

25th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 6: Consideration of Malaysia's UPR Outcome

Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

Thank you Mr. President!

I make this statement on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative

We commend the government's acceptance of recommendations to:

- Step up its efforts to reduce maternal mortality, including through an increased access to quality family planning ;
- Take necessary steps to ensure the accessibility of the sexual and reproductive health services in Government facilities ;
- Take effective measures to reverse the increasing trend of HIV/AIDS incidence by strengthening the National Strategic Plan (NSP) on HIV/AIDS Prevention ; and, to
- Allocate more funds for training of health care staff, including doctors, midwives, nurses, and social workers

In taking action in implementing these accepted recommendations, we strongly encourage the government to remove any legal barriers to access abortion services, ensure access to a range of contraceptive methods and integrate comprehensive sexuality education as part of formal school curriculum.

We are concerned, however, with Malaysia's complete refusal to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of individuals with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions through the rejection of recommendations to decriminalize same-sex sexual relations. Rejecting these recommendations is a refusal by the government to guarantee the rights of individuals with diverse sexualities, gender identities and expressions to live free from all forms of stigma, discrimination and violence.

We remain equally concerned regarding the government's rejection of recommendation for criminalizing marital rape through the removal of the exception in Section 375 of the Penal Code. This represents a gross violation of women's right to live free from all forms of violence and we urge the government to reconsider its position on this issue.