

Thank you Mr. President,

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

Men and boys can play a crucial role in preventing discrimination and violence against women and girls. They can also be key actors in working alongside women in challenging the harmful gender stereotypes and norms, attitudes and behaviors that reinforce and perpetuate this violence and discrimination.

Efforts must be made to integrate gender perspectives into national and international laws, policies and programs which seek to eliminate the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and conditions of disadvantage, their root causes and consequences, and their impact on the advancement of women. Engaging men and boys in work to advance gender equality involves not only working with individuals on behavioural change in their own personal lives, but also in mobilizing support for structural changes throughout society and in the institutions that reinforce gender stereotypes and norms, including in the socio-cultural, economic and political arenas.

Yet the role and importance of the engagement of men and boys is still a contested issue even in this Council, and among the many states who systematically attempt to avoid addressing, discussing and incorporating such notions and language into international human rights instruments, national legislation and policies, even in those that specifically relate to the human rights of women and girls.

It is evident that the lack of priority for change is linked to the benefits that men actually receive from perpetuating gender inequality and who, therefore, resist change towards more equitable gender relations. As a result, men are still rightfully considered, the “problem” in gender equality policy discussions. A transformative approach to gender is required, and one that calls on all stakeholders to join efforts in opposing norms and stereotypes that perpetuate patriarchal systems that privilege men and boys on macro and personal levels

Thank you