

## Human Rights Council – 32<sup>nd</sup> session – June 2016

### Item 8:

#### Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

Thank you, Mr. President.

Action Canada makes this statement in collaboration with the Sexual Rights Initiative.

Mr. President, human rights relating to sexuality and gender include the right of every human being to bodily autonomy – that is, to make decisions that affect our own bodies and lives. These rights which are, and should be treated as inalienable and indivisible are all too often wilfully ignored, violated, traded, diminished or denied by state and non-state actors.

The factors that create the conditions that reduce the likelihood of our accessing the right to autonomy include militarisation and conflict, environmental degradation, the crises in democracy, religious and economic fundamentalisms, the capitalist crises and patriarchy and heteronormativity. These are prevalent everywhere and in all regions of the world.

Sexual and reproductive rights must be addressed within a framework that recognizes the impact of race, class, age, gender, ability, nationality and others upon their realisation.

The Sexual Rights Initiative again acknowledges and commends the efforts and attention by the Human Rights Council to sexual orientation and gender identity. But we remind this Council that human rights related to sexuality address a wide range of issues that intersect with several other rights

We call on the Council to:

1. Ensure that all measures taken on sexual orientation and gender identity recognise and address the root causes of violence and discrimination and of the multiple and intersecting forms of oppression on these grounds;
2. Recognize that it is impossible to address violations related to sexuality and gender effectively without naming and addressing their root causes;
3. Systematically address the multiple and intersecting forms of oppression linked to sexuality and gender more broadly;
4. Recognise and establish protections to all those whose rights are violated, or who are discriminated against, or marginalised through criminalisation. This includes recognising the rights of sex workers, those seeking and providing abortions, people living with HIV, those who are non- heteronormative, young people's access to SRH and services and so on

Thank you Mr President