

**Cross-regional Joint Statement to be delivered at the closing of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development**

It is my pleasure to deliver this cross-regional statement on behalf of 36 countries including Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, UK, Uruguay and my own country South Africa.

We thank the Chair and the co-facilitators for their sterling work and leadership.

We express regret that a resolution was unable to be adopted

For more than three decades, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA) has guided our collective efforts to achieve sustainable development, advance gender equality, and respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of all people without discrimination.

We are deeply concerned by what we have witnessed in this forum around fundamental rights and issues that have enjoyed longstanding consensus in the United Nations attempting to be undermined.

We cannot allow the actions of a few to jeopardize our shared aspirations and the futures of many. We must remain committed to the principle of achieving the full realization of human rights for all. We must reinforce – not undermine or weaken – our commitments to multilateralism, human rights, and sustainable development, and with it our commitment to implement the ICPD PoA and 2030 Agenda including the SDGs in their entirety.

We are at a critical juncture. We are facing a moment where human rights including the right to development, sustainable development, and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights – central components of the ICPD PoA and the 2030 Agenda – are being challenged.

Growing hunger, conflict, climate change, unsustainable debt burdens, regression in development cooperation, economic instability, and increasing discrimination are deepening inequalities, including gender inequality.

These factors are undermining the ability of governments to invest in the health and wellbeing of their populations. In the face of these crises, global cooperation is not just important – it is indispensable.

For decades, governments have made bold commitments to achieve the ICPD PoA through the Commission on Population and Development. We remain resolute in our commitment to this process and fora.

We call on all Member States to decisively uphold the ambition, integrity, and spirit of consensus that the ICPD PoA embodies. Let us move forward together with courage, conviction and a shared commitment to the rights, development, dignity for all – leaving no one behind.

Thank you.