

## CPD51 Joint Statement

**[This statement was made on behalf of Australia, Austria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Cambodia, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Tunisia, United Kingdom and Uruguay.]**

Mister Chair,

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to you, Mister Chair, and we would like to thank the facilitator for her tireless work. We would also like to thank the other Bureau members and the secretariat for their support and guidance. Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the presence of civil society groups and youth, for bringing important voices to these discussions.

Our countries have been, and continue to be, strong and vocal advocates for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of its review conferences. We know that it saves and improves millions of lives. We therefore place great importance and value in the role of the Commission on Population and Development to follow-up, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), especially in view of its upcoming 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. We would also like to emphasize the important mandate and invaluable work of UNFPA in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

We back up this commitment through our policies in our own countries and through our support to sustainable development efforts abroad. We firmly believe that the full realization of all human rights for all including sexual and reproductive health and rights, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential for addressing sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration, and in general for eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development for all.

We deeply regret that for the third time in the matter of a few years only and in view of the upcoming review of the Programme of Action 25 years after the ICPD, this Commission was unable to reach a consensus on this very important topic, despite our joint efforts and constructive engagements of delegations to reach an outcome throughout this week.

As reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda, the achievement of full human potential is not possible if we do not meaningfully address discrimination, violence and continued human rights violations against women and girls. We believe that all people have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, free of coercion, discrimination and violence – as a matter of social justice. These are principles that have been agreed and reaffirmed since 1994. They underpin sustainable development, social justice and contribute to creating the kind of world that we want to live in.

Mr. Chair, the countries listed on this statement will do everything in their power to make these principles a reality for all in every region of this world. Together we must do everything in our power to protect young people and adolescents' rights, help them realize their full potential and develop into healthy, educated adults. For this reason, we believe that young people and adolescents should have access to comprehensive sexuality education in order to understand and make informed decisions on matters relating to their bodies and sexualities, to protect themselves from sexually transmissible infections and unintended pregnancies and to contribute to sustainable development.

These aims are not only important for their prosperity and development as individuals, but also for the development of our countries as a whole, and to capitalize on the demographic dividend.

Mister Chair, our experience is that ensuring all individual's full enjoyment of SRHR is not only the right thing it is also the smart thing to do. Access to SRHR is inseparably linked to gender equality,

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women's and girls' economic empowerment, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Ensuring SRHR for all will have a direct impact on the possibilities of achieving many of the targets in the 2030 Agenda.

Our group notes with concern the lack of reference to sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are at the heart of sustainable development. When individuals can control their choices and be safe and healthy in their sexual and reproductive lives, they are better able to participate in education and the labor market, to care for their families, and have more capacity to contribute to their communities and social life. It is therefore an imperative that women and girls, particularly adolescents, have full access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Mister Chair, we thank you again for your leadership during this session. We are hopeful that we will be able to improve our methods of work and ability to reach consensus on these critical issues especially in view of the upcoming session that will review the implementation of the Programme of Action at the historic moment of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ICPD next year.

You can count on our continued engagement in the Commission's work.

Thank you.