

Thank you Ms Thompson, Mr Lalonde, for this opportunity of interaction.

I am Doris Mpoumou (with the International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere Region), and I speak on behalf of the women's major group.

We, the Women's Major Group, are deeply concerned, about the pace and state of the negotiations of the past week. Let me reword this: we are scandalized!

You have asked us to prioritize 3 points, and we want to focus on:

1. Gender equality and Women's empowerment in the proposed SDGs
2. Universal social protection floor
3. Governance, gender mainstreaming and women's participation

You will note that all three priorities focus on governance and means of implementation. 20 years after Rio we should have a better understanding of why the world is still far short of meeting commitments made in Rio and Johannesburg and actions have not been prioritized. Yet, the zero draft as presented last January was very weak and did not live up to the urgency of the current economic and environmental crises, which have exacerbated inequalities in most countries worldwide. The zero draft hardly included concrete commitments for means, funding, timelines.

In many countries around the world, women have no say over their bodies. They own 1% of assets worldwide, and many live from land and resources for which they do not have titles.

More and more women are unable to protect their livelihoods in the face of climate of change and powerful corporations, which are grabbing their land or means of production. For example, women have no means to defend themselves against mining or biofuel corporations that grab their lands upon which their survival depends except through legal remedies. The poor need rights, and women in particular as the poorest of the poor, need rights to protect themselves. We are outraged at any efforts that aim to delete hard won references to rights and equity in the text, including agreed human rights language. Governments should not wait time bracketing our rights! **INSTEAD**, they should spend time **IMPLEMENTING** them!

In the preamble of the Rio + 20 Declaration governments **MUST** commit to the principle of non-regression and must strongly affirm that sustainable development must be based on equity, human rights and gender equality!

Let me now briefly come to our 3 points.

Regarding point 1 on the Gender dimension of the SDGs.

Recent reviews of MDG3 and MDG5 have shown that some progress has been achieved in some areas, but that overall, **MAJOR** gaps still remain. For example, MDG5 on Universal access to RH is the most off-track MDG. Still 250.000 women die each year because they lack access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. These deaths are unnecessary and preventable!

Governments have failed women! They have **NOT** kept their promises made at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). If the Rio+20 outcome document outlines the content of the SDGs, it's essential to include sexual and reproductive health. This should be a priority area for any development agenda!

We are dismayed at the lack of reference to gender equality as an important thematic area for the Sustainable Development Goals. As long as women continue to die each day, because their governments continue to deny them access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, continue to deny their human rights, refuse to have women participate in decision making, we cannot talk about Sustainable Development Goals! Integrating a gender perspective to the SDGs is not optional. We need to continue to address gender equality issues as cross-cutting priority issues, and as stand-alone priority issues. And For Rio+20, governments should firmly enshrine gender equality as one of the key principles for any sustainable development goal or any post 2015 development agenda.

Regarding point 2 on the Social Protection Floor

Women represent the majority of the poor, the poorest of the poor, and the majority people working in the informal, unpaid and precarious sectors. As such, women's rights to social protection has to be ensured. There are already many countries which are implementing this right through a gender-responsive social protection floor as a poverty elimination instrument. For example, India has established the right to employment, for women and men, who have the right to 100 days of paid work. Brazil has the Bolsa Familia, which has lifted 52 million people out of poverty, 90% of whom are women. In South Africa the social protection floor assures access to basic services: health, education, water and energy.

For Rio+20, we recommend that governments agree on a global social protection floor to implement those rights!

Regarding point 3 on Governance

Gender mainstreaming and participation of women has proven to be a very effective way of strengthening good governance and increasing accountability, because it assures effective participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels.

Finally, as important to strengthen governance, we support the proposals by other major groups on

- 1) high commissioner and ombudsperson for future generations
- 2) a global convention on access to information, justice and participation
- 3) independent technology assessment and monitoring body.