

## **Statement submitted Campaign Life Coalition**

Campaign Life Coalition is a national non-profit organization involved in political action and advocacy for legal and cultural change in Canada with respect to protecting human life at every stage of development, and the natural family.

We call upon Member States at the 54th Commission on Population and Development to prioritize the human rights of all people at every stage of the human life cycle with a focus on concrete solutions that promote human development regardless of one's abilities or life circumstance. To further promote true sustainable development, it is critical that the second principle of the ICPD Programme of Action which states that "People are the most important valuable resource of any nation" be reaffirmed. Additionally, the inclusion of the fundamental family as a critical means to achieving the development of every nation, is of absolute necessity.

In relation to this 54th Commission's theme of "population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development", it is imperative that the commission does not lose its focus on the preservation of human life, and the advancement of the family unit as key channels through which human development is achieved around the world. Human beings are at the centre of sustainable development, and it is crucial that this founding principle be reflected in how the global community addresses the many challenges to food security, nutrition and sustainable development.

A primary threat to achieving sustainable development, is that of abortion. All too often, it is promoted as a means of population control and a solution to eradicating poverty and world hunger through the promotion of "sexual and reproductive health and rights". Not only is this an extremely divisive issue, but the inclusion of such language in drafting resolutions, is in contravention of long-standing agreements held by Member States.

We call on Member States to reaffirm the responsibility of governments at all levels to preserve and protect human dignity and all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and remind States of Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states that, "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life." The inherent right to life of every individual, born or preborn, should not be ignored during this commission.

Additionally, Member States must stand up for national sovereignty for the sake of nations who are facing immense social pressure from the international community to thwart national rights to self-determination regarding abortion laws which has only been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic. We take this opportunity to remind Member States of the ICPD preamble which clearly states that "any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process" and that no international, nor legal, right to abortion exists.

In respect for every nation's right to self-determination, any reference related to "sexual and reproductive health and rights" must be removed, or clearly distinguished as not including a right to abortion or utilized to pressure governments to change their national laws regarding abortion, nor towards the funding, promotion or providing access to abortion. Over the years, it has become evident at the Commission on Population and Development, that the inclusion of abortion is often a roadblock to paving the way for a fresh infusion of authentic consensus development, as well as increase the opportunities for international cooperation.

We strongly encourage all Member States to adopt the Geneva Consensus Declaration which recognizes that the right to life and the protection of families are fundamental to the growth, protection and health of every nation. By advancing the four pillars of: 1) better health for women, 2) the preservation of human life, 3) strengthening of family as the foundational unit of society, and 4) protecting every nation's national sovereignty in global politics, this Declaration not only reaffirms longstanding principles of the United Nations, but it also sets a blueprint for how we can transform our world to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.