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Emerging issue

Statement submitted by the Stichting Rutgers WPF, Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network – LACWHN, Family Care International (FCI), RFSU Swedish Association for Sexuality Education, Polish Federation for Women and Family Planning, European Women's Lobby, Plan UK, Asian-Pacific Resource & Research Centre for Women (ARROW), Population Action International (PAI), World Young Women Christian Association, Väestöliitto, International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network, Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung, Red Activas/Alianza por la Solidaridad, AIDOS, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Catholics for Choice, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development, Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM), Advocates for Youth, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs and of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

Statement

Emerging issue

1. We are all aware that: an estimated 222 million women and girls who want to avoid becoming pregnant, are not using modern contraception; some 16 million girls and young women become pregnant between the ages of 15 and 19. An estimated 39,000 child marriages take place globally each day; 13.8 million girls have undergone female genital mutilation in Africa; one in three women globally experiences violence, including intimate partner or sexual violence by someone other than a partner or both; an estimated 287,000 deaths occur as a result of pregnancy-related causes; and complications of unsafe abortions account for an estimated 47,000 maternal deaths.

2. As organizations working on gender equality, women's and girls empowerment and sexual and reproductive health and rights, we recognize that despite all the calls to action, the recommendations, the policies and programmes, the laws that have been introduced and all the other measures that have been introduced and implemented, the progress that has been made on women's empowerment and achievement of their sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for adolescent girls, has nevertheless been limited.

3 We therefore call upon members of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda to promote and support the inclusion of a stand alone goal on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, as well as mainstreaming gender throughout the framework.

4 Such a goal should include targets that (i) protect and fulfil women's and girls sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the necessary monitoring and protection systems; (ii) prevent and eliminate sexual coercion and violence against women and girls, including early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting and other harmful practices as well as engaging men and boys and promoting positive norm changes for the achievement of gender equality; (iii) universal access to a full range of essential services to the victims and survivors of gender-based violence

5 Furthermore, to ensure that women's sexual and reproductive health and rights are fully protected, including for adolescent girls, we call on members of the Commission to promote and support a target under the health goal on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.