

Human Rights Council – Agenda Item 6 – Universal Periodic Review – Norway
Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

Mr President,

This statement is supported by the Norwegian association for sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the Sexual Rights Initiative.

We welcome Norway's acceptance of a number of recommendations related to sexuality and gender. We look forward to hearing the results of the public consultation on the proposed amendments to the Penal Code so as to strengthen relevant provisions related to violence, especially domestic violence, sexual abuse and rape, and of efforts aimed at countering gender stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes, as well as at the further promotion of gender equality.

We urge the Ministry of Justice and Public Security to change the focus on rape in the current criminal laws, from the existing one on presence of violence to a focus on genuine consent, by widening the legal definition of rape so as to include all kinds of non-consensual sexual activity.

We also urge the government to complete regular national surveys on rape and other forms of sexual violence, to enhance knowledge and develop effective policies, education and campaigns; ensure that the police collect and make use of all forensic information and materials from sexual assault clinics if the case is reported, and ensure national plans of action on forced marriage include reference to and information pertaining to rape and sexual violence.

Increased training on the consequences of sexual violence and gender stereotypes is also essential for professionals, health workers, the police, and others working with victims of sexual violence as are increased resources to ensure preventive work is possible.

Finally it is essential to ensure that sexual assault clinics have a stable, predictable economic and organisational framework and that psychiatric and psychological follow-up services to all survivors of rape are ensured for one year, free of charge.

Thank you