



# G L O B A L H A W C

Helping to Advance Women and Children

Oral Statement: CPD52, April 4, 2019

Mr. Chair, I speak on behalf of Global HAWC and the UN Family Rights Caucus, with representation in 170 countries.

As recognized in Article 9 of the Program of Action, the family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. The family has the potential to contribute to national development and to the achievement of major objectives of every society including the eradication of poverty, the protection of children, the right to education, the empowering of women and girls, and the creation of stable and secure societies.

Nations have the well-founded right, indeed the obligation, to place the protection and support of the family at the center of their development policies, and we congratulate the Member States and the Observers who have made mention of the family in the last few days recognizing its important role in bringing up children and in generating intergenerational solidarity among other things. In the same spirit I remind you of the oft quoted statement of UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, "The very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals." (SG 2011 Family Report (A/66/62-E/2011/4))

Mr. Chair, the negative consequences of teenage sexual activity continue at unacceptable rates. For example, youth aged 15–24 account for 45% of all new HIV infections globally (UNESCO, 2009), and in the U.S., one in four sexually active girls has a sexually transmitted disease (CDC, 2016). In this regard, Mr. Chairman, we deplore the increasing promotion of controversial curricula under the name of "comprehensive sexuality education" widely promoted as being effective at protecting adolescents from these harms and therefore a remedy that should be implemented in school classrooms worldwide (UNESCO, 2009, 2018). Yet the permissive and explicit content of many CSE curricula raise questions about its acceptability. The weak definitions of "effectiveness" used in many reviews of CSE research raise serious concerns about its true impact. Given the threat posed by STDs, HIV, and pregnancy to the health of young people worldwide, and the compelling lack of evidence of effectiveness for school-based Comprehensive Sex Education after nearly 30 years and 103 credible studies, we recommend that policymakers disregard the call for its global dissemination and pursue alternative prevention paradigms for reducing the negative consequences of adolescent sexual activity.

Mr. Chair, we regret the inclusion in the text of the political declaration of the mention of the "outcome document of the review conferences." None of the controversial 20-year reviews of ICPD were openly negotiated conferences. We are concerned that the declaration could imply endorsement and acceptance of future review outcome documents for ICPD that have not even yet been produced. We contend that it's a dangerous practice to endorse or affirm broad categories of documents without specifying each document by name with their reference number as is customary.

The outcome documents of some of the regional reviews of ICPD promote highly controversial sexual rights that a large number of Member States would not agree to in a negotiated document.

I thank you.