

## Item 8 – Action Canada for Population and Development

Mister President,

I make this statement on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative and African Men for Sexual Health and Rights

As organisations working to ensure the full enjoyment of rights by everyone, everywhere, we emphasize the need for upholding the principles of dignity, equality and freedom as fundamental benchmarks in the promotion and protection of rights.

We applaud steps taken to promote the protection of women's human rights and the work done on violence against women through language adopted in the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Similarly, we appreciate the developments at the Human Rights Council following the adoption of the Resolution 17/19 in 2011. We commend the leadership of South Africa, Norway, Brazil and other states in sustaining dialogue on the need to protect, prevent and redress sexual orientation and gender identity based human rights violations.

We, however, note with regret, the unfortunate subjugation of rights for political expediency by states in Forums such as this one. We are appalled by the practice of State bargaining, picking and choosing and negotiating rights. This is witnessed specifically by the grandstanding of States here and doing differently at national level. This further contributes to the limitation of the enjoyment of rights by traditionally marginalised groups and people, in particular women, human rights defenders, same-sex loving and gender non-conforming people.

We call on states to

1. Take adequate measures to effectively prevent and redress all forms of human rights violations, including those based on sexuality and gender.
2. To ensure that any action taken by this Council steers away from further political polarisation but yield positive change in reducing violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
3. We further call on states to engage in a sustained and constructive dialogue to entrench sexual orientation and gender identity in the broader protection agenda of the Human Rights Council