



Lobbying for Faith and Family:

A Study of Religious NGOs
at the United Nations



Photo: Ken Opprann

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Scope of the Study	2
2.1	Influential Religious Actors	3
3	Findings	4
3.1	Strategies and Methods: A new form of Activism	5
3.2	Knowledge Production Centres	6
3.2.1	Catholic	6
3.2.2	Mormon	6
3.2.3	Cross-faith	7
3.2.4	Evangelical	7
3.2.5	Muslim	7
4	Conservative Christian Organisations: The US Context.....	9
5	The Roman Catholic Church: Its Foreign Policy	11
5.1	Foreign Policy.....	12
5.2	Strategic Concerns and Rhetoric	13
6	View Points and Arguments	15
6.1	National sovereignty and UN scepticism.....	15
6.2	The Christian Family.....	16
6.3	Anti-abortion	17
6.4	Human rights.....	18
6.5	Strategic arguments and Biblical legitimation.....	18
7	Perspectives on Dialogue.....	20
8	Influential Actors – Alphabetic Order	21
8.1	Alliance Defending Freedom	21
8.2	American Family Association.....	22
8.3	American Life League.....	23
8.4	Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, known as C-FAM	23
8.5	Concerned Women for America.....	24
8.6	Doha International Institute for Family and Development.....	26
8.7	Family Research Council.....	27
8.8	Family Watch International	28
8.9	Focus on the Family	29
8.10	Howard Institute for Family, Religion and Society/ World Congress of Families	30

8.11 Human Life International	30
8.12 International Youth Coalition.....	31
8.13 National Right to Life Committee	32
8.14 Population Research Institute.....	33
8.15 United Families International	33
8.16 World Family Policy Centre	34
9 Overview of the Research Field	35
9.1 Publications on Religious Actors engaged at SRHR at the UN	35
9.2 Conservative Religious Actors against SRHR on the ground.....	35
9.3 General Studies mapping religious NGOs at the UN	35
9.4 Mapping religious lobby groups	36
9.5 Research programs	36
Annex A: Bibliography	37

1 Introduction

Religious organisations are a relatively small minority of NGOs at the United Nations (UN). Still, they are able to make themselves clearly heard and seen.

This study focuses on religiously motivated lobbying groups fighting against sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) policies at the UN. While health policy is usually framed as a part of the secular political domain, it touches upon combustible religious values and engages powerful alliances across religious divides. Catholics and Mormons; Christians and Muslims; Russian Orthodox and American fundamentalists find common ground on traditional values and against SRHR issues at the UN.

The conservative religious lobbies comprise constellations of different organizations with various religious affiliations. However, conservative Christian actors constitute a particularly influential bloc wedded to a distinctly conservative social agenda and motivated by pre-modern ideas about gender issues, family politics and women's health. They represent a key factor in the resistance to SRHR, and work ceaselessly to contest, obstruct and delay the development of relevant UN agendas. Their influence does not reflect their number but is largely due to a striking ability to build alliances across religious boundaries as well as elicit the support of religious communities around the world.

2 Scope of the Study

The task is defined as follows:

1. An overview and description of the most active and influential religious actors fighting against SRHR at the UN, as well as descriptions and exemplifications of collaboration across and between confessional backgrounds established to influence states and UN-structures against SRHR.
2. An overview of main groups' theological positions and confessional belonging as well as rhetoric and methods. Analysis of the theological arguments promoted by influential actors and examinations of the bases of these arguments: are they rooted in religious teachings, or are the arguments merely defences against modernity/secularisation or instrumentalization of religion to support conservative political agendas.
3. Description of actors/groups and main argumentation with preliminary suggestions to how and on what bases Norway may initiate dialogues with these actors.
4. Mapping of research/knowledge production on the intersection of religion, SRHR and gender.

We identified the most important actors by cross-referencing ECOSOC accreditation lists with previous studies of religious NGOs, UN documents and media reports. We have also identified and added back stage actors that do not figure on the list. The list is not exhaustive.

Since the field of religion and international politics consists mainly of studies on terrorism and religious nationalism, there has been limited academic study of the subject of religion and SRHR. Hence this study relies heavily on the self-presentation of the religious NGOs under scrutiny. This means the team has had to do careful analyses of what is being said to uncover actual content and intention, and thus also develop analytical tools as we went along.

In order to make the report more user-friendly we have divided it in two separate parts. The first part – chapters 3-7 – consists of the main findings and analysis of the aims and goals of religious NGOs that are fighting against SRHR issues. The second part – chapters 8 and 9 – contains an overview of the research field, and an alphabetically ordered overview of the main actors with brief information on their history, confessional belonging and theological position, as well as arenas, working methods and argumentation/rhetoric.

It should be noted that the Catholic Church has a special status at the UN, where the Holy See is recognized as a 'permanent observer' state. Thus it holds a special position among religious actors at the UN. Consequently, we have allotted the Catholic Church a separate treatment in this report.

The aim of the study has been to get an overview of the most influential actors, their arguments and motivating factors. As this is a desk study on a little-studied field, without the collection of qualitative data such as interviews that could have substantially filled out the picture, we venture the following findings as preliminary conclusions only.

2.1 Influential Religious Actors

Evangelical

- Alliance Defending Freedom
- American Family Association
- Concerned Women for America
- Family Research Council
- Focus on the Family

Catholic

- American Life League
- Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (C-FAM)
- The Holy See
- Human Life International
- Population Research Institute

Mormon

- Family Watch International
- United Families International
- World Family Policy Centre

Cross-faith

- Doha International Institute for Family and Development
- Howard Center for Family, Religion and Society/World Congress of Families
- National Right to Life Committee
- International Youth Coalition

3 Findings

The NGOs that are wedded to the conservative Christian cause on SRHR, and have carved out prominent positions in the UN's NGO system, are mainly American. Their rhetoric and approach reflect the "culture wars" in American political debate, where these groups are generally associated with the 'New Christian Right' tied to the Republican party.

Three conservative Christian networks of Evangelicals, Catholic and Mormons dominate anti-SRHR at the UN. Each network comprises organisations and actors influenced by their respective knowledge suppliers, mostly religiously and ideologically motivated think tanks, research institutes and universities. These networks form a flexible and loose pro-family coalition collaborating across national and religious divides for pragmatic reasons on a set of issues where they identify common concerns, or a common threat, e.g. abortion and same-sex marriage. In time, this collaboration might solidify into more permanent shared organizational structures, but with a few exceptions, such as the World Congress of Families (see below), this has not yet materialized. Only forty years ago, social barriers and mutual distrust would have made such collaboration hard to imagine. Today, on an individual level, some activists even shift between positions in NGOs with different religious orientations.

This loose coalition of conservative, Christian and mainly US-based NGOs is unified by a critical and defensive stand against modern socio-political developments (secularisation, feminism, the sexual revolution), which they see as a serious threat, not only to religion, but to society, which depends for its stability on traditional moral values and a patriarchal social order, framed as "family values", and conceived as absolute moral standards laid down in pre-modern sacred texts or authoritative religious teachings.

Muslim organisations and Christian NGOs originating outside the Western hemisphere play a limited role in the UN lobbying effort, except in collaboration with the three conservative Christian networks noted above, and Jewish groups are hardly involved. Alliances with Muslim states (often acting en bloc as the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, OIC) and contacts with individual delegates/ambassadors are important, but non-governmental Muslim actors are not. There are some exceptions, such as the Qatar-based Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development, but on closer scrutiny, this was partly a Christian initiative (see below). Influential Christian conservatives have been involved in the running of the Doha Institute, making it a striking example of cross-religious, cross-regional collaboration for the sake of traditional family values. The Doha Institute received ECOSOC accreditation in 2009, but lobbying at the UN is only a small part of the efforts of the activists behind a number of Doha initiatives to promote the 'natural family'. The same goes for the related World Congress of Families, which involves both a geographically and religiously broader set of groups than the ones considered here. Since the present study focuses on the most prominent lobby groups at the UN, we have not seen fit to conduct the in-depth analysis that both the Qatar-based organisation and the World Congress of Families would merit.

Evangelicals form a religious movement across Protestant denominations, prominently Baptist and Pentecostal ones, that defines itself in opposition to the modern liberal theology of "mainline" Protestantism, emphasizing the final authority of Scripture and individual salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus, often through a conversion experience.

Varying in size from small units with just a handful of staff members to sizeable and resourceful organisations, evangelical organisations are politically adept after several decades of political activism, having emerged as the so-called New Christian Right in the Reagan era. They do not form a single Church or other shared organisational structure, but have umbrellas like the National Alliance of Evangelicals, and form informal alliances on common moral grounds. More so than other conservative religious NGOs, evangelicals tend to be deeply suspicious of the UN and keep a more explicit American perspective.

Unlike the evangelicals, the Mormon NGOs have ties to the single centralised hierarchical organisation of the Mormon Church of Latter-Day Saints and the renowned Brigham Young University.

The Catholic NGOs represent another kind of group. Their relationship with the central church organization is loose and informal. This allows for a wide range of Catholic activism ranging from liberal to conservative views. However, the Catholic NGOs engaged in SRHR issues are among the most conservative - and hence in strict accordance with official church policy and as conservative as their Evangelical and Mormon counterparts. There is one notable exception, the liberal Catholics for Choice, which has been accredited to ECOSOC since 1998, which strives for gender equality and reproductive rights as argued by Norway and the EU. However, this is the exception to the rule which illustrates the fact that Catholic NGOs are not ruled or run by the Vatican (see below).

3.1 Strategies and Methods: A new form of Activism

The arrival of conservative Christian NGOs at the UN upset the consensus-based work of NGO caucuses at UN conferences. In addition, they made themselves heard by breaching established codes of conduct, as when "a group of long-bearded friars (Franciscans) wearing grey robes and carrying rosaries openly prayed in meeting rooms and hallways" (Butler 2006:52).

In addition to their engagement in UN committee work, the religious NGOs analysed in this report have developed strategies towards the UN General Assembly as their preferred lobby forum. They are effective at reaching out to member states on pro-family values and against a liberal SRHR-agenda. Their long-term aim is to build a permanent pro-family bloc among conservative member states from Muslim and developing countries. To this end they pursue a strategy carved out by the Vatican. Having a special status as permanent observer state to the General Assembly, the Vatican has full access to the entire UN system, and plays a key role among religious actors. It is regarded as an ally by Christian conservatives and a role model for all NGOs promoting religious values at the UN.

Another aspect of religious NGO collaboration is helping likeminded NGOs to navigate the UN system. For instance the Catholic NGO, C-FAM (see below) has helped Evangelical groups involved in UN lobbying, and has taught them the ropes and helped ease their way towards getting accreditation. The founder of United Families International, Susan Roylance

is the author of the “The UN Negotiation Guide”, a tool widely used by pro-family activists at the UN.¹

A significant development is the growing tendency among pro-lifers to focus on legal issues; for instance, the Alliance Defending Freedom, an organisation founded by Evangelical leaders that provides finance and resources for litigation against abortion and for traditional marriage and family laws, and more generally for an expansive interpretation of religious freedom. A similar role is played by the American Centre for Law and Justice, associated with Pentecostal televangelist and former presidential candidate Pat Robertson. These American lawyers also have offices and influence in Europe, Latin America, and Africa.

3.2 Knowledge Production Centres

The three categories of religious activists that we have identified as influential in the SRHR field, Evangelical-, Mormon- and Catholic NGOs, constitute informal networks, which are motivated, and to some extent monitored by knowledge producers. These actors range from think tanks to universities, but have a common denominator in their function as centres of knowledge. Their function is double; they inspire and give legitimacy to NGOs religious-political strategies. While they mostly do not lobby the UN themselves, they provide theological legitimacy to the conservative NGOs under scrutiny here, and we have therefore, as far as possible, included them in our study.

3.2.1 Catholic

The Catholic Church has several international think tanks in the form of its official councils and academies, e.g. the Pontifical Academy for Life, which was established in 1994. Several conservative Catholic NGO actors sit as individual members on these councils, where they learn Vatican rhetoric and are drilled in its logic.

With its huge resources and global organisational network, the Catholic Church has also played an important role in the formation of think tanks in many parts of the world, including African and Latin-American countries. Catholic universities are found in all parts of the world, and in the Western hemisphere they are among the most renowned. They are not think tanks producing research for a political purpose, but they produce some of the research cited by the lobby groups.

3.2.2 Mormon

Brigham Young University (BYU) has hosted vital Mormon resources on pro-family issues. The BYU School of Family Life in partnership with Reuben Clark Law School and the David M. Kennedy Centre for International Studies established the World Family Policy Centre with the aim of providing pro-family values and educate the UN-system on moral and religious issues. The Centre was closed down in 2008. President Richard Wilkins, a key Mormon pro-life actor (died December 2012) continued his international engagement as the director of Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (see below).

¹ <http://unitedfamilies.org/default.asp?contentID=21>

3.2.3 *Cross-faith*

The Howard Center for Family, Religion and Society is a cross-faith institution which serves as a pro-life resource centre. Its interreligious activities cut across established barriers. It provides research on the 'natural' family, and operates the World Congress of Families. In tandem with Mormon Richard Wilkins, the Lutheran Allan Carlson, president of World Congress of Family were involved in the planning of the Doha international conference on Family (2004) at the initiative of Qatar's UN ambassador Al-Nassar² to mark the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

3.2.4 *Evangelical*

The network of evangelical NGOs is more diverse or fragmented than the two other networks. Because the evangelicals lack a central organisation and a common authority (apart from the Bible), they relate to a number of centres of knowledge, mostly organised as think tanks.

Two of the largest "pro-family" evangelical groups are Focus on the Family (FOTF) and Concerned Women of America (CWA). Together with Family Research Council (FRC) they are among the top religious lobbyists in Washington³ These groups are also the evangelical heavyweights in the UN anti-SRHR lobby with a strong presence in Washington DC.

The Heritage Foundation (HF) is ranked among the top ten most influential think tanks in the US. It is well known for its leading role in the conservative movement during the 1980s and has continued to push conservative values and policies. The Foundation has strong ties to many Republican politicians, and several staff members have served in senior governmental roles and vice versa. The HF takes a fundamentally critical view of the UN and comments frequently on developments on the SRHR field. HF is not accredited to the UN, but is a key provider of policy briefs and analysis.

Worth mentioning is also the Family Research Council, which is among the most significant conservative think tanks/lobbies. It has strong influence on the Republican Party, especially on anti-abortion issues. Like the Heritage Foundation, the Council accuses the UN of promoting family policies according to radical feminist ideologies aiming at undermining the family, national sovereignty and religion. Over the last decade FRC has published several publications on social policies and human rights at the UN.⁴

3.2.5 *Muslim*

The Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development conducts research and issues publications on traditional family values. It is financially supported by the Qatar Foundation (owned by the royal family) and works in tight cooperation with US-based Christian organisations. From 2008-2012 it was headed by a prominent Mormon activist in

² Appointed as Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations of the United Nations by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon fall 2012.

³ Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2012)

⁴ Family Research Council serves as mentor also for Norwegian pro-life activists. E.g the annual conference "The Oslo Symposium" is inspired by the Council's high-level events, according to Bjarte Ystebø, assisting editor of the Christian conservative newspaper *Norge i Dag* and initiator of the event.

the SRHR field, Richard Wilkins. The Institute is an active participant at the UN (with consultative status at ECOSOC since 2009) with the aim of supporting the implementation of the Doha Declaration.⁵ The institute's modus operandi differs from more radical conservatives in its far less controversial language and more diplomatic mode of cooperation. Yet the centre is founded on the same conservative values. It seems that Doha aims to become a leading interreligious agency, among other things publishing widely on anti-abortion and pro-family policies with writers from different countries and religious backgrounds.

⁵ A report on the Doha conference is available at: <http://www.frc.org/insight/the-doha-declaration-an-international-consensus-in-favor-of-marriage-and-the-traditional-family>

4 Conservative Christian Organisations: The US Context

With few exceptions, the most influential conservative religious NGO within the SRHR field at the UN, are Christian and American. There is a significant overlap of lobbying groups at the UN and Capitol Hill, and argumentation in the SRHR field mirrors US political debate. Until the late 1990s, progressive views and feminist NGOs dominated the SRHR agenda at the UN. The change occurred in the late 1990s and Bush's presidency (2000-2008) was indisputably the heydays of US conservative actors at the UN. During this period new groups formed and applied for accreditation at the UN every year. 12 conservative religious NGOs focusing on SRHR received accreditation with the ECOSOC during this period.

In 2007/2008 the growth declined, and since 2009 there are few real newcomers. This observation is supported by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life report on religious lobbies in Washington DC⁶, which identifies one newcomer with a focus on SRHR since 2007 (Citizenlink, a web resource formed by Focus on the Family). The majority of the nine religious NGOs established since 2006 are engaged in other matters, notably freedom of religion and inter-religious issues. Focusing on the SRHR field we are able to say that among the few newcomers, none bring anything qualitatively new to the table in terms of beliefs and arguments.

When Obama took office in 2009, conservative New Christian Right lost the advantage they enjoyed under Bush of having the US president's immediate support and attention - a fact that may account for the lack of newcomers. However, the levelling off in the number of conservative Christian lobby groups joining the UN battle over SRHR need not mean that their interest or influence has waned; rather, it may simply be a sign that the field has matured, and the niche has been filled.

In this connection it is worth mentioning a phenomenon described as a "new evangelicals" generation shift in the USA, with a significant number of young evangelicals turning away from the conservative partisan politics of the cold-war generation, showing greater interest in social justice issues and the environment, and somewhat more openness to homosexuals, though they may take an even stricter line on abortion.⁷ Yet, the consequences of this development even if the trend continues, should not be overestimated. Loss of members does not necessarily mean a weakening of political impact, which relies primarily on effective organisation. Butler (2006) claims that one of the religious right's strengths has been in their relatively stronger recruitment of young activists. A generation shift has in fact taken place in key organisations like Focus on the Family and Concerned Women of America (see below). On the other hand, many of the same individual actors are circulating between organisations both within and outside their own religious networks. For instance, Sharon Slater, a Mormon and former director of United Family International, is currently the

⁶ Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2012)

⁷ [Williams \(2010\), ch. 11; Pally \(2011\); see also the online debate on Pally's essay at the The Immanent Frame, January 2013, <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2013/01/15/evangelicals-who-have-left-the-right/>; but compare Sarah Posner, "New Evangelical'-Progressive Alliance? Not So Fast", Religion Dispatches, January 27, 2013, \[http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/politics/6791/new_evangelical_progressive_alliance_not_so_fast/\]\(http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/politics/6791/new_evangelical_progressive_alliance_not_so_fast/\); see also \[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/carol-howard-merritt/why-evangelicalism-is-fai_b_503971.html\]\(http://www.huffingtonpost.com/carol-howard-merritt/why-evangelicalism-is-fai_b_503971.html\)](#)

president of Family Watch International. Another prominent leader who has changed employer is Wendy Wright. She headed the evangelical group Concerned Women of America from 2006-2010 and currently holds a leading position in the conservative Catholic C-FAM. The conservative Christian NGO network seems to be rife with similar cases: C-FAM also counts a former legal counsel with the (mainly evangelical) Family Research Council among its senior fellows, whereas a current legal counsel at FRC is the wife of C-FAM's president. These leaders are not only able to collaborate across denomination, but can apparently also switch from fronting an evangelical organization to a Catholic one.

Despite the lack of growth in their number, but probably due to their organisational skills and extensive collaboration conservative Christian NGOs have been able to gain ground at the UN also during the last few years. According to Austin Ruse, the leader of C-FAM, the future potential lies in the religious NGOs' ability to build a permanent conservative bloc of UN member states dedicated to conservative values. One example, which might seem to show that this is more than wishful thinking, is the adoption of a resolution on traditional values and human rights in the Human Rights Council (September 2012). The resolution was presented by Russia, and supported by Central Asian, Muslim and African states. Opponents (European states, US and Canada) expressed concerns that conservatives would use the resolution to restrict women's and LGBT rights around the world.

However, the blocs that Christian conservative NGOs are able to mobilize also show limitations and liabilities. In December 2009 the UN General Assembly voted to delete a reference to gender identity and sexual orientation as categories of non-discrimination from a resolution. Analysing the vote, however, C-FAM found that the "victorious coalition of socially-conservative nations" was "centred in Africa, the Islamic world and parts of the English-speaking Caribbean," and that many Catholic countries (Latin America, Philippines) had "defected".⁸ For a US-based conservative Catholic group like C-FAM, such alignments create obvious questions of legitimacy and credibility.

Future success of Christian conservative NGOs also relies on networking in developing countries. A recent report documents that organisations like Family Watch International, American Center for Law and Justice and Human Life International have joined partnership with likeminded actors and organisations in African countries on anti-abortion and anti-gay policies in Africa.⁹ So far building partnerships with Muslim organisations has proved to be more difficult than partnerships with allies in Latin-America and Africa.

Finally, further developments obviously also depend on internal politics as well as changes in religious and social currents in the US.

⁸ Piero Tozzi, "General Assembly 'Sexual Orientation' Vote Reveals Defection by Catholic Nations", C-FAM Friday Fax, Jan 7, 2010.

⁹ Colonizing African Values. How the US Christian Right is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa. Political Research Associations, 2012.

5 The Roman Catholic Church: Its Foreign Policy

Although this report focuses on NGOs, the Vatican's role at the UN also merits attention because of its unique status as both a religious and a political actor. In 1964 the Catholic Church entered the international political scene when it joined the UN as a permanent observer in the General Assembly as a non-member state, a status it shared with Switzerland (*Religion counts* 2002:23). It is not the Catholic Church as such that is a part of the UN system, but the Holy See or the Vatican state.¹⁰ This makes Catholicism a unique case in international politics. Although it shares some characteristics with the Anglican Church with its multinational organisation and global reach, in terms of membership numbers it can only be compared to Islam. However, Islam lacks the representative body and organizational system that renders the Catholic Church an influential actor under the leadership of one man; the pope.

When considering the Vatican and the Catholic Church, it may be useful to distinguish between three levels:

1. The Church; a global religious organization made up of local churches
2. The state (Holy See or Vatican state); an actor on the international political scene.
3. Catholic NGOs; a network of autonomous lay organisations with no formal link either to the Church or the Vatican.

A strictly hierarchical structure permeates the Church from the pope down to the lowest clergy. On the other hand, the laity, or ordinary Catholics who represent the vast majority of Catholic NGO activists, have a more informal relation with the Vatican hierarchy. However, it does imply more or less extensive bonds with the Church on a personal level. Hence employees and representatives will as a rule be Catholics and they will normally have at least one cleric among the board members. Thus the Catholic NGOs with ECOSOC accreditation range from the liberal "pro-choice" activist group Catholics for choice to the most fervent "pro-life" campaigners in American Life League.

Nevertheless, the pope wields a unique authority in matters of doctrine. Although official teachings on moral and sexuality are fiercely challenged by modern thinkers, over the past 50 years the popes have stood firm on their views on all matters related to the SRHR field. A document published after the committee's February 11-14, 2000 session of a Vatican committee, the *Pontifical Academy for Life*, provides an informative glance into the official Catholic view on modern, secular society:

Indeed, the distinctive feature of our time consists not only in the killing of innocent human beings, which has been perpetrated since antiquity, but in something far worse: the legalization of this crime in specific circumstances, as though it were "a right". It is no surprise then that the most serious and critical controversies arise precisely with regard to the law (cf. *Evangelium vitae*, n. 72). Recent history indicates, as

¹⁰ The Catholic Church first gained its present status as a nation state in 1929 when it entered a bilateral agreement with Mussolini's Italy (The Lateran Treaty).

the Holy Father has observed, that "the evidence shows with increasing clarity how policies and laws opposed to life are causing societies to decline, not only morally but demographically and economically. The Encyclical's message can therefore be presented not only as true and authentic guidelines for moral rebirth, but also as a reference-point for civil salvation".¹¹

5.1 Foreign Policy

The power of the pope is both political and moral-religious, two roles which are not easily kept apart. As head of the Vatican state, the pope delegates his powers to the secretary of state who in turn appoints diplomats, called *nuncio*, papal messengers. But since they are selected from among Catholic clergy, they have in fact already been appointed by the pope in his capacity as head of the Catholic Church. In practical terms this means that the representatives of the Catholic Church at the UN are not bureaucrats like other diplomats but more like government ministers who are the official representatives of their state as well as representatives of a political regime and wedded to a specific set of ideas and values.

The pope has absolute power, and the secretary of state is directly appointed by him and acts as his representative.¹² The current secretary of state (since 2006) is Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, an Italian who comes from a congregation of priests (Salesians of Don Bosco) dedicated to education. Prior to his appointment Bertone worked closely with the current pope Benedict XVI for years (in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith), the office responsible for overlooking doctrinal matters. He is close to the current pope, and like him, continues in his predecessor's footsteps.

The secretary of state appoints the Vatican's representatives to the UN. Since Vatican ambassadors are at least titular high-ranking clerics, they are male, and there is currently only one woman on the staff of the permanent observer mission in New York.¹³ The present apostolic nuncio to the UN in New York is Francis A. Chullikatt, titular archbishop of Ostra and an Indian-born career diplomat with the Vatican, recently apostolic nuncio to Iraq. However, the personal biographies of these men do not matter much, since policy and official standpoints are closely controlled by a rigidly hierarchical system. Much the same caveat applies when the authority to head a Vatican delegation is delegated to a layperson, such as Mary Ann Glendon at the Beijing Women's Conference in 1995.

¹¹ Address at the Commemoration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Encyclical "Evangelium vitae", delivered at the 14 February 2000, and rendered in L'Osservatore Romano English edition, 23 February, p. 4). (http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/index.htm)

¹² This arrangement was laid out in the present constitution, which was penned by John Paul II in 2001. He established the role of the minister of foreign affairs (secretario dello stato) as one directly delegated from the pope (§2 http://www.vatican.va/vatican_city_state/legislation/documents/scv_doc_20001126_legge-fondamentale-scv_it.html)

¹³ <http://www.holyseemission.org/about/staff.aspx>

5.2 Strategic Concerns and Rhetoric

The Holy See works closely with three Catholic NGOs on the SRHR arena: CARITAS Internationalis,¹⁴ Franciscans International and the *Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité* (CIDSE). In June 2012 they hosted a parallel event at the Rio +20 conference. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Vatican rhetoric generally seems to avoid direct references to population control (contraceptives). So also with contraceptives and abortion, topics which are at the heart of official Catholic concerns, but which in the current climate it tries to subsume under the guise of family politics. It is 'family' which is the central term; and the autonomy of the family that takes centre stage in the Vatican's argumentation against population control. Framing the argumentation in this way the Catholic Church insists on addressing issues concerning sexuality firmly within the framework of a traditional, biological understanding of the family.

As a permanent observer, the Catholic Church in its role as a state, is recognised as a discussion partner on a par with other states, but is barred from voting; it is involved at all levels in the UN body participating in deliberations and planning, and participates fully in several UN agencies (IAEA, FAO, UNESCO, UNID).(Chao 1999:42)

In the area of reproductive health the Holy See first made its presence felt at the UN conferences on Population and Sustainable Development in Cairo 1994. The same year the pope created a new Academy, The Pontifical Academy for Life; one of 12 consultative bodies consisting of clerics, experts and a selected number of Catholic lay persons, including a few women.

As noted before, it is important to distinguish Catholic NGOs from the Vatican. The Holy See is not their official spokesman and although there are several links and networks between them creating easy access for Catholic NGOs, the Catholic NGOs should be assessed on their own merits and viewed as linked with but not dictated from the Vatican. Although the Catholic Church is a global network and enjoys a privileged position on the international political arena, Catholic NGOs are deeply embedded in their own local or national religious-political context, and are not under direct control from Rome - unlike the close monitoring that clerical organisations are subjected to. But even among clerical organisations, the formal link is not so rigidly defined as to impede individual initiatives. Thus they often serve as unofficial mouthpiece for the pope's more personal views.

Broadly speaking, conservative religious lobbies at the UN pursue a strategy and rhetoric forged by the Vatican for the Cairo and Beijing conferences in 1994–5. At these conferences the Catholic Church became a leading actor on the conservative wing. Apologetic writings on Catholic politics give pope John Paul II the credit for taking up the fight against "what the secular world would call progressive: the notion, for example that humans share with God the right to decide who will and who will not be born " (Chao 1999:48)

14 Caritas Internationalis is often referred to as "the relief organisation of the Catholic Church", but is not run directly by the Vatican. It is an international umbrella organisation of 164 national organisations - the largest of its kind. On the national level it is owned and run by the Church; board members are appointed or approved by the bishop, and for all practical purposes Caritas differs from other Catholic organisations by its close ties with the official Church.

In Cairo, the Holy See sought and successfully forged alliances with conservative Muslim states; today, the 'traditional family' lobby continues to rely on a Muslim voting bloc in the UN. In Beijing, the Vatican deployed a more subtle strategy, "challenging not only specific human rights provisions but also broader human rights concepts and language which the Vatican perceived as offering a vision of human rights inimical to its own" (Buss 1998).

Assessing the impact of Vatican strategy and rhetoric in Beijing, Buss notes that the Vatican opposed key human rights concepts, like gender and equality. It presented its views as representative of the world's women, unlike the excessive feminism allegedly characterizing women's human rights organizations. In particular, the Vatican opposed the use of 'gender' and insisted that it could only be interpreted in terms of the male and female sexes. Struggles continue over these issues in the UN today.

6 View Points and Arguments

Christian conservative activists share a common rhetoric and buzzwords and key arguments are limited to a handful of subjects concerning the protection of life, faith and family.

The groups surveyed here are ultimately **motivated** by their religious beliefs and identity, even if they are tightly bound up with a specific set of political values, e.g. belief in the free market, small government, American patriotism, and political partisanship (Republican). However, their rhetoric is usually tailored to the occasion. The Family Research Council, for example, offers activists “The Best Pro-Life Arguments for Secular Audiences”, explaining that “you will need to make your case, in most instances, not in the language of faith or religion but in the language of the post-modern secularist.” These groups are anything but political liberals; they advocate for public policy to be based on particular interpretations of Scripture and Natural Law. However, they are pragmatic enough to realize that such arguments have little attraction in venues such as the United Nations. Here they typically deploy counter-expertise to make resonant arguments in the dominant idioms of medical and social science, international law, human rights, and state sovereignty.

Citing selected studies and statistics, they seek to prove the social harms and health risks of abortion and homosexual practice; disprove the maternal-mortality argument for legal abortion; prove the benefits of abstinence-based education and show that contraception-based policies increase abortion, etc.

It seems that gender issues, women's health, and sexuality are of such importance as to make it possible for Catholics, Evangelical and Mormons to transcend institutional barriers and collaborate against a common adversary - those who promote progressive feminist views. At the centre of this cooperation is the Catholic Church, which plays a key role among the religious NGOs at the UN, firstly because of its status as an observer state with access to all levels of the UN system. Second, but equally important, its theological resources allows the Catholic Church to provide well-founded arguments against progressive SRHR initiatives.

6.1 National Sovereignty and UN scepticism

There is a widely expressed agreement among conservative religious actors that the UN systematically encourages a secular global order that is in direct conflict with Christian (or other religious) values. Their critique relies on an idea of the UN as an all powerful entity. Acknowledging its peace keeping mission, the conservative religious NGOs typically claim that the UN has drifted away from its original intent of promoting and securing world peace, and has developed a multi-national bureaucracy that threatens national sovereignty.

When Christian conservative NGOs play the nationalism card and accuse the UN of undermining nation-state control, this is *not* to say that they are religious nationalists and share traits with groups we associate with the war in ex-Yugoslavia, or that they are in favour of strong state control. As mentioned earlier, conservative Christian activists came to the UN with an explicit negative agenda aiming at weakening and ultimately ending UN influence on America. The appeal to national sovereignty must be seen as a vicarious

argument which serves to associate the UN with unpatriotic, destructive forces - socialism, feminism and environmentalism –that threaten to infiltrate America.¹⁵

The sovereignty issue relates to the groups' American nationalism in shifting and contradictory ways. During the George W. Bush administration, the pro-family lobby were cheerleaders for the imposition of conservative American policy on the UN and around the world, in some tension with the sovereignty argument. Given the Obama administration's push for progressive international policy, not least on gay rights, Christian conservative lobbies routinely denounce American policies, seeking to undermine American agendas at the UN.

6.2 The Christian Family

The main bulk of religious arguments against progressive SRHR initiatives are subsumed under the concept of the family. The strategy seems to be motivated by a wish to avoid direct confrontation over same sex issues; sexual morality; contraception and abortion. By consistently defining family as a natural unit, the conservative Christian NGOs give voice to views shared by the vast majority of religious leaders worldwide. They regard marriage as part of divine creation; a union of man and woman, and biological offspring or legally adopted children by a married couple. This rhetoric serves to strengthen the traditional idea of family as a natural given - as something unchangeable and eternal.

The basic pro-family argument is that the traditional (American) nuclear family is under threat with severe consequences such as destabilisation of a biologically natural and God-given gender balance, decline of social and moral order and the loss of male authority. The Christian conservatives blame the UN system for this development. "Pro-family advocates have been especially effective in uncovering evidence of how the UN system is being manipulated to influence national laws that promote abortion, prostitution, homosexuality, promiscuity, and the sexualisation of children" states the Family Watch International website. The main task of conservative lobbyists, as they see it, is to defeat UN proposals that undermine the family.

While conservative Christian NGOs argue for marriage as a bulwark against immorality and impending apocalypse, the Vatican also focuses on another angle, namely the family vs. the state. Its family policy is not framed as a battle against an immoral and faithless population, but against non-religious states which undermine the traditional family and thereby also traditional religion, morals and the social order. By framing family politics as a state/church problem it becomes possible to ignore the pressure for a redefinition of 'family' in accordance with current developments in Western countries and influential LGBT NGOs .

Pressure groups are not the Vatican's adversary; it is the (non-religious) state which it perceives as the real threat to the Catholic Church. This way of framing the discussion is historically tied to the successful ideological fight against Communism. Ever since Bismarck and the *Kulturkampf* in the 1870s it is religious freedom, understood in concrete terms as the

¹⁵ Isgro, Kirsten Lynn (2006)

Church's freedom from state control, which has been at the core of Catholic policy towards the modern state.

6.3 Anti-abortion

The most important anti-abortion argument is probably the term 'pro-life', which subtly manages to portray the opponent as pro-death. In an attempt to create a positive image of themselves, feminist activists have coined the term 'pro-choice', referring to the woman's perspective.¹⁶ It is worth noting that the Catholic Church has been especially successful in furnishing arguments for the so-called 'pro-life' agenda. Their persistent reference to 'the unborn child' and avoidance of any reference to 'the developing foetus', is just one example of an effective strategy to cement the idea that there is no significant distinction between a foetus and a new born child. Apart from the fact that this position is relatively new – it was first stated by pope Pius 9 in the 19th century – it has massive political and ethic implications: it means that the fertilised egg is regarded as a human being with equal rights to life and protection as any person.

The religious fight against legal abortion is built on the following premise: that every human being has the right to life, which should be protected by law. The unborn child is a human being from the moment of conception, therefore it has the right to live and should be protected by the law laid down in the Mosaic prohibition "Thou shall not kill" (Mos.2:20). The unresolved question is therefore when human life begins, or put differently, on what grounds a fertilized egg can be compared to a baby, child or adult. In religious terms this is ultimately a question of soul, because it is the soul which ensures the uniqueness of the human being compared to other living beings. Among Christian theologians and doctrines there is hence a clear distinction between those who maintain that the fertilized egg has human dignity, and those who stand for a 'delayed humanisation' (in the spirit of Aquinas) and believe the foetus receives souls after three months (which is also according to the traditional Muslim teachings, i.e.100 days).

Anti-SRHR activists at the UN take a conclusive anti-abortion stance. To gain ground on a matter that is profoundly religiously driven yet belongs within a secular domain of health politics, the pro-life movement has established arguments modified to a secular or liberal audience. An essential part of social conservative knowledge production involves skimming the field of medical and social sciences for arguments, and to select and bend conclusions to fit or support their own agenda. For instance, they claim that liberal secular abortion laws not only violate the rights of the unborn child, but expose the mother to serious risk of physical illness, difficulties with later pregnancies and even infertility. According to pro-life health organisations, medical research has established the link between abortion and breast cancer, a claim that evidently has received media attention and stirred debate on radical pro-life activists' misinterpretation and selective use of medical research in the USA.¹⁷

¹⁶ View Anne Stensvold *A history of Christian pregnancy*. Routledge, New York, 2014 (forthcoming)

¹⁷ <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/abortion/ab0102.html>

When conservative Christian activists insistently disregard the distinction between foetus and baby and subsume both under the concept of 'helpless child', they rely on a theological argument known as 'instant hominization'. According to this view, the soul is infused into the fertilised egg at conception, and therefore the fertilised egg is a person; i.e. a unique entity of body and soul. Often modern genetics is used to underpin this view, pointing to the presence of DNA from the moment of fertilisation, but logically, it is the presence of the soul which is the defining criterion; and this belief - in God's infusion of the soul at conception - that explains their commitment.

6.4 Human rights

The human rights arguments used by the NGOs under consideration here relate primarily to the sanctity of life and religious freedom. Based on these provisions the conservative religious bloc develops a three-fold argumentation: first, the right to life should be construed to protect life from conception, precluding abortion. Second, they also defend an expansive interpretation of religious freedom and free speech that protects homophobic religious speech, religiously rooted discrimination, as well as conscientious objection by professionals e.g. against performing abortion. And lastly, they argue that international human rights treaty law does not provide any right to abortion or to non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, and insist that these would be 'new rights' that only states have the power to create.¹⁸

More broadly, the conservative religious lobby plays the sovereignty card in their appeals to states with 'traditional values'. They frame SRHR as 'new' rights imposed on states that never agreed to them, and thus an attack on national sovereignty, perpetrated by a collusion of international bureaucrats, radical activists, and rich Western/Northern states. The US is traditionally cautious of accepting international human rights treaties, guarding the sovereignty of its political and legal system. The argument is thus a natural one for American conservatives to make, at the same time as it resonates with many third world governments.

6.5 Strategic arguments and Biblical legitimation

The most effective way of conveying a message is to coin a term and take ownership to it. Another method is to systematically avoid a well-established term or habitual phrase, substituting it with a similar word thereby almost unnoticeably distort its meaning. This is what the anti-abortion NGOs are doing when they systematically avoid using the word foetus, and consistently refer to the child in womb or the unborn child; labelling the anti-abortion stance 'pro-life' and define the traditional concept of the family as natural and given.

To illustrate, the following are a few examples of sections from the Bible in support of conservative Christian views in the SRHR field:

¹⁸ A concise statement of these arguments in relation to abortion, supported by key groups, are the "San Jose Articles" (<http://www.sanjosearticles.com/>, 2011).

In support of death penalty: Punishment of death was applied to those who take another's life because God values human life.

"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man." Genesis 9:6

In support of the anti-abortion stance: God gives life before birth and cares for the unborn.

"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvellous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them." Psalm 139:13-16

In support of the view that the foetus is an individual:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5

This verse makes sense only in light of theological definitions of the human being, i.e. a *unity* of body and soul. This idea is not found clearly and explicitly in any *one* text but is based on centuries of theological discussions. However, it is usually conveyed in the following reference to Genesis:

In support of the divine creation of man:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness (...)" Genesis 1:26

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27.

In support of the Christian heterosexual family:

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply (...)" Genesis 1:28

"And He answered and said to them, Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female," and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." Matthew 19:4-6

The tendency to refer to Biblical texts is most prominent in Evangelical and Mormon rhetoric. It is also frequent among Catholic NGOs, probably because of the US dominance among NGOs at the UN. In general, Catholics have a preference for papal encyclicals and theological authorities. In either case the appeal to non-Christians is doubtful, whether they be religious or not.

7 Perspectives on Dialogue

This study maps religiously motivated lobbying groups challenging SRHR policies at the UN. The NGOs in question are mainly American of Catholic, Mormon or Evangelical background. In addition, the Catholic Church stands out as a key institution because of its status as a state with permanent observatory status at the UN and with resources to follow up on their core issues.

To grasp radical religious actors like Concerned Women of America, C-FAM or Family Watch International and their modus operandi at the UN, it makes sense to consider them as passionate and convinced political activists. They are motivated by moral concerns for the future of mankind, which in their view is threatened 1) by the lack of religious faith and respect for religion on the political arena (global, national, local), and 2) by the lack of moral standards, which is a consequence of the lack of faith. On this basis the conservative Christian NGOs have adopted a strategy of fighting for a few important causes.

The scope of this study raises questions to how and on what bases Norway may initiate dialogues with anti-SRHR actors. Our view is that these organisations and leaders, while demonstrating pragmatism at some level, offer no space for dialogue and negotiations on the questions and issues relating to SRHR. To fight secular anti-family policies at the UN constitute their key *raison d'être* for being at the UN in the first place. Time and resources would be far better spent by focusing on their 'target groups', i.e. member states from developing countries and Latin American and Muslim states.

On that note it should be said that the Vatican is among the most firm anti-feminist actors, but with its broad social concerns and massive influence in many third world countries, pragmatic collaboration should be possible. The Vatican's diplomatic relations with the umbrella organisation for Muslim states (OIC) is a domain where religion and politics intersect. In order to understand the dynamics of this relation - and assess its possible influence - a thorough knowledge of both parties is necessary. To our knowledge such a study does not exist, nor research based information about the strategies and values guiding Vatican policy making *per se*.

Another track to follow up could be the Doha International Institute for Family and Development, which is interesting for several reasons. The centre is financially and politically backed by the Qatar Royal Family through the Qatar Foundation and is engaged by the state of Qatar at the UN on several occasions. The other aspect is the partnership between American pro-family activists with what appears to be a resourceful and influential think tank for family policies the Middle East.

Even though the religious and the political are hard to disentangle, these groups cannot be properly understood or dealt with if reduced to a conservative political movement in religious guise. However, this is not to say that their religious ideology and arguments are deeply rooted in theological tradition. They are not, as the very limited scriptural support for the "family" agenda suggests. This agenda, as it relates to SRHR, was forged fifty years ago or less (in the case of gay rights, far more recently). It represents a reaction by conservative factions within each religious community to modern social and theological change.

8 Influential Actors – Alphabetic Order

8.1 Alliance Defending Freedom

Denomination: Evangelical

HQ office: Arizona

Website: <http://www.alliancedefendingfreedom.org/>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2010

The Alliance Defending Freedom is a legal organization. It was founded as the “Alliance Defence Fund” in 1994 by attorney Alan Sears (it changed its name in 2012). More than 30 prominent evangelical Christian leaders participated in the founding, including Focus on the Family founder James Dobson. It was intended as a legal counterweight to liberal groups like the American Civil Liberties Union.

The Alliance Defending Freedom describes itself as “a servant ministry building an alliance to keep the door open for the spread of the Gospel by transforming the legal system and advocating for religious liberty, the sanctity of life, and marriage and family”, launched by prominent Christian leaders in recognition of “the need for a strong, coordinated legal defence against growing attacks on religious freedom”.¹⁹

In 2010, the ADF launched a “Global Initiative” to take its legal struggle international.

ADF is historically a creature of the conservative Evangelical movement, but it counts conservative Catholics among its senior counsels.

ADF seeks to win strategic, precedent-setting cases for religious freedom, broadly interpreted to include pro-life, pro-marriage and pro-family causes (i.e., anti-abortion and anti-gay). Increasingly, it does litigation itself; it also coordinates, funds, and provides other resources for litigation by its allied attorneys and organizations. Where it lacks standing to litigate, it may also file **amicus** briefs or offers legal counsel.

The ADF coordinates legal efforts in strategic, precedent-setting cases with allied attorneys and organizations, developing strategy and providing resources. By February 2013, the ADF boasted alliances with 300 organizations and 2,200 attorneys in 52 states/territories and 31 countries.

It had trained 1,600 of these attorneys itself:

At the Alliance Defending Freedom Legal Academy, Christian attorneys are trained by some of the nation’s top litigators and constitutional law experts to effectively combat attacks on religious freedom. In return, these Allied Attorneys provide hundreds of pro bono/dedicated hours to defend the Body of Christ in their local communities.²⁰

¹⁹ <http://www.alliancedefendingfreedom.org/about>

²⁰ <http://www.alliancedefendingfreedom.org/about>

By February 2013, the ADF estimated this work at 740,000 pro bono hours, worth \$141 million. In addition, the ADF provided strategic funding – 2,300 grants totalling \$36 million by February 2013 for litigation. However, the name change in part reflects the fund’s shift to doing more litigation itself, rather than coordinating and funding the work of others work. In February 2013, the ADF’s 44 in-house attorneys were involved in 200 current cases, providing legal assistance free of charge thanks to their generous sponsors, so-called “Allied Ministry Friends”

In 2011, the ADF launched its “Global Initiative” to take its legal struggles to the world.

It has been active in European courts, especially the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, where it has been involved in the cases of **Lautsi v. Italy** (concerning crucifixes in classrooms; the ADF represented 33 members of the European Parliament) and **A, B and C v. Ireland** (concerning abortion).

In Latin America, where the ADF is represented by Mexico City-based, it has submitted **amicus** briefs both in national Supreme Court cases in Argentina and Mexico, and at the Inter-American Court of Rights (the **Atala** case). Part of the ADF’s motivation for going international is that American courts are influenced by the outcome of cases elsewhere.²¹

Together with Focus on the Family, ADF is pushing for UN treaty-body reform (see below) that would keep the various human rights committees from “exceeding their mandate” e.g. to complain about countries’ restrictive abortion laws.²²

8.2 American Family Association

Denomination: Evangelical

New York

Website: <http://www.afa.net>

Consultative status: The New York AFA chapter is on the ECOSOC Roster

The American Family Association (AFA), founded by Donald Wildmon in 1977, is a US NGO of conservative evangelical or fundamentalist Christian orientation. It describes itself as “one of the largest and most effective pro-family organizations in the country with [...] approximately 180,000 paid subscribers to the [monthly] AFA Journal”, plus nearly 200 American Family Radio stations and a strong on-line presence.

Its mission is “inform, equip, and activate individuals to strengthen the moral foundations of American culture”, as the AFA believes “that a culture based on biblical truth best serves the well-being of our nation and our families, in accordance with the vision of our founding documents.”

²¹ ADF’s Global Initiative Champions Life, Family and Religious Liberty”, C-FAM Friday Fax, Sep 15, 2011

²² For the ADF’s and C-FAM’s argument against the CESCRC committee’s endorsement of a right to sexual and reproductive health, including abortion, see <http://www.c-fam.org/docLib/20101021subCESCRSRHOct18.pdf> (for a summary, see the C-FAM Friday Fax of Oct 21, 2010).

It vocally opposes abortion, homosexuality in general and same-sex marriage in particular, , as well as a host of other things, including vulgarity and pornography in the media, atheists, less right-wing evangelicals, the supposed threat of Islamisation, multiculturalism and hate speech laws (it has been named a 'hate group' by the Southern Poverty Law Center). It takes an activist approach, boycotting even such paragons of decency as Disney for accommodating gays.²³ .Though it has attended UN meetings, the AFA does not seem to be an influential player or suited to becoming one. Its relevance lies in articulating views and motivations that underlie the polished arguments of more diplomatic lobbyists.

8.3 American Life League

Denomination: Catholic

Stafford, Virginia, USA

ECOSOC accreditation since 2000.

American Life League (ALL) is a hard line Catholic lay movement focusing on anti-abortion activism. It is among the largest anti-abortion (pro-life) groups in the US (cf. Wikipedia entry) with 60 full time employees. It is one of the oldest anti-abortion NGOs, established in 1979 as a "kitchen table initiative" by Judie Brown, the author of more than 12 books with conservative Catholic content. She is also the main contributor to the web page.

ALL describes their adversaries' position as a "culture of death". In doing so ALL is in line with official Catholic teaching where the phrase was coined by pope John Paul 2. in the 1995 encyclica *Evangelium Vitae* (*Gospel of Life*). Judie Brown was member of the official Vatican council, which is charged with handling abortion and family issues, the Pontifical academy for life. The council was established 1994, and Brown entered in 1996 and sat for ten years until 2006.

In 2007 ALL launched a campaign against hormonal contraception, *The Pill Kills* (www.thepillkills.org). Hormonal contraception is called "poison", which kills - not women, but "the unborn child" because the pill "makes it difficult—if not impossible—for the five- to seven-day-old baby to attach to the lining, where he/she would receive the nourishment needed to grow. If the baby does not successfully attach to the lining, he/she dies and is expelled from the body during menstruation. This process is known as a chemical abortion."

8.4 Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, known as C-FAM

Denomination: Catholic

Main office in New York,

<http://www.c-fam.org/>

Established in 1997, C-FAM is a Catholic think tank

²³ The discursive strategies of the AFA over the past decade have been studied by Roghult (2012).

Not accredited with the UN

C-FAM, was started as a lay Catholic initiative in 1997 "to monitor and affect the social policy debate at the United Nations and other international institutions". It "works among NGOs at the UN without actually being one" (Chamberlain 2006). C-FAM's main goal is to foster collaboration among "pro-family" groups across religious divides: "Inspired by the Holy See's coalition-building efforts at the Cairo Population Conference in 1994, [C-FAM leader] Ruse saw that through joint efforts pro-family forces could foster the formation of a bloc of socially conservative governments to oppose legalizing abortion internationally and to take a conservative stand on social issues" (Butler 2006, 94), and C-FAM was instrumental in getting other conservative Christian NGOs into the UN system. The organisation challenges on-going processes at the UN, seeing itself as defending higher aims: "The preservation of international law by discrediting socially radical policies at the United Nations and other international institutions". (<http://www.c-fam.org/about-us/>)

The organisation's influence is partly due to a weekly newsletter, the Friday Fax, available on C-FAM's website, "an originally researched and reported news article prepared by C-FAM staff members who attend UN meetings and conferences as well as closely reading numerous UN documents". The news letter has an alleged readership of more than 400,000. C-FAM, like the Population Research Institute, is a spinoff from Human Life International.

Seeing itself as a moral watchdog, C-FAM effectively undermines international political agreements. Special attention is given to The Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), which it claims is continually reinterpreted by a monitoring committee. "C-FAM's CEDAW Watch has followed the CEDAW committee since 1997. This program provides policy makers and citizens with the information they need to understand what CEDAW is all about and how to protect their national laws from the harmful effects of the activist committee" (<http://www.c-fam.org/research/>).

C-FAM's president, Austin Ruse, is a former journalist and television reporter, whose highly developed communication skills have helped spread C-FAM's position among conservative Catholic organisations. His contacts in US politics is evidenced by his role as organiser of the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast.

In recent years, C-FAM's minimal staff has grown to include Wendy Wright, former head of Concerned Women for America, as vice-president for government relations and communication; and a research group including a lawyer, a molecular biologist, and Susan Yoshihara, Ph.D., a former naval helicopter pilot and lecturer, who works on demographic issues through C-FAM's "International Organizations Research Group".

8.5 Concerned Women for America

Denomination: Evangelical

Washington DC

Website: <http://www.cwfa.org>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2001

CWA was founded in 1979 by Beverly La Haye, a Christian conservative and wife of the evangelical leader Timothy LaHaye. The moral imperative of CWA is to act within the

public arena as agents of political and social change on a range of social and political issues. CWA fights for a renewal of Biblical literacy and supports teaching creationism in schools.²⁴ CWA defines its role within a 'culture war' scheme of the cultural war and as protector of Christian (American) values against aggressive secularism, feminism and supra-national interests.²⁵

CWA is a private, non-profit association and receives its main funding from private donations and a number of conservative philanthropies. It is an activist think tank founded on specific moral principles. Its strategy comprises three main approaches: advocacy, lobbying and research/knowledge dissemination. CWA is primarily engaged on domestic political and legal issues and its involvement at the UN is first and foremost to protect America against secular over-national policies. It is active on both federal and state level with "nearly 500 prayer/action chapters in almost all 50 states".²⁶ CWA claims to include over half a million members, thus being the largest public policy organisation for women in America.²⁷

The organisation moved its head office from San Diego to Washington in 1995 to boost its influence on national politics. From 1995 CWA began covering UN activities more consistently based on the notion that the UN constituted a threat to American Christian values and the traditional family. During the 1990s CWA had staff representatives to attend UN proceedings and conferences under observer status and it received special NGO observer status in 2001.²⁸

CWA is involved in range of activities from grassroots trainings of "kitchen lobbyists", prayer meetings and dissemination of research that supports Christian values. CWA produces radio programs and written publications and is proactive in lobbying towards relevant political institutions and at relevant international arenas. It produces a number of publications, including the monthlies *Family Voice* and *Issues at a Glance*, as well as books, cassettes and videotapes. The CWA also has a daily radio show, "Concerned Women Today", and is active on social media and public debates in mainstream media.

The CWA organisation comprises several departments; Concerned Women for America Education, their Legal Defence Foundation, and Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee, and the Beverly LaHaye Institute, and the Culture and Family Institute.

Through the Legislation department/Legal Studies CWA closely monitors the juridical system and "its impact on families and our nation". The Beverly LaHaye Institute focuses specifically on women's issues "from a conservative, Biblical perspective" and provides material on main issues of concern: "feminism, marriage, pornography and sex trafficking,

²⁴ CWA website: <http://www.cwfa.org>; Isgro (2006)

²⁵ Butler (2006); Isgro (2006)

²⁶ <http://states.cwfa.org/states/>

²⁷ The membership number is contested by other organisations.

²⁸ Isgro (2006); CWA website: <http://www.cwfa.org>

religious trends and freedoms, as well as national political commentary and reports about recent United Nations activities.”²⁹

CWA’s working focus include six main topical areas: the family, anti-abortion, religious liberty, pornography, national sovereignty and Christian education.

8.6 Doha International Institute for Family and Development

Denomination: Muslim/cross-faith

Location: Doha, Qatar

Website: <http://www.fsd.org.qa/>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2009

The Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (DIIFSD) was established with support by the Qatar Foundation for Education of the Qatar royal family in 2006. Its current leader is Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani. From 2008-2012 the institute was headed by the late prof. Richard Wilkins (Brigham Young University).

The institute is mandated to follow up the Doha Declaration on the Family (outcome of the Doha International Conference on the Family organised in 2004). The declaration encourages member states to support traditional family values worldwide by conducting family programs and research.

From 2012 the institute decided to focus its efforts on promoting family values in the Arab world, while maintaining an international engagement. The institute engages in three lines of activity: research (conducting and supporting), a policy unit (“raising awareness of family issues”), and supporting local NGOs family programs in a number of countries.

DIIFSD has partnered up with pro-life organizations in several countries and has special connections to Christian pro-family organisations in the US. DIIFSD’s most recent publication, a three-volume book on the role of family in development (The Family in the New Millennium: World Voices Supporting the "Natural" Clan”), illustrates the institute’s ties to the Mormon community. The editors are two Brigham Young professors; A. Scott Loveless and Thomas B. Holman, and UN veteran Susan Roylance, the founder of United Families International (currently at the Howard Center). Writers ranging from 19 countries in Europe, Asia, Middle East and the US discuss divorce, abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriage from a religious traditional point of view.

It remains to be seen if DIIFSD will continue to cooperate as tightly with American Christian activists without the influence of Richard Wilkins as the institute’s managing director.

²⁹ <http://www.cwfa.org/main.asp>

8.7 Family Research Council

Denomination: Evangelical

Main office: Washington DC

Website: <http://www.frc.org>

UN Accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2002

Evangelical, autonomous organisation not tied with any denomination

Family Research Council is a politically conservative hybrid group - a think tank as well a US grass root membership organization which promotes religious related concerns to politicians and the general public.

The Family Research Council was established in 1983 as a lobbying group at Capitol Hill. The initiative came from Dr. James Dobson, the founder of Focus on the Family, an Evangelical ministry (view below). Dobson's religious background is the Church of the Nazarene, but Focus on the Family has no confessional ties. It is an independent Evangelical ministry centred around Dobson's radio program, making Dobson comparable to more internationally known televangelists like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell. In 1988 it merged with Focus on the Family, and became this organisation's "Washington public policy arm". Its primary interest is human sexuality and bioethics. In addition to lobbying it engages directly in public election campaigns and publishes voter scorecards and action guides (Chamberlain 2006). Its mission statement declares: "Family Research Council champions marriage and family as the foundation of civilization, the seedbed of virtue, and the wellspring of society." Properly understood, "families" are formed only by ties of blood, marriage, or adoption, and "marriage" is a union of one man and one woman".³⁰

This organisation's core values; faith, family, freedom, places it squarely in the centre of US political concerns, and across religious divides. A former member of the Reagan administration, Gerald P. Regier, was the first president of the lobbying group. From 1989 onwards, it achieved a leading position among the New Christian Right under the leadership of Gary Bauer, former undersecretary of Education of the Reagan administration; by the end of the 1990s, the FRC had a staff of 120 and a mailing list of nearly five hundred thousand (Williams 2010; cf. Butler 2006, 112).

In 2000, a Florida attorney at law, known for his "pro-life" engagement was appointed president, to be replaced in 2003 by the present leader, another Republican, former conservative Louisiana legislator Tony Perkins.

In addition to lobbying for its conservative family concerns, Family Research Council places much emphasis on educating the public (propaganda), keeping an active presence on the Internet, and radio, iPod downloads, guest editorials and interviews, making its views known through legal briefs and on-campus debates.

³⁰ <http://www.frc.org/issues>

Gilgoff (2007) gives a detailed journalistic portrait of Focus on the Family in American politics.

8.8 Family Watch International

Denomination: Mormon

Main office: Arizona

Website: <http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status

Family Watch International (FWI) is a small but effective organisation, founded in 1999 by Sharon Slater. From 2001 until 2006 Sharon Slater was the president of United Families International (UFI), an assignment that sparked Slater's international engagement and allowed her to develop her lobbying skills at the UN.³¹

FWI is a non profit, international organization and claim to have members and supporters in over 80 countries. FWI has consultative status at the UN and is a prime example of a small, but influential actor that has a particular focus on UN matters on social policies and family values. FWI has received attention for its engagement in support of anti-gay legislation in African countries like Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda.³²

FWI is an activist lobby and advocacy organisation established to build a "worldwide movement to preserve and promote the family, traditional marriage, life, parental rights and religious freedom. The UN has FWI's explicit and immediate attention and it closely monitors UN developments on the SRHR-field. The Global Family Policy Forum sponsored by FWI in 2010 exemplifies how FWI is targeting UN delegates and member states; the forum was organised specifically for diplomats that negotiates social and family issues at the UN and the aim was to train them on how to resist UN initiatives on sexuality.³³ FWI seeks partners across religious and political boundaries, for instance when collaborating with delegations from Iran, Syria, Nigeria, Qatar and Saint Lucia on an alternative meeting on motherhood during a UN Commission on the Status of Women conference.³⁴

FWI main concerned is that Christian family values are under attack and thus needs to be defended nationally and globally. FWI claims the UN system " is being manipulated to influence national laws that promote abortion, prostitution, homosexuality, promiscuity and the sexualisation of children."³⁵ On the coming period FWI will continue to focus on the a number of topics: marriage, abortion, homosexual rights, sexual educational and religious

³¹ See below for more info on UFI.

³² Political Research Association:Kaoma K.J: Colonizing African Values .How the US Christian Right is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa.
http://www.publiceye.org/Reports/Colonizing_African_Values/Pdfs/PRA%20Report%2072dpi.pdf

³³ <http://www.familywatchinternational.org/fwi/newsletter/0502.cfm>

³⁴ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/katherine-marshall/family-watch-international_b_1091222.html

³⁵ http://www.standforthefamily.org/sff/about_sharon.cfm

freedom. FWI produced policy briefs providing their arguments on each topic, claiming to be supported by scientific evidence. FWI, for example, claims that social science has “conclusively proven that a strong family based on marriage between a man and a woman is the optimum environment to protect, nourish and develop individuals”. On abortion FWI states: Every abortion destroys an innocent life—the life of the developing child—and has serious repercussions for the mother as well. If women were more informed regarding abortion, there would be far fewer of them.

8.9 Focus on the Family

Denomination: Evangelical

Main office: Colorado Spring

Website: <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2003

Focus on the Family grew out of the radio programme by the same name hosted by James Dobson from 1977. By 1991, the organization had 900 employees; by 1995, the broadcast was the third most popular in the US (Williams 2010). Over the past couple of decades, FOTF has been one of the largest social-conservative, evangelical organizations in the US, and Dobson, who projects an image of being above partisan politics, has been perhaps the most politically powerful Evangelical leader. Focus on the Family is an Evangelical ministry, not tied to a specific denomination (its founder, Dobson was raised in the Church of the Nazarene). It requires detailed statements of belief and practice when hiring staff, and the workday begins with morning prayers for all employees. In politics, FOTF has occasionally distinguished itself from some other major Religious Right forces by making credible threats to withhold support from the Republican party if the latter does not deliver the socially conservative policies of importance to the Evangelical base.

Focus on the Family describes itself as “a global Christian ministry dedicated to helping families thrive” by providing help and resources for couples “to build healthy marriages that reflect God’s design”, and for parents to raise their children “according to morals and values grounded in biblical principles”.³⁶

As such, FOTF offers a range of marital and family advice and resources, packaged by a highly efficient service industry built around Dobson’s popular broadcasts and bestselling books. Political lobbying on “social issues” is only one of their priorities, but there is no doubt that it has been a priority, and one on which the founder has quietly but firmly insisted.

FOTF wields political influence in the US through a variety of more or less closely affiliated groups that benefit from the pooled resources of FOTF and the credibility of its founder. It set up the Washington-based Family Research Center as a separate political think-tank/lobbying affiliate in 1983 to promote FOTF’s tax-exempt status (view below). Together

³⁶ http://www.focusonthefamily.com/about_us.aspx.

with Concerned Women for America the FRC is one of the Religious Right's most powerful lobbies.

Focus on the Family has grown to a global service organization, with national branches in Australia, Canada, Costa Rica (**Enfoque a la Familia**), Egypt, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, and Taiwan, as well as regional offices (e.g. Costa Rica for Latin America).³⁷

8.10 Howard Institute for Family, Religion and Society/ World Congress of Families

Denomination: cross-faith organisation

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 2003

A main activity for the Howard Institute is to run and administrate World Congress of Families, a network of pro-family organisations, scholars, and individual actors from more than 60 countries. Six large congresses have been organised so far, the next will be held in Australia in 2013. WCF's early aim was to build an international movement of "religiously-grounded family morality systems' that can influence and eventually shape social policy at the United Nations". The pro-family Lutheran Allan Carlson is the leader of the institute, and a well known defender of the traditional family. Carlson, in partnership with Paul Mero, a Mormon leader and head of an influential conservative think tank (Sutherland Institute) wrote together "the National Family Manifesto", which is a guiding document for "a concise, coherent, compelling pro-family worldview and program of action". The Manifesto, while founded on religious principles, is written in the form of a secular language and is described as a contribution to the conservative development of a counter-discourse to a feminist progressive perspective on gender and family. The book is a mixture of religious doctrine and social science aiming at providing an ideological fundament for the Christian conservative "new family theology".³⁸ (Buss & Herman 2003).

8.11 Human Life International

Denomination: Catholic

International headquarter Virginia, USA

Website: <http://www.hli.org>

Not in consultative status with ECOSOC

Chamberlain (2006) describes HLI as a hard-line conservative Roman Catholic resource and training ground for anti-abortion activists with partner organizations in 59 countries, which was barred from UN accreditation due to aggressive tactics and the supposed anti-Jewish remarks of its founder, the late Paul Marx, allegedly (the HLI contests these claims). Instead

³⁷ http://www.vatican.va/phome_en.htm

³⁸ <http://familymanifesto.net/fm/manifesto.asp>

of lobbying the UN themselves, then, Human Life International has created C-FAM (see C-FAM) and the Population Research Institute. HLI is a lay apostolate of the Roman Catholic Church, meaning that it carries out a ministry, supposedly in consultation with the Catholic hierarchy. It expounds a hard-line position on Roman Catholic doctrine concerning abortion, contraception, and the right to life in general.

HLI is working against abortion in a large number of countries, training activists and deploying them in the mission field. The HLI does not itself lobby at the UN. What makes the HLI interesting in terms of UN lobbying is its loud and clear enunciation of the beliefs, arguments and positions that underlie the work of C-FAM and other, more diplomatic Catholic groups.

The HLI also provides a large number of resources for use by pro-life activists. A notable recent example was the video “Facts for Melinda Gates” (<http://www.factsformelindagates.com/>), released to spoil the party at the Family Planning Summit held in London in July 2012 by the UK Department for International Development and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

8.12 International Youth Coalition

Denomination: Cross-faith, mainly Catholic

Website: <http://iycoalition.org/>

Not accredited to ECOSOC

The International Youth Coalition (IYC) was launched at the World Youth Conference in León, Mexico (2010), and touted by C-FAM as evidence as the real voice of youth, as a counterweight to UNFPA youth programs and the “radical” youth delegates who produced the SRHR-friendly NGO document at the conference. The IYC launched its own document as input to the International Year of Youth, a “Statement of Youth to the UN and the World” (<http://www.c-fam.org/youth/statement/>), which is also a “pro-family critique of the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).

The Statement lists eight principle, including “Parents are the Primary Educators of Young People”; “Rights of Youth are Based on their Evolving Capacities”; “The Right to Life is Inviolable from Conception to Natural Death”; and “Man and Woman are Based in Nature”. It references selected bits of international law in support. C-FAM started a signature drive and soon claimed over 100,000 signatures.³⁹

At the UN High Level Meeting on Youth in July 2011, the IYC activists “flooded” the Twitter topics “and for an hour dominated the conversation”. They scheduled a “Youth Formation Day” on the Sunday before the meeting, with a day-long panel of prominent pro-life speakers, followed by a Mass celebrated by the Apostolic Nuncio to the Holy See Mission,

³⁹ “Statement of Youth to the UN and the World”, promulgated by the International Youth Coalition at the World Youth Conference in León, Mexico, August 26, 2010, <http://www.c-fam.org/youth/statement/>; C-FAM Friday Fax: “Young People Launch Pro-Life/Pro-Family “Statement to the UN and the World”, Sep 9, 2010, and “Pro-life Statement Enters UN Youth Fray”, May 26, 2011.

and a prayer vigil in front of the United Nations. The IYc program further included a side event hosted by the Holy See Mission, and a rock concert.⁴⁰

The director of the IYc, from September 2011, is Timothy Herrmann. However, though this newly-constructed group seems to be the new favoured international youth voice of conservative Christians (replacing the World Youth Alliance, <http://www.wya.net>, not covered in this report), it not yet clear whether this group has activists apart from some interns at C-FAM, or any real existence after the UN high-level meetings on youth. Its blog did try to mobilize “virtual delegates” to the UNFPA Global Youth Forum in Bali in December 2012.⁴¹

8.13 National Right to Life Committee

Denomination: Cross-faith organisation

Main office: Washington DC

Website: <http://www.nrlc.org/>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 1999 as National right to Life Educational Trust Fund

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) is the largest and oldest pro-life organisation in the USA (1968) with affiliates in all states and over 3000 local chapters. The NRLC advocates an abortion ban in the US It has been active in international arenas since the 1994 Cairo Conference, and its publishing arm, the National Right to Life Educational Trust Fund, has been an NGO at the UN since 1999 (cf. Chamberlain 2006). The most recent information on “Life Issues at the United Nations” on the NRLC website is from June 2009.⁴²

The National Right to Life Educational Trust Fund has been involved with the United Nations at fora around the world, at just about all the Commission on the Status of Women meetings, summits from the Cairo conference onward, and negotiations of various treaties and declarations, not least the Disabilities Convention.

It has also taken part at the yearly meetings of the General Assembly, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Social Development in New York, the Human Rights Council (formerly the Commission on Human Rights), and the World Health Assembly in Geneva.

The NRLC/NRLETF’s primary representative at the UN has been National Right to Life Vice President for International Affairs Jeanne Head, a nurse.

⁴⁰ C-FAM Friday Faxes: “Young People will Promote Values and Life at UN Meeting on Youth”, Jul 21, 2011; “Young Voices Speak the Truth about Human Life to United Nations”; and “UN Youth Conference Pays Lip Service to Youth Concerns”, Jul 28, 2011.

⁴¹ <http://iycoalition.org/?p=1183>

⁴² <http://www.nrlc.org/UN/index.html>

8.14 Population Research Institute

Denomination: Catholic

Virginia

Website: <http://www.pop.org>

UN accreditation: Defunct since 2008, not in consultative status

Human Life Institute founder Rev. Paul Marx is also behind the creation of the Population Research Institute (PRI) in 1989, headed by its president Steven Mosher, who in a fundraising letter has said he hopes to “drive the final nail into the coffin of UN population fund abortionists.” (Chamberlain 2006). Marx recruited Mosher to PRI, a former research student on Chinese birth control policy in the late 1970s. According to PRI’s website, his experiences from China changed his former pro-choice conviction to eventually “become a practicing, pro-life Roman Catholic”. PRI is a “a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to “objectively presenting the truth about population-related issues”. A central campaign has been to defund United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) by lobbying with the Congress to withhold US contributions. Mosher lobbied and apparently succeeded to influence the Bush-administration to withhold substantial amounts from UNFPA over a seven-year period. PRI works in partnership with other catholic anti-abortion organisations such as C-FAM and Human Life Institute.

PRI’s specialty in the pro-life movement is the question of population. It sees its role as pursuing the agenda against abortion, euthanasia, artificial contraception, and in favour of traditional marriage and family-friendly societies and economies all of which are essential to maintaining healthy populations. PRI argues against the “myth that overpopulation is occurring”, and states that its mission is to “document abuses of human rights in the name of population control; to make a case against the widely held, but fundamentally wrongheaded, development paradigm which places economic and population growth in opposition to each other; and to articulate the material and social benefits of moderate population growth.

8.15 United Families International

Denomination: Mormon

Main office: Arizona

Website: <http://unitedfamilies.org>

UN accreditation: Special Consultative Status since 1999 as Association of Untied Families International

Despite being housed in offices far from New York, UFI maintains an active presence at UN conferences and vigorously advises other anti-abortion, pro-family NGOs.

It was founded by Susan Roylance, a long-time pro-family activist and the supposedly the first Mormon lobbyist to be engaged with the UN in the late 1970s. Roylance participated in preparatory meeting for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, which she

describes as a “wakeup call for those who believe the traditional family unit to be an important basic unit of society”. UFI is currently headed by Carol Soelberg.

UFI is a lobby and advocacy group promoting pro-family policies and family programs at the international level, as well as in the US on national and local /grassroots level. UFI is responsible for a number of pro-family publications, websites and newsletters, as it organizes conferences and trainings/workshops for lobbyists and advocates of pro-family values. UFI is responsible for the website: <http://www.defendmarriage.org/>

At the UN UFI seeks to “educate UN ambassadors and delegates on family policy issues as well as sending experts to lobby at international conferences on family issues. UFI claims to have influenced UN conference documents on several occasions. UFI has published “The Pro-Family UN negotiation Guide “ and claims it to be the most widely used tool at the UN for defending the family in UN documents. Its staff members attend the Commission on the Status of Women conference annually to “stand in defence of families”.

It holds a conservative pro-family, pro-life stance and is listed by the Southern Poverty Law Center as an anti-gay hate group. UFI seeks to reduce UN’s secular influence on family policies nationally and internationally and lobby to secure that religions are respected and protected in UN documents.

Note that Susan Roylance was the one encouraging professor Richard Wilkins at Brigham Young University to get involved in family policy issues internationally. Wilkins was a major pro-family leader as a professor on Law at Brigham Young University, the head of BYU World Family Policy Center and managing director of the Doha Family Policy Center (deceased November 2012).

8.16 World Family Policy Centre

Denomination: Mormon

Brigham Young University

UN accreditation: Defunct since 2008. Not in consultative status.

World Family Policy Centre (WFPC) with the late prof. Richard Wilkins as managing director and dr. A. Scott Loveless as acting managing director was a conservative Mormon think-tank based at Brigham Young University (BYU). It was closed by BYU in 2008.

Designed to support “pro-family” NGOs and UN delegates from its location at Brigham Young University, the WFPC has provided a megaphone to its managing director on leave, Richard Wilkins and a chance for Mormons to become involved with international family policy. Wilkins headed the planning team that organized the Doha International Conference for the Family. (Chamberlain 2006)

In contrast to the activist UFI, the WFPC was more of a think tank on family issues and a backstage resource centre. While it was part of the BYU system only a small part of WFPC’s funding came through the university. And while it was located on the BYU campus, the connections was purely administrative. WFPC’s work was coordinated with the BYU’s J. Reuben Clark School of Law, School of Social Work, School of Family Life and the David M. Kennedy Centre for International Studies. (Butler 2006).

9 Overview of the Research Field

Despite increasing political and social influence of conservative religious organisations/institutions at various global political arenas, conservative religious activism at the UN is still largely under-researched. As early as in 2006 Jenifer Butler noted that Christian conservative actors received little attention from the academic field, despite the fact that “the Christian Right is building a global interfaith coalition, advocating policies at the United Nations through governmental allies, establishing offices around the world, catalysing regional networks and holding international conferences.” (Butler, 2006:4) Since 2006, no new research contributions scrutinising religious actors engaged against SRHR at the UN have been published.

9.1 Publications on Religious Actors engaged at SRHR at the UN

Butler, Jennifer S. 2006. *Born Again: The Christian Right Globalized*. London: Pluto Press

Chamberlain, Pam. 2006. *UNdoing Reproductive Freedom: Christian Right NGOs Targeting the United Nations*. http://www.publiceye.org/reproductive_rights/UNdoingReproFreedomSimple.html

Isgro, Kirsten Lynn. 2006). “‘Real women’ and the Struggle Against Spiritual Forces of Darkness: A Transnational Feminist Analysis of Concerned Women for America”. Dr. Phil. thesis, University of Massachusetts.

Religion Counts. 2002. *Religion and public policy at the UN*, a Religion Counts Report

Rothschild, C. (2005). *Written out: How sexuality is used to attack women’s organizing*. New York: International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and Center for Women’s Global Leadership.

Buss, D., & Herman, D. (2003). *Globalizing family values: The Christian right in international politics*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

9.2 Conservative Religious Actors against SRHR on the ground

Kaoma K. J: *Colonizing African Values .How the US Christian Right is Transforming Sexual Politics in Africa*. Political Research Association, 2012.

http://www.publiceye.org/Reports/Colonizing_African_Values/Pdfs/PRA%20Report%2072dpi.pdf

9.3 General Studies mapping religious NGOs at the UN

Juul, Marie Petersen. 2010. *International Religious NGOs at The United Nations: A Study of a Group of Religious Organizations*. *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*.

<http://sites.tufts.edu/jha>.

9.4 Mapping religious lobby groups

Pew Forum. 2012. Lobbying for the Faithful: Religious Advocacy Groups in Washington, D.C. - Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. Washington, D.C: Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewforum.org/lobbying-religious-advocacy-groups-in-washington-dc.aspx>.

Aston University, Birmingham: The politics of religious lobbying in EU:
<http://www1.aston.ac.uk/lss/research/centres-institutes/aston-centre-europe/projects-grants/religion-eu/>

9.5 Research programs

Kent University conducted a research program to explore religious NGOs at the United Nations. It was finalised in 2012 (after three years), yet no publications are available at this point.

The aim of the study was “to explore the type, density and number of NGOs, which perceive themselves as religious or faith-based, and explore their motivations, rationale and activities at the UN in New York and Geneva. The aim is to develop an understanding of who these groups

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