

GRACE AKALLO

www.africanwomenrights.org

Grace Akallo is Founder and Executive Director of United Africans for Women and Children's Right (UAWCR), a non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguarding the rights of vulnerable women and children which is significant in attaining a peaceful and healthy community, crucial for socio-economic Development. UAWCR is committed to promote democratic non-violent principles, gender equity and child protection in Africa through, research, education and grass roots advocacy, and advocating for enabling policies and legislative environments from governments and the United Nations necessary for effective development.

Grace Akallo is the co-author of a book *Girl Soldier; a story of hope for Northern Ugandan children*, narrating the horrors that she faced while in the rebels camp. Grace Akallo was abducted and recruited into one of the most brutal rebel militia groups in Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army, led by the infamous Joseph Kony, that abduct children as young as seven years old and trained them to fighters in the army. After seven months of unspeakable cruelty, Ms. Akallo managed to escape from Sudan, bringing with her eight other former child soldiers. With determination she went back to high school and college in Uganda, and then transferred to Gordon College in the Massachusetts.

Before UAWCR Grace Akallo has been a spokesperson for children in armed conflict and advocate for peace since 2004. She has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show, and CNN, Washington Post, BBC and Boston Globe have featured stories about her. She has also addressed the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict, and was a speaker at the Amnesty International Annual Meetings.

Grace Akallo She testified at the US Congress's House International Relations Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, and advocated to pass the Child Soldier Accountability Act. She is a founding member of the Network Young people affected by war founded by a group of young people whose lives had been touched by war as children.

Grace Akallo has master's degree from Clark University in International Development and Social Change, and a bachelor's degree from Gordon College.