



To: Mr. Ryszard Sarkowicz  
Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations in New York

**Subject: European Civil Society recommendations for the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Open Working Group on SDGs (5-9 May 2014)**

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Dear Mr. Ryszard Sarkowicz,

With this letter, ASTRA Network, Central and Eastern European Women's Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, together with other 87 European SRHR NGOs from 42 European countries wishes to extend our appreciation for your support and leadership in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) within the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development.

***We call on you along with all European governments to speak up for the full inclusion of specific targets on sexual and reproductive health and rights under the Health and Population Dynamics and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment focus areas at the upcoming session of the OWG in May***

Specifically:

1. We welcome the revised Co-Chairs Focus Area Document (April 2014) for it includes sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights under two areas (*Health and Population Dynamics and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*). However we would like to draw your attention on the fact that the document refers to language agreed back in 1994 and thus it re-affirms minimum standards that do not take into account the increased international recognition that 'sexual and reproductive health and rights' have gained since then (see for instance the EU Council Conclusions, June 2013; outcome documents of the Regional Conferences of the ICPD Operational Review, 2013; ICPD Global Review Report, 2014; UN Secretary General's Reports to the 47<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Population and Development and to the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women)

**As the OWG was called by the UN General Assembly to elaborate inspirational goals for a new transformative agenda, we strongly believe that Member States should be ambitious and call in their oral statements for 'sexual and reproductive health and rights' targets, which is a more encompassing concept and addresses a wider range of issues, including for instance discrimination and violence against women and girls; child, early and forced marriage; and female genital mutilations.**

2. **We strongly support the full inclusion of SRHR in the SDGs through:**

- 2.1 A Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Women's rights stand-alone goal with specific SRHR targets as well as the integration of these issues through targets and indicators across the framework;
- 2.2 A specific target under the Health stand-alone goal on 'Achieving Universal Access to SRHR';
- 2.3 Addressing Population Dynamics in the SDGs from a human rights perspective and as a cross-cutting issue;
- 2.4 A specific target on 'comprehensive sexuality education' under the Education stand-alone goal ; and
- 2.5 A special focus on young people and adolescents' needs through specific targets and indicators across the framework.

- 3. We welcome the strong leadership on SRHR shown by European Troikas and national delegations within the OWG sessions. We hope that **at OWG 11 European governments will work together with likeminded delegations from other regions**, particularly from Africa, who supported sexual and reproductive health and rights at the OWG 8th session in February through the joint statement delivered by Argentina, but that since then have remained silent.

To conclude, we would like to share with you the enclosed document '**Everyone. Always. Everywhere. The European SRHR civil society community's position on the post-2015 agenda**' with the hope that this can be of support to your work with the Open Working Group.

Sincerely on behalf of ASTRA Network,

Marta Szostak



ASTRA Network Coordinator

## **ASTRA Network members**

Albania - Albanian Family Planning Association  
Armenia - Women's Rights Center  
Armenia - Society Without Violence  
Armenia - Women's Resource Center  
Azerbaijan - Center "Women and Modern World"  
Belarus - Women's Independent Democratic Movement of Belarus  
Bulgaria - Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association  
Bulgaria - Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation  
Bulgaria - Gender Education, Research and Technologies  
Bulgaria - Demetra Association  
Bulgaria - Gender Alternatives Foundation  
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo Open Center  
Croatia - B.a.b.e. (Be Active, Be Emancipated)  
Croatia - CESI - Center for Education and Counseling of Woman  
Croatia - Women's Room  
Georgia – Real People, Real Visio  
Georgia – HERA XXI  
Georgia - Women's Center  
Hungary – PATENT  
Kazakhstan - The Legal Center for Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim"  
Lithuania - Family Planning and Sexual Health Association  
Latvia - Latvia's Association for Family Planning And Sexual Health  
Macedonia - Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women  
Macedonia – Shelter Center  
Macedonia - Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women  
Macedonia - Health Education and Research Association  
Moldova – Family Planning Association  
Moldova - Reproductive Health Service Center  
Poland - Federation for Women and Family Planning  
Romania - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives  
Romania - A.L.E.G.  
Romania - The East European Institute of Reproductive Health  
Romania - AnA: Society for Feminist Analysis  
Russia - Novogorod Gender Center  
Russia – Russian Association for Population and Development  
Slovakia – Pro Choice  
Tajikistan – Gender and Development  
Ukraine - Women Health and Family Planning Ukraine - Charitable SALUS Foundation  
Uzbekistan - Future Generation

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