

United Nations Human Rights Council 37th Session
UPR Adoption: Pakistan

Speaker: Ms. Noor Imran

Than you Mr. President. I make this statement on behalf of Action Canada for Population and Development, Asia Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, Right Here Right Now Pakistan, and the Sexual Rights Initiative

We welcome Pakistan's acceptance of recommendations to implement the Transgender Protection Bill tabled in Senate (91). Further, we commend Pakistan's commitment to improve sexual and reproductive health through an enabling policy (219) and improve maternal services at provincial levels (218).

However, we are concerned with the insufficient attention paid to the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people, both in policy and in implementation. Pakistan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Child, early and forced marriage operates as a means to control girls' sexuality and reproductive capacity, and results in significant risks of unwanted and forced pregnancies. UN treaty monitoring bodies have consistently stated that early pregnancy violates a girl's right to health by putting her at risk of maternal mortality and morbidity and unsafe abortion.¹

Moreover, in Pakistan, where talking about sexuality and sexual health and reproductive rights is considered taboo, young people's choices in this matter are restricted and their well being jeopardized. Pakistan at this moment has a very unique opportunity. We, the young people, are part of the largest population in its history, with 55% of the population under the age of 25.

It is vital therefore that Pakistan institute awareness raising programmes on sexual and reproductive health and rights information for young people and ensure the availability of accessible, affordable, acceptable and quality SRHR service for all persons, especially young people.

Thank you.

¹ CEDAW Committee (2012) *Concluding Observations: Djibouti*, para. 30, U.N. Doc. CEDAW/C/DJI/CO/1-3 (2011). 254 Human Rights Council, Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, 22nd Sess., para. 51, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/22/31, 2012