

Human Rights Council – 29th session – June 2015

Item 6: Consideration of the UPR Outcome of Turkey

Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

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

We regret that Turkey did not provide well in advance its views on 52 recommendations, thus limiting the scope of this dialogue.

We welcome Turkey's acceptance of recommendation 149.44 to ensure all women's access to safe abortion. We further welcome the acceptance of recommendations to combat discrimination against women and ensure gender equality.

In implementing these recommendations, we urge the government to: amend the law so that a woman's husband's permission is not required to terminate her pregnancy; eliminate any manner of psychological pressure on women seeking abortion services; undertake campaigns to inform women of their right to legally obtain an abortion; ensure that health providers have knowledge of the legal context surrounding abortion, and; provide acceptable service of good quality, and make health services and information available in diverse languages, including Kurdish.

We further urge the government to ensure that all women have access to a full range of free birth control services, including intrauterine devices, and ensuring access in rural and remote areas.

We also welcome the acceptance of recommendations to combat early marriage, address gender stereotypes, and prevent violence against women. We urge the government to ensure provision of comprehensive sexuality education in State institutions and communities as a critical intervention to transform gender norms, empower girls and women, and prevent violations of their human rights.

We are disappointed that Turkey chose to not support recommendations 151.16 and 151.17 on gender equality and discrimination against women. We urge the government to fulfil its obligations pertaining to the human rights of women, and to demonstrate its commitment to women's rights and gender equality at the highest levels of leadership.