

12^a Session of the Human Rights Council: Item 6: Universal Periodic Review (Uruguay) – Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development (Speaker: Enisa Eminovska)

Thank you, Mr. President,

We have the honour to make this statement on behalf of partner organizations in Uruguay, including the **Inter-American Platform for Human Rights -Democracy and Development, Chapter Uruguay (PIDHDD - Chapter Uruguay)**¹.

In relation to human trafficking – Recommendations 16, 18, 43, 45 to 51 – we recognize the efforts made by the State after the installation of specialized courts for crimes that require special treatment, such as transnational crimes, especially human trafficking. However, prosecution of the crime is the predominate approach, leaving a marked gap in the field of prevention, inter-institutional coordination and joint work with civil society. In this regard, we regret the absence of a national plan that could integrate the current sector-based policies. For children and adolescents there is a plan to combat commercial and non-commercial sexual exploitation, however in practice this does not represent progress since no resources have been granted for its implementation making evident the absence of political will.

In relation to the prison system, Recommendations No. 7, 28, 29, 39, 40, 52 to 60, 61, 63, 67 to 70 – we are concerned about prison conditions: the critical cases of overcrowding, riots and the frequent jailbreaks, the application of violent repression on prisoners, the serious deficiencies of basic needs which generate unacceptable living conditions, the abuse suffered, the severe food shortages and inadequate health care. In addition there are insufficient socio-educational programs and the labour conditions generated subjects all prison employees to physical and emotional stress. Furthermore, 63% of detainees in prison are in preventive custody for years, violating the international law about the "reasonable time" which must be respected. The recent death of 5 inmates in the COMCAR prison is a direct consequence of the above situation. Added to this, are the cases of juvenile prisoners that involve allegations of abuse, long hours of confinement without access to the patio or training activities and lack of appropriate programs, as reported by the Children's Rights Committee in Uruguay.

Regarding the right to truth, justice, memory and reparation and guarantees against non-repetition - recommendations No. 62, 64 to 66 - while we recognize the existing progress during this period, in relation to the impunity issue, it is essential to annul the Law of Expiration of punitive state claims because it represents one of the largest obstacles in the fight against impunity. There will be a plebiscite on October 25 on the law, along with the national elections, promoted by and as a result of a popular initiative and not a governmental one. Excavations have been resumed to find around about 200 people still missing, but we request to know the truth about the events, access to all files of the repression and ensure the independence of the powers of the state (subject to the Law of Expiration).

¹ Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos - Democracia y Desarrollo- Capítulo Uruguay (PIDHDD - Capítulo Uruguay) – (*Inter-American Platform for Human Rights - Democracy and Development, Chapter Uruguay (PIDHDD - Chapter Uruguay)*) , Amnistía Internacional Sección Uruguay (*Amnesty International Uruguay Section*)