

43rd session of the Human Rights Council

Item 8 General Debate

Federation for Women and Family Planning

Thank you, Madam President.

I deliver this statement on behalf of the Federation for Women and Family Planning.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action urged the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights as a matter of priority. The protection and fulfilment of the human rights of women and girls, which include the full realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights, is at the heart of gender equality, without which it cannot be achieved.

The Covid-19 crisis has gravely impacted Polish women and LGBT+ community especially. In the midst of pandemic, Polish parliament debated the two draft bills aiming at quasi total ban of abortion and sexuality education. The amendment to another law which tightens the rights of women who are refused sexual and reproductive services because of doctors' relying on consciousness clause passed for the further debate in Senate.

The ongoing presidential election campaign targets LGBT+ community who are objects of overt hate speech from the current president and other prominent politicians. Members of LGBT+ community are denied respect and basic human rights.

International human rights mechanisms have a crucial role to play in reflecting the demands coming from women's rights and LGBT+ movements. Hence we demand UN institutions to continue holding Poland accountable for its obligations to take concrete actions so that standards of protection of women's and LGBT+ rights are upheld.

The worrying developments in Poland violating women's and minorities rights cannot be overlooked by the international community. The voice of Polish feminists and representatives of LGBT+ community should be heard at Human Rights Council.