

MALTA'S STATEMENT



REPUBLIC OF MALTA

UNECE Regional Conference ICPD Beyond 2014

ENABLING CHOICES: POPULATION PRIORITIES FOR THE 21st CENTURY

**Geneva
1-2 July 2013**

The Delegation of the Republic of Malta refers to the Chair's Summary and, with special reference to paragraphs 13, 19 and 24 wishes to make the following comments thereby registering its objection to the inclusion of reference to the rights and services related to abortion.

It is pertinent to point out that according to the Maltese Criminal Code Malta considers the termination of pregnancy through induced abortion as illegal. In this spirit, Malta reaffirms that its action will adhere to the understanding reached in the ICPD Programme of Action stating that: (quote) 'Any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process'.(unquote).

Within the context of these national legal obligations, the Republic of Malta can only accept language that does not carry any implications that a State is required to legitimize abortion or that abortion is a legitimate form of birth control.

Consequently, the Republic of Malta maintains that any recommendation on sexual and reproductive health and rights, commodities or services, should not in any way create an obligation on any party to consider abortion as a legitimate form of reproductive health services.

In accordance with the Cairo ICPD Programme of Action, the Republic of Malta maintains that: 'In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning', since we understand that the dignity and right to life of both the mother and the unborn child need to be fully respected at all times.

Malta would be grateful if this statement is included in the official records of this meeting.

Thank you, Chair.