Holding governments to account for the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women and girls around the world

To the President of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), HE Ambassador Peter Thomson of Fiji and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban-Ki Moon,

On the anniversary of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we, the undersigned, call on you, in your roles as the President of the United Nations General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to hold Member States to account for their progress towards achieving SDG 5 on gender equality and women’s empowerment. As you know, gender equality is central to achieving sustainable development, and the target on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights is a pre-requisite for that change.

The ambition set out in the SDGs is clear. Gender equality, women’s and girls’ human rights, and the empowerment of girls and women will not be possible without the realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Providing the full range of sexual and reproductive health services, information and education so that all women and girls can make free and informed choices about their sexuality and their reproductive lives is a basic human right and central to realizing the full range of women’s rights, and to progressing gender equality.

Achieving sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality is not just an end in itself. Enabling everyone to access these life-changing services will support the elimination of poverty and hunger, achievement of gender equality and quality education, reduction of inequality, adaptation to climate change, and sustainable consumption. Without access to sexual and reproductive health services and education achieving some of the other goals will become a much harder task, while others will be impossible to realize.

We must ensure that the commitments made just one year ago are not forgotten. We cannot risk failing on all the goals due to a lack of political will to implement those related to gender equality and SRHR.

In this 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, one year after the SDGs were adopted, we urge you to work with Member States to turn their ambition into reality by supporting their efforts for implementation, encouraging effective
partnerships and ensuring their commitment through strong accountability mechanisms. In advance of The High Level Political Forum in 2017, which will be focusing on goals 3 and 5, now is the opportunity to work with Member States to help them to meet their commitments on SRHR and move towards a sustainable world where no one is left behind.

Signed

Action Works Nepal
AFLED Mali
AKAHATÁ
Akina Mama wa Afrika
American Jewish World Service
Arab Women Organization of Jordan
Association for Farmers Rights Defense, AFRD - EUFRAS Georgia
Balance from México
Caidre Cameroon Association
CARE International
China Family Planning Association
Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies
Coordinadora de la Mujer – Bolivia
Danish Family Planning Association
Family Planning New Zealand
Family Planning NSW
Family Planning Tasmania
Family Planning welfare Northern Territory
FOKUS- Forum for Women and Development
Forum International des Femmes d’Iespace Francophone
Fundación para el Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer
Gender and Development Network
Gender-Center Republic of Moldova
GENDERS AC
GROOTS Trinidad & Tobago
INPPARES- Perú
International Community of Women Living with HIV
International Council of AIDS Service Organizations
International Federation of Women in Legal Careers
International Federation of Women Lawyers
International Peace Initiatives
Isis-Women’s International Cross Cultural Exchange
Japan Family Planning Association
Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning
medica mondiale
Mefam
Mongolian Family Welfare Association
National Alliance of Women’s Organisations
Nigerian Network of Women Exporters of Services
Orchid Project
'Pacificwin' Pacific Women's Indigenous Networks
Papua New Guinea Family Health Association
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Red Federación Mujeres & Municipalidades A.L.C- Enlace Perú
Regional Centre for International Development Cooperation
Rural Women's Network Nepal
Rutgers
Samoa Family Health Association
SDGs Kenya Forum and GCAP Kenya
Sexual Health information networking & education SA Inc
Sexual Health Switzerland
Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries
Solar Cookers International
SOVA Somalia
Stichting Ultimate Purpose
Support for Women in Governance Organization
The Association of War Affected Women
The Central America Women's Network
The German Medical Aid Organization
The Global Initiatives for Human Rights – Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights
The International Alliance of Women Equal Rights – Equal Opportunities
The Swedish Women's Lobby
Tonga Family Health Association
Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health
Union de l Action Feministe
Väestöliitto ry
Vision Spring Initiatives Lagos Nigeria
Womankind Worldwide
Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways
Women Peacemakers Program
Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights
World Vision Finland