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Thank you chair,

Good morning

I am Alice Frade from a Portuguese NGO for Development, P&D Factor Association

Gender equality, comprehensive sexuality education, sexual and reproductive health, and rights are critical to move human rights and development from papers and law to the reality we desire and that was promised to several generations: bodily autonomy, sexual and reproductive justice, and equality for all.

In Portugal, we have been on a path that has yielded maternal and child health, gender equality, the inclusion of ICPD+ goals in health, education, international cooperation, and equality policies, but the path has presented difficult challenges to overcome.

CSE, among many other questions, is integrated into the citizenship and equality curriculum, but it is far from being a reality for all children and young people at all levels of education and schools, as well as for teachers and other professionals training.

It is not uncommon to find leaders from different political and professional areas who include the expression "culture, tradition, identity and sovereignty (SOVERDI)" as an obstacle to the full realization of human rights, in particular sexual and reproductive rights.

Discrimination and violence based on gender and more recently, discrimination based on age and ageism, the increase in STI numbers, and populist approaches are problems we are facing because we have not invested in prevention and anticipation.

Sexual and reproductive health is guaranteed to all pregnant women, regardless of nationality, age, and marital status, including planning, contraception in the context of the NHS, and abortion. In this specific case, the difficulties are evident, with the number of professionals declaring themselves conscientious objectors.

To achieve all people and leave no one behind, including young people, namely girls, the elders, the migrants, people with disabilities, people in social vulnerability, and all others in an intersectional approach, we need to be more vocal, present and consistent but also, we need more political will in resource allocation.

We need rights, knowledge, and special tools to promote rights respect, dignity, and free choices for all.

Thank you.