

Excellencies,

Dear delegates,

Yesterday we, civil society representatives from across the UNECE region, discussed important achievements of the last five years and recognised the large diversity between and within our countries. However, these times of multiple crises, including COVID-19 pandemic, several armed conflicts especially the war in Ukraine, increasing pushback against democracy and human rights, and economic instability showed us significant gaps and shortcomings.

There is an urgent need for renewed commitments and concrete actions to realise the promise of gender equality, respect for dignity, bodily autonomy and human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.

As representatives of civil society, we call on the governments and all actors to:

- Refrain from, and counteract initiatives and actions that undermine and jeopardize gender equality and human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights particularly those of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons
- Combat shrinking space for civil society, and provide political and financial support and protection to civil society organisations and human rights defenders working to protect human rights, gender equality, women's and LGBTI rights and SRHR.
- Reform relevant laws and policies, including on SRHR, to bring them into line with human rights standards and public health recommendations;
- Introduce and strengthen laws, and policies against all forms of discrimination on the basis of disability, HIV status, ethnicity, age, sex, legal status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political convictions and economic status.
- Take an intersectional approach to developing and implementing strategies, policies and programs in order to address specific experiences and needs of the most marginalized.
- Develop and implement targeted measures, including through temporary special measures/affirmative actions, to ensure inclusion and equity for marginalized groups.
- Pay special attention to sexual and reproductive health needs throughout the life cycle guaranteeing universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including modern contraceptives, safe abortion, maternal health care, and assisted reproduction
- Ensure provision of comprehensive sexuality education as part of mandatory school curricula
- Prevent and effectively respond to and ensure accountability for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as harmful practices, institutional violence, including obstetric violence, and provide all necessary support to survivors.

- Make greater investment on disaggregated data collection and dissemination to better monitor implementation of ICPD Programme of Action