



## **Statement on Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health**

Equality and empowerment of women are global issues. Women's rights are human rights and a prerequisite for poverty eradication and for positive sustainable development. Reproductive rights are human rights.

### **Background**

Zonta International is an organization pledged to empower women at the global and local levels, and to promote justice and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Zonta International, districts and clubs advocate at the international, national and local levels on issues related to human rights and gender equality. At the international level, Zonta International advocates primarily through the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe. At the national level, Zonta districts, areas and clubs take action in support of, or in opposition to, legislation on issues affecting women and girls. At the local level, Zonta clubs monitor laws and policies and their impact on women, participate in hearings and meetings with local politicians and administrators, and host speakers and panels to raise awareness about issues affecting women in their local communities.

In accordance with the UN Human Rights Commission statement reproductive rights are human rights and human rights are fundamental to women's reproductive health. Zonta International has longstanding relations with the UN and has been a steadfast partner to UN agencies. Zonta's support of UN projects and programs has been critical to their success.

### **Statement**

Zonta International endorses the values expressed in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and focusses on status of women issues according to Articles 1-16 of CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.

Every person should have the freedom to make decisions about their bodies and to safely and privately access healthcare.

Zonta International supports that each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals is integral to sustainable development but promotes particularly Goal No. 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Goal No. 5 seeks, among other things, to:

- eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and
- ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the *Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development* and the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Zonta International supports the agreed conclusions of CSW63, *March 2019*, whereby, among other things,

*The Commission urges governments at all levels and as appropriate, with the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities, .....to take the following actions:*

*Strengthen women's and girls' access to social protection*

*uu. Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, and recognizing that the human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on all matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, as a contribution to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and the realization of their human rights;*

**Zonta International**

April 2019