

African based CSO's, feminist organizations and Women Rights Organizations (WRO's) Key Points on NGO consultation on the future role and organization of the Commission on Population and Development

Good evening, good morning, and good afternoon wherever you are. My name is Halima Abba Zaid Ali, I am the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Lead from The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) which is a pan- African, feminist and membership-based network based in Nairobi with over 800 members across 50 African countries. On behalf of the African CSO's, feminist organizations and Women Rights Organizations and Networks based in Africa and we align with the written inputs submitted by ISRRC.

Last year marked the 25-year review and celebrations of the ICPD Programme of Action where most governments including African governments embraced the ICPD+25 and Programme of Action. Where they reaffirmed this in subsequent intergovernmental for and reviews and making commitments to invest in its full and accelerated implementation, and support concrete actions to that effect, within overall context of the 2030 agenda for sustainable Development. On behalf of The African women, CSOs based in the global South, we are taking stock of progress and asking to what extent promised reforms have been implemented and examining why progress has been limited in many countries and we seek ways to overcome the obstacles. The ICPD agenda and its implementation have been key in ensuring progress in developing countries in all regions,

•To ensure a multi-sectoral approach and meaningful participation of civil society, WRO's and networks and as members of ISRRC we would like to suggest the following:

- Adding a half-day session devoted specifically to have a dialogue between governments, civil society, and other stakeholders on the progress of the ICPD PoA.
- An annual high-level, multi-stakeholder and interactive panel discussion with CSO, the private sector, academia etc. to open the consideration of an agenda and present evidence-based information to the Commission which will inform Member States' discussions and share information, good

practices, experiences, and lessons learned including planning, policies and implementation in relation to PoA and the SDGs.

- Maintaining the practice of inviting civil society representatives to take the floor following Member States and observers during the consideration of relevant agenda items, time permitting.
- The covid-19 pandemic and subsequent scaled-down sessions of the CPD have led to a decrease in civic space. The African CSO's, WRO's and feminist organizations based in Africa would like to request the creation of a mechanism that would allow civil society access to delegations, negotiations and (virtual) speaking slots, while also ensuring that civic space is protected, including in the recovery from the pandemic.
- Conducting informal briefings by the Chair and/or Bureau in advance of the Commission sessions, with sufficient time to inform CSO written submissions, and during the session itself.
- Lastly, the processes for the development of the 2030 Agenda, High Level Meetings on HIV/AIDS, and Human Rights Council have demonstrated the interest and value of meaningful engagement with civil society. The SDG and 2030 Agenda negotiations and Human Rights Council processes have allowed civil society organizations to intervene during discussions alongside Member States and to work collaboratively in preparing statements inputs and ensuring that the voices from those most affected on the ground are heard in these fora. Additional mechanisms which complement existing opportunities for engagement could allow civil society representatives to provide information based on their expertise and experiences in expert meetings more broadly as has been seen in other UN fora.