

## **Joint CSO statement urging member states to respect, protect, and fulfill the SRHR of adolescents and youth during the 41st session of the Human rights Council**

We make this statement on behalf of more than 300 CSOs from across the globe.\*

Through the Vienna Declaration and numerous regional and international commitments, member states agreed to respect, protect, and fulfill the human rights of adolescents and young people, including their rights to life, bodily autonomy, education including comprehensive sexuality education, survival, and development. However, many member states are hesitant to recognise the role of adolescents and young people's sexuality beyond links to reproduction.

Human rights violations affecting adolescents and youth must be located within the context of multiple and intersecting oppressions. Millions of them, especially girls, are coerced into unwanted sex or marriage<sup>[1]</sup>, putting them at risk of unwanted or early pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV, and life-threatening childbirth.<sup>[2]</sup> Indeed, pregnancy and childbirth-related complications are the leading cause of death among adolescent girls aged 15-19 years worldwide.<sup>[3]</sup>

Across the globe, restrictive laws and third party authorisation and parental consent requirements continue to hinder adolescents and young people's full realisation of their sexual and reproductive rights. With the largest global youth population ever, millions of today's young people will be failed if the human rights violations affecting us are not effectively addressed and redressed.

We urge the Human Rights Council to recognise and reaffirm the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all adolescents and young people through its resolutions, dialogues, debates, and UPRs. Further, we urge member states to respect, protect, and fulfill the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all adolescents and young people, with particular attention to those facing multiple and intersecting forms of oppression, including through full recognition of their legal capacity to access comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services autonomously. Furthermore, states should put in place effective measures to prevent and eliminate violations of adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive rights, including actions aiming to control girls' sexuality, harmful practices, and coerced or denied medical interventions, as well as to effectively

combat widespread impunity, and provide adolescents and youth, in particular girls, with effective reparations, access to justice and redress, and guarantees of non-repetition in cases of violation and denial of their bodily rights.

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*\*This joint CSO statement is delivered on behalf of: Aahung, Pakistan; Abortion Access Campaign West; Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada; Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights; Action Group for Health Human Rights and HIV/AIDS (AGHA); Action on Africa Women Foundation Ghana; Advocates for Youth; Africa Alive; Africa for SDGs; Africa Young Positives Network (AY+); Afrihealth Optonet Association; AGROMART OUTREACH FOUNDATION; Akili Dada; Aliansi Remaja Independen (ARI); Aliansi Satu Visi; Alliance for Choice; Alliance Nationale des Jeunes Pour la Santé de la Reproduction et de la Planification Familiale; APGANZ (Abortion Providers Group Aotearoa NZ); Arc en ciel Sénégal; Ardhanary Institute; ASEAN SOGIE Caucus; Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA); Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW); Asociacion Ciudadana ACCEDER; Association des Juristes Sénégalaises (AJS); Association for Dalit Women Advancement of Nepal; Association For Promotion Sustainable Development; Association for War Affected Women, Sri Lanka; Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON); Aware Girls; Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud AC; Bandhu Social Welfare Society; Bangladesh Mahila Prashad; Bangweulu Wetlands Project; BAPSA (Association for Prevention of Septic Abortion, Bangladesh); Bargad, Pakistan; Beyond Beijing Committee (BBC), Nepal; Blue Diamond Society; Blue Veins, Pakistan; Boys of Bangladesh; BRAC; Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation; Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network; Carbone Guinée; Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP), Vietnam; Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE); Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD); Center for Karnali Rural Promote and Society Development (CDS-PARK), Mugu; Center for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD); Center for the Promotion and Defense of Sexual and Reproductive Rights – PROMSEX; Centre d'Accompagnement des Alternatives Locales de Developpement (Caald); Centre for Child and the Law, National Law School of India University; Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR); Centre for the Study of Adolescence; Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYECE); Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES); Channan Development Association (CDA); Child Poverty Action Group; Children of the World Foundation (COW Foundation); CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality; Civic Union Public*

*Accociation; Coalizão da juventude; COC Nederland; Collective for Social Science Research; CommonHealth; Commonwealth Youth Health Network; Community Initiatives for Development in Pakistan (CIDP); Concerted College School Ntinda; Consorcio par el Diálogo MX; Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies; Dance4Life; Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA); Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN); Disabled Persons Assembly – Christchurch and Districts; Dot Youth Zimbabwe; Dr Uzo Adirieje Foundation (DUZAFFOUND), Nigeria; DSW (Deustche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung/German Foundation for World Population; Ecoforum of Uzbekistan; End FGM European Network; Enfold Proactive Health Trust; EngenderHealth; Equidad; Family Health Options Kenya; Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB); Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN); Family Planning New Zealand; Family Planning NSW; Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP); FECCIWA/ACCEAO (Fellowship of Christian Council and Churches in West Africa); FEDERACIÓN PLANIFICACIÓN FAMILIAR ESTATAL; Fédération Nigérienne des Personnes Handicapées (FNPH); Federation of Reproductive Health Associations, Malaysia (FRHAM); Federation of Sexual and Gender Minorities of Nepal (FSGMN); FIAN International; Fiji Women’s Rights Movement (FWRM); Fokus Muda; FORO REGIONAL POR LOS DERECHOS SEXUALES Y REPRODUCTIVOS AREQUIPA PERÚ; Forum for Dignity Initiative (FDI); Fundacion Arcoiris por el respeto a la diversidad sexual; Fundación de la Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla; Gatef organization; Global Doctors for Choice; Global Network of Women Peacebuilders; Graduate Women New Zealand; Hartsheba Limited; Hivos; Human Development and Environment Protection Forum (HUDEP); Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum; Human Rights Focus Pakistan (HRFP); Human Rights Network Uganda; Human Rights Support Society; Idara-i-Taleem-o-Agahi (ITA), Pakistan; Indonesian Human Rights Committee for Social Justice (IHCS); Indus Resource Center (IRC); International Alliance of Women (IAW); International Campaign for Women’s Right to Safe Abortion; International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); International Youth Alliance for Family Planning, Mexico; Inti Muda Indonesia; Ipas; IPPF Africa Region; JAGO NARI; James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), Brac University; Justice, Aid and Development (JAD) Foundation; Khpal Kore Organization, Pakistan; Kilusan para sa Repormang Agraryo at Katarungang Panlipunan (KATARUNGAN – Philippines); Kiribati Family Health Association; Kiribati YPeer Network; KITASAMA, Indonesia; kkr ks charitable trust; KOTHOWAIN (Vulnerable Peoples Development Organization); Krityanand UNESCO Club Jamshedpur; L’ Associacio. Drets Sexuals i Reproductius; La Mesa por la Vida y la Salud de las Mujeres; Ladlad Caraga*

*Incorporated; Lanka Fundamental Rights Organization; Latin American and the Caribbean Women's Health Network (LACWHN); LOOM, Nepal; Make Mothers Matter (MMM); Marie Stopes International; MARUAH, Singapore; Medical Impact; MenEngage Alliance; Movimiento Manuela Ramos; Muvubuka Agunjuse Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Centre; Myanmar Ethnic Women Refugees Organization (MEWRO); Najoti kudakon, Tajikistan; Nalane for Reproductive Justice; Naripokkho; National Campaign For Sustainable Development – Nepal; National Council of Women – Hamilton Branch; National Council of Women – South Canterbury branch; National Council of Women -Tauranga; National Council of Women New Zealand; National Fisheries Solidarity Movement; National Forum for Advocacy, Nepal; National Users Network of Nepal (NUNN); NCW NZ, MWIA; Nepal Disable Women Association (NDWA); Network for Adolescent and Youth of Africa; New Zealand College of Midwives; New Zealand College of Midwives (NZCOM), Auckland Region; New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, Te Kauae Kaimahi Women's Council; NYARWEK LGBT+ NETWORK; ODRI Intersectional Rights; ONG PADJENA; Organisation Intersex International (OII) Europe; Organized Centre for Empowerment and Advocacy in Nigeria (OCEAN); Pamflet; Parole aux jeunes; Participatory Research Action Network – PRAN; Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (PKBI); Plan International; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; PRAVAH; PRERANA (SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT); Psychological Responsiveness NGO; Pusat Kajian Gender dan Seksualitas FISIP UI; Radanar Ayar Association, Myanmar; Radha Paudel Foundation; Rahima; Rahnuma – Family Planning Association of Pakistan; Rapad Maroc ; Reach A Hand Uganda; Red Dot Foundation; Regional Centre for International Development Cooperation (RCIDC); Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC); Reproductive Health Services Training and Education Programme (RHSTEP); Reproductive Health Uganda; Restless Development; Restless Development Nepal; Right Here Right Now Bangladesh; Right Here Right Now Bolivia; Right Here Right Now Caribbean Sub-region; Right Here Right Now Honduras; Right Here Right Now Indonesia; Right Here Right Now Kenya; Right Here Right Now Nepal; Right Here Right Now Sénégal; Right Here Right Now Uganda; Right Here Right Now Zimbabwe; Right to Food Network, Malawi; Rights for All Women; ROOTS; Rural Area Development Programme, RADP; Rural Women's Network Nepal (RUWON Nepal); Rutgers International; RutgersWPF Indonesia; Sahara Welfare Foundation, Pakistan; SAHAYOG; Sanggar Waria Remaja (SWARA); SANTE SEXUELLE Suisse; SERAC Bangladesh; Sex og Politikk; SEXUAL HEALTH Switzerland; Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG); Sexual Rights Initiative (SRI); SFBSP – Burundi; Shirkat Gah*

Women's Resource Centre; Simavi; Society for Conservation & Sustainability of Energy & Environment in Nigeria (SOCSEEN); Society for Environmental Actions, Reconstruction and Humanitarian response (SEARCH), Pakistan; Society for Health Education (SHE Maldives); Society for International Development (SID); SOFA; Sonke Gender Justice; Soroptimist International of Aotearoa New Zealand; Success Capital Organisation; Sukaar welfare organization Pakistan; Swedish Association for Sexuality and Development (RFSU); TAFAWUQ CONSULTING CENTER for DEVELOPMENT; Taller Salud; TDJ – BURUNDI; Tertiary Education Union Te Hautū Kahurangi; The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID); The Association of Anglican Women New Zealand; The Garden of Hope Foundation; The Health practitioners, researchers and inventors awards Uganda; The Judith Trust; The Kota Alliance; The Queer Muslim Project; The Swedish Federation of LGBT Rights – RFSL; The Tandem Project; The YP Foundation; TICAH; Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV/AIDS (UNYPA); Uganda Youth Alliance For Family Planning And Adolescent Health-UYAFPAH; UN Major Group for Children and Youth; UN Women Aotearoa NZ; Union des Amis Socio Culturels d'Action en Développement (UNASCAD); Unite for Bodily Alliance; United Nations Association of New Zealand; Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights; Vaagdhara, India; Visible Impact; Wairarapa Women's Centre; WDF (IEO); WeCan; WomanHealth Philippines; Women Enabled International; Women Health Foundation; Women Working Group (WWG) Indonesia; Women's Centre; Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR); Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights Africa; WOMEN'S INITIATIVES (WINS); Women's March Aotearoa New Zealand; Women's Rights Centre; Y-PEER; Y-PEER Afghanistan; Y-PEER Albania; Y-PEER Asia Pacific Regional Center, Bangkok; Y-PEER Bhutan; Y-PEER Kazakhstan; Y-PEER Kiribati; Y-PEER Laos; Y-PEER Mongolia Foundation; Y-PEER Myanmar; Y-PEER Nepal; Y-PEER Syria; Yayasan Kesehatan Perempuan; YouAct – European Youth Network on Sexual and Reproductive Rights; Young Omang Pakistan; Young Women's Advisory Group (YWAG) to the Equality Rights Alliance; Youth Action Hub Guinea – CNUCED; Youth Action Nepal; Youth Advocacy Network (YAN); Youth Advocacy Network Sri Lanka; Youth Advocates Zimbabwe; Youth And Women For Opportunities Uganda-YWOU; Youth Association for Development (YAD) Pakistan; Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights; Youth Development Center; Youth Engage; Youth Equality Centre – YEC; Youth Forum Papua; Youth Interfaith Forum on Sexuality (YIFOS); Youth Lead; Youth Peer Afghanistan Organization (YPAO); YUWA, Nepal; Yuwalaya, Nepal; YWCA Christchurch; Zimbabwe United Nations Association; Zonta International.

<sup>[1]</sup> UNICEF. (2018). *Child Marriage: Latest Trends and Future Prospects*. Retrieved from <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Child-Marriage-Data-Brief.pdf>

<sup>[2]</sup> Abdul Cader, A. (2017). *Ending Child, Early, and Forced Marriage: SRHR as Central to the Solution*. Kuala Lumpur: Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW). Retrieved from <https://arrow.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Thematic-Paper-on-Ending-Child-Early-and-Forced-Marriage.pdf>

<sup>[3]</sup> WHO. (2018). *Adolescents: health risks and solutions*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescents-health-risks-and-solutions>