

**Statement of the Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations  
after the Chair withdrew her proposal for a resolution on the theme of  
“Realizing the Future We want: Integrating Population Issues into Sustainable  
Development, including in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”**

**Forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development**

**New York, 17 April 2015**

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

I am speaking on behalf of Finland, Norway, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, France, Iceland, Estonia, United Kingdom, Spain and my own country The Netherlands.

First of all, we would like to thank you Madam Chair for your efficient conduct of this session and we would like to appreciate the facilitator for his excellent facilitation. We also would like to thank the other Bureau members and the secretariat for their support and guidance. We would also like to acknowledge the presence of civil society groups and youth, for bringing important voices to these discussions.

Our countries have been, and continue to be, strong and vocal advocates for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions, and the outcomes documents of the review conferences. We back up this commitment through our policies in our own countries and through our support to sustainable development efforts abroad. We believe that the key findings and recommendations of the ICPD Global Review report give us clear guidance for the future implementation of the ICPD Beyond 2014. The full realization of human rights, achieving gender equality and realizing sexual and reproductive health and rights are essential for addressing population dynamics, eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

We thank colleagues for having these important discussions on the integration of population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 agenda. Therefore, we regret deeply that we were unable to reach a consensus in this session. The distinguished representative of Nigeria, who is my friend and my neighbour today, asked for a 10 minute conversation on important issues in the Chair’s text. If it would be helpful to the Chair I would not mind talking with him for 10 minutes.

We heard strong appeals for sexual and reproductive health and rights in the various country statements, to have SRHR embedded in the outcome document and to recognise that countries are reforming and revising laws and policies that contribute to the realization of sexual rights. We believe that all people have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, free of coercion, discrimination and violence – as a matter of social justice. Sexual and reproductive rights are about bodily integrity, equality and freedom of choice. We cannot look away from the fact that these rights are violated every day, in all our countries. The UN Commission on Population and Development is the right place to discuss actions at global level to ensure that no woman or

girl is a victim of rape, dies in childbirth or due to an unsafe abortion, or that women, girls, men and boys are denied access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services.

We also believe that knowledge is power, and that everyone, especially young people, should have access to comprehensive, evidence-based sexuality education in order to understand how their bodies work, to protect themselves from sexually-transmitted infections, to promote gender equality and to learn how to build healthy relationships.

Young people have the right to meaningfully participate in decisions that affect them. Our 21 year old Netherlands Youth Ambassador for SRHR could not have said this better when she delivered her statement in this session.

We remain convinced that the promotion, protection, respect for and fulfilment of human rights for everyone, women and men, girls and boys, including their sexual and reproductive rights, without discrimination on any grounds, is a critical component of sustainable development and is a requirement for the full achievement of our internationally agreed development goals, including those goals to be set in the forthcoming post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you.