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Human Rights Council 31st session
Item 6 Universal Periodic Review – Rwanda
Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development



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

The Government of Rwanda must be applauded for its constitution, which underscores the central role of human rights and dedicates 41 articles to the guarantee of fundamental human freedoms, for the establishment of independent human rights institutions and for all the efforts made to implement previous UPR recommendations. However, there are still issues and barriers that require the Government's immediate attention for human rights to be realised by all.

We therefore call upon the government of Rwanda to:

- i) Eliminate all the barriers to access to safe abortion as it impacts heavily on young and poor women in the country. Poor women and girls continue to be victims of sexual torture and oppression.
- ii) Ensure women's freedom of opinion and expression. The Community Policing Committee, a mechanism that is supposed to assist the government with crimes in communities is oppressive to women in vulnerable situation and has no regard for their privacy.
- iii) Address the issue of unfair trials in courts, harassment and reprisals that human rights defenders in Rwanda continue to face in their search for justice.
- iv) Strengthen implementation of laws and policies to recognise and protect the work of human rights defenders.
- v) Develop and implement a National Human Rights Action Plan.
- vi) Commit to ratifying human rights conventions from recommendations 135.1 to 135.77. The delay or refusal to ratify such documents continues to put individual citizens' human rights in jeopardy.

Thank you!

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