

CPD 58 – Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

H.E. Permanent Representative, Lise Gregoire-van Haaren

KNL Youth Ambassador SRHR Aydin Karadag

Thank you, Chair,

I have three core messages:

- (1) inclusive, accessible and resilient health systems are critical to enable individuals to make their own choices;
- (2) The milestone ICPD Programme of Action has delivered for women and girls worldwide, in fact, it saves lives;
- (3) But we need to do more, in partnership with young people.

Equal access to health-care services is a precondition for stable, prosperous and thriving societies, in which individuals can shape their own futures.

It requires good quality health services, including for safe pregnancies and deliveries.

With equal access and the right to make your own decisions at the core.

The ICPD Program of Action promised a profound impact on the lives of young women and girls.

And it delivered.

Maternal mortality dropped.

HIV/AIDS infections in Sub-Saharan Africa declined with more than half.

Contraceptives are more accessible, especially for young people.

Despite this progress, we are not there yet.

UNAIDS is predicting an additional 6.3 million AIDS related death in the next 4 years.

Every day, 800 women and girls die from preventable causes during pregnancy and childbirth.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands therefore strongly supports sexual and reproductive health and rights, including comprehensive sexuality education and family planning.

Young people play a critical role in shaping and advancing the ICPD agenda.

So I now handover to our youth ambassador for SRHR, Aydin Karadag.

Thank you.

I am honored to speak here as the Youth Ambassador for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Gender Equality, and Bodily Autonomy.

When I was 19 years old, a close friend of mine tested positive for HIV. I saw firsthand, what impact this had on his life, due to stigma and fear of exclusion. He has access to treatment now, and is able to live a life just as his peers.

Many others are not as fortunate.

Worldwide, AIDS has claimed the lives of 42.3 million people since the start of the epidemic. In 2023 alone, 630.000 people died from AIDS. With access to medication, this could have been prevented.

And still, every 24 seconds, someone is newly infected with HIV. These are not just statistics; this is about people and their futures.

Access to sexual and reproductive health services, can change the future of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Access to contraceptives and medication saves lives.

Access to comprehensive sexuality education enables young people to make smart and informed decisions.

I would like to invite you all to change the life stories of young people, by ensuring accessible and equitable HIV/AIDS care and sexual and reproductive health services.

This requires the meaningful inclusion of young people at the heart of this discussion.

Nothing about us without us.

Thank you for your attention.