXV



PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE HOLY SEE GENEVA



TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SURROGACY:

Surrogacy is a practice whereby a woman becomes pregnant with the intent of giving the child to someone else upon birth. This practice firstly violates the inalienable dignity of the child: a child is reduced to an item for sale or the object of a contract. Secondly, it exploits women by commodifying their bodies and violating their human rights. Differing domestic legal frameworks have led to a dramatic increase in transnational surrogacy. A national response is not enough. Prohibitions on the national level simply exports the issue of surrogacy to different countries. New surrogacy 'hotspots' emerge and, consequently, this facilitates the transnational exploitation of women and children.

There is an urgent need for an international response to human rights violations generated by the commodification of women and children through the practice of surrogacy. This event aims at bringing a diverse panel of women together to explore the root causes of surrogacy, the harms it generates and the ways in which the international community might begin to work together to end this exploitative practice.

Panel Discussion Featuring:

- 1. Mrs. Eugenia Roccella**, Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family, Italy
- 2. Dr. Gabriella Gambino**, Undersecretary of the Holy See's Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life
- 3. Ms. Olivia Maurel**, born through surrogacy, working for the abolition of surrogacy
- 4. Ms. Eva Maria Bachinger**, Austrian journalist, author. She co-founded the 'Stop Surrogacy' initiative in Vienna in 2015
- 5. Ms. Bettina Roska**, ADF International, serving as a UN Legal Officer in Geneva

Discussion Questions:

The following provides a list of thematic questions that will be discussed by panelists:

How does surrogacy impact the rights of the child and women's rights?

Why is there a need to unequivocally condemn all forms of surrogacy?

Why are current surrogacy regulations insufficient in effectively addressing relevant human rights violations?

Why an urgent international response to all forms of surrogacy is needed and what could it look like?