International Planned Parenthood Federation, South Asia Region:
Joint Oral Statement by 44 Arab and Asian CSOs to CPD48

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Speaking on behalf of a cross-regional group of civil society advocates representing 44 Asian and Arab countries, I have the following messages and demands:

Sexual and reproductive health and rights are indivisible, inalienable human rights. However, these rights are far from being fully addressed and much work is still needed, as acknowledged in the ICPD beyond 2014 Global Review, and particularly the outcomes of the Regional Review Conferences. Persistent violation of these rights seriously undermines the possibility of achieving sustainable and inclusive development in our regions.

As we are discussing the integration of population issues in sustainable development and particularly the Post-2015 development agenda during this 48th session of the CPD, it remains of utmost importance for the Asian and Arab region that the universality of sexual and reproductive health and rights is put at the center of the debate. Many of our countries face serious challenges due to instability, insecurity, large numbers of refugees and unsafe migration. Religious and political conservatism and fundamentalism is increasing across our regions. These challenges aggravate existing gender inequality and poor sexual and reproductive health and rights, along with limited space for civil society to address these issues. Early and forced marriage, sexual and gender based violence, female genital mutilation, unplanned and teenage pregnancies are reasons for grave concern. Access to quality sexual and reproductive health information, education and services, including modern contraceptives, safe abortion services, STI prevention, counseling and treatment are inadequate and insufficient. This leads to the daily violation of human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, particularly harming women and girls, young people and adolescents, refugees and migrants.

Integrating population issues in the Post-2015 development agenda needs to be human rights based, as reflected in the ICPD. It needs to put gender equality, human rights and the universality of sexual and reproductive health and rights at its core.

We therefore call on our governments to follow up on the commitments made in the Regional Review Conferences. We demand that our Governments: ensure universal access to comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services; eliminate and address all forms of violence and discrimination; and empower and meaningfully engage youth,
and adolescents, particularly young women, in the decision-making processes on policies and programs that affect their lives.

Only through the recognition, promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights of all we will see persistent inequalities, violence and discrimination addressed; only then we can see the transformational change the Post-2015 development agenda envisions.

Endorsed by:

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Restless Development India
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Nepalese Women Watch (NWW)
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Association Algerienne du Planning Familial
Palestinian Family Planning and Protection Association
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