

Holy See

Mr. Chairman,

During the course of the informal consultations, my delegation consistently made proposals to advance the overall well being of all adolescents and youth. My delegation continually emphasized the essential role of parents and the family, access to food, basic healthcare, education, and vocational training for employment.

Unfortunately some delegations attempted to disregard the role of parents as if to somehow suggest that they are ill-equipped to raise their children. For this reason, my delegation reminded delegations that international instruments consistently affirm the prior and primary responsibilities, rights and duties of parents regarding their children and this includes especially all matters concerning human love, human sexuality, marriage and the family (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Article 26, 3, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 18, 4, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 5 and 18, 1). In this regard, my delegation notes with serious dismay the inclusion of so-called "comprehensive education on human sexuality" which, on review of the UNESCO International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education publication, promotes immoral behavior and is not conducive to the dignity of the human person.

During negotiations some delegations promoted to children abortion and so-called "reproductive rights," "sexual and reproductive health," "contraceptives," "commodities," and so-called "safe" abortion. Abortion is never safe as it kills the life of the unborn child and harms the mother. My delegation expresses grave dismay at these various attempts against children, born and unborn, parents, and the family, by way of a document which is supposed to be on adolescents and youth, defined as young as 10 years of age by some UN offices and agencies.

Mr. Chairman,

As this Commission concerns population and development, my delegation would have expected that this resolution, just adopted, might have addressed on an equal footing also the issue of development, in solidarity towards the needs of developing countries. In the future, my delegation hopes that the Commission will begin to focus attention on respect for each and every person throughout the life cycle, that is, from

conception until natural death, and on the right to development for all persons, including youth and adolescents, especially those in developing countries. Given the ongoing effects of the worldwide economic and financial crisis, greater attention and resources need to be directed toward them. The more governments are able to recognize this and work together to achieve this goal, the more they will contribute to the advancement of the well being of all.

The Holy See reaffirms its reservations with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the World Programme of Action for Youth, especially regarding their references to “sexual and reproductive health” and “services” since the Holy See does not consider abortion or abortion services to be a dimension of such terms, regarding the term “family planning” as the Holy See in no way endorses contraception or the use of condoms, either as a family planning measure or in HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, and regarding the term “gender” and its various uses in the text as the Holy See understands the term as grounded in biological sexual identity, male or female.

I would request that this statement be included in its entirety in the records of this meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman