

**Human Rights Council – 28<sup>th</sup> session – March 2015**

**High-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**

**Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development**

Action Canada for Population and Development makes this statement in collaboration with the Sexual Rights Initiative.

International cooperation is critical for achieving sustainable development globally and promoting human rights. Its practice must embody human rights principles. For instance, the provision of financial and technical assistance must seek to eliminate inequalities and promote social and economic justice, within and between countries. It must seek to advance the situation of the most marginalised populations and ensure their participation in related decision making processes. Transparency and access to information in relation to international cooperation must be prioritised.

Human rights standards must apply to international cooperation at the level of multiple stakeholders – State, private sector, civil society and national human rights institutions.

At the State level, international cooperation must emphasise mutual accountability between States. Equally important, it must be accountable to all persons, particularly those most marginalised, those failed by unjust and inequitable systems of power and as a consequence living in a cycle of poverty, and subjected to violations by State or non-State actors such as corporations or families. For instance, development projects must not only refrain from violating the rights of indigenous peoples' but ensure their inclusion and participation at every stage. Humanitarian assistance must seek to fulfil the best interests of the child and meet the particular needs of all women, persons with disabilities and older persons, among others.

Policy making and implementation of international cooperation must adopt an intersectional approach. It must seek to address multiple and intersecting forms of injustices and inequalities, including related to sex, gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion and ability, among others. For example, it is a must to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated across all international cooperation initiatives. This includes making a concerted effort to ensure the participation of women and trans\* persons of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, economic status etc. in policy making and evaluation.

I thank you.