

26th June 2009.

Interview with Ursula Aboubacar - Deputy Director, UNHCR Bureau for Middle East & North Africa as appears in the film Stolen. Interview took place in December 2007 at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva. Present in the interview: Violeta Ayala, Ursula Aboubacar and Dan Fallshaw.

Ursula – You bring your contribution by alerting and making the documentary which I think is one step in the right direction.

V – In article four of the UN declaration of human rights, it says that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude, slavery and the slave trade shall be forbidden in all their forms.

Ursula – These practices exist not only in the camps but also in the camps as they exist in the surrounding and I can tell you whenever there is a report being made...

V – What's slavery for the UN, for UNHCR?

Ursula – It's an abuse of human rights, and we will immediately, it's our job, if we are aware about it to combat it.

Dan – What are you going to do?

Ursula – What do you mean what are we going to do? I just said this is our daily work, when we are... For example when we are in the camp and someone brings it to our attention we bring it to the police officers.

Dan – UN police officers or POLISARIO police officers?

Ursula – POLISARIO police, we don't have any UN police officers. What I want to tell you, it's a cultural issue which is existing. This is not something that you can abolish from one day to another, this is something which needs a long time and it has to come from the people.

V – But the first thing should be accepting publicly that this is happening.

Ursula – But I told you...

V – This is not a cultural problem.

Ursula – It's what?

V – It's not a cultural problem.

Ursula – It's what?

V – It's a human problem...

Ursula – Yes

V – It's a real problem that there are no laws that protect these refugees, they are a minority in a refugee camp.