

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, and fellow advocates,

Family Planning NSW is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of International Planned Parenthood Federation, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania Region, MSI Reproductive Choices and SERAC - Bangladesh.

Family Planning NSW is also a member of the Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, a regional network that catalyses civil society advocacy towards the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Just and sustainable development that prioritises sustained and inclusive economic growth for all, along with environmental and social development cannot be achieved without the fulfilment of the national, regional and global commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights contained within the ICPD Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda and the Nairobi Summit.

Sustainable economic growth, women's economic empowerment and the health and wellbeing of women and girls, and societies most vulnerable, cannot be a reality without gender equality, human rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particular, universal access to evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education and long-acting reversible contraception.

Unmet need for family planning, combined with deeply entrenched gender-based discrimination, leaves women and girls shouldering much of the unpaid care responsibility such as raising children and running families, often limiting their access to paid work and economic opportunities. While use of long-acting reversible contraception is slowly increasing in the Asia-Pacific region, many women still face accessibility difficulties due to economic, structural, cultural and geographical barriers.

At the recent Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, representatives of major groups and other stakeholders highlighted the need to mainstream comprehensive sexuality education, recover losses in learning opportunities, particularly for young people, women and girls, and enhance access to sexual and reproductive health services.

We call on Member States to ensure consistent implementation of comprehensive sexuality education, especially within Australia and the Pacific, to ensure all people, particularly young people, develop optimal levels of literacy, including health literacy, which fosters development of essential life skills and opportunities for employment.

We urge Member States to continue to show strength, commitment and leadership to achieve sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. We encourage Member States to invest in long-acting reversible contraception and ensure access to safe abortion.

Investment in sexual and reproductive health and rights along with human rights will contribute to the economic empowerment of women and girls and enable them to exercise real power and control over their lives.

Thank you.

