Joint statement on behalf of Action Canada for Population and Development; Federation for Women and Family Planning; Center for Reproductive Rights; Ipas; ActionAid; Advocates for Youth; ARC International (Allied Rainbow Communities International); Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW); Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana "Profamilia"; Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID); Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network; Catholics for Choice; Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL); Centre for Health and Social Justice; Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS); Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN); Ekta Resource Centre for Women; EngenderHealth; European Humanist Federation; European Women’s Lobby; European Youth Forum; Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit – COC Nederland; FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development Norway; Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM); Generation Initiative for Women and Youth Network (GIWYN); Girls To Mothers’ Initiative; Global Fund for Women; Global Justice Center; International Commission of Jurists; International Federation for Human Rights Leagues (FIDH); The International HIV/AIDS Alliance; International Humanist and Ethical Union; International Lesbian and Gay Association; International Planned Parenthood Federation; International Planned Parenthood Federation South Asia Region Office; International Service for Human Rights; International Women’s Health Coalition; Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS); Manusher Jonno Foundation; Marie Stopes International; Médecins du Monde - France; MenEngage Alliance; Oxfam; Pathfinder International; The Population Council; PROMSEX, Centro de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos; Rutgers; Shalupe Foundation; Simavi; Social Charitable Center Women and Modern World; Sonke Gender Justice; Sukaar Welfare Organization Pakistan; Union Women Center; Womankind Worldwide; Women Enabled International; Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways; Women International Democratic Federation; Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights; Women’s Rights Center NGO Armenia; World YWCA; and Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights.

Mr. President,

It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of 285 organisations from around the world.

Through the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, States explicitly agreed to prioritize the human rights of women, including the eradication of gender-based discrimination and violence. However, many States have not yet made the important decision that women’s human rights deserve to be upheld and their lives are worth saving. The continued criminalization of abortion and restrictions on access to and provision of abortion and post-abortion care in many jurisdictions is stark evidence of this.

Around 22 million unsafe abortions are estimated to take place around the world annually, leading to 7 million health complications and 47,000 deaths. In addition, there are major social and financial costs to women and girls, families, communities, health systems and economies. The criminalization of abortion and failure to ensure access to quality abortion services is a violation of the rights to non-discrimination, to privacy, and to make decisions about one’s own body, and can constitute torture or ill-treatment, as repeatedly highlighted by UN bodies and experts. Prohibiting abortion pushes it
underground and gives rise to unsafe abortions, violating the rights to life, health and bodily autonomy. Moreover, the poor and those already facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are disproportionately affected, making the global community’s pledge to “leave no one behind” ring hollow.

These human rights violations must stop now. On September 28, the Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion, we urge the Human Rights Council to address the human rights violations arising from criminalization of abortion and the denial of access to safe and legal abortion services through its resolutions, decisions, dialogues, debates, and the UPR. We demand in a collective voice that governments across the world respect, protect and fulfill the right to access safe and legal abortion services and post-abortion care.

Thank you, Mr. President.
Feminist Analyses AnA Romania; Society for Women's Action and Training Initiative; Society Without Violence NGO; Solidarité des Femmes Burundaises pour la lutte contre le Sida et le Paludisme au Burundi; Solidarité des Femmes Burundaises pour le Bien Etre Social et le Progres au Burundi; SPECTRA: Young Feminists, Rwanda; Spectrum; SRHR platform Ghana; Srijanatmak Manushi Sanstha; Stella, l’amie de Maimie; Success Capital Organisation; Sukaar Welfare Organization Pakistan; Surkun; Sustainable Consulting; SWISSAID; Synergia - Initiatives for Human Rights; Taller Salud; Terre Des Jeunes Burundi; TFMR Ireland; The Bridges We Burn; The Legal Center for Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim"; Tonga Leitis Association; Uganda Network of young people living with HIV & AIDS; UNAM; Unidas por La Paz I A P; Unión Democrática de Mujeres –UDEMU; Uprising of Women in the Arab World; Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights; Vecinas Feministas por la Justicia Sexual y Reproductiva en América Latina y el Caribe; VOICE MALE Magazine; Voice Your Abortion; White Ribbon Canada; WISH Associates; WO=MEN; Women Interfaith Council/Network of Men Leaders on Violence Against Women; women on waves; women on web; Women's Link Worldwide; Women's Solidarity Namibia; YouAct, European Youth Network on Sexual Reproductive Rights; Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana; and Zeromacho.

WHO: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs388/en/

Ibid.

WHO: http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/unsafe_abortion/magnitude/en/