

Oral Statement RutgersWPF

Thank you Mr. Chair for the floor. I share this statement today on behalf a coalition of young advocates and activists present here to highlight issues related to young people with respect to this year's theme of migration.

In the last year, we have seen remarkable progress for youth around the world. This includes the resolution produced at last year's CPD on adolescents and youth as well as the outcome document from the Global Youth Forum held in Bali last December. These two documents reaffirm the fundamental human rights of all young people, including our sexual and reproductive rights. Last year's CPD and the Global Youth Forum were both instrumental examples of the UN and governments providing the space for young people to participate in and take leadership of decision making that affects our lives. We congratulate the Ghanaian and Finnish governments for including young delegates this year and encourage Member States to include young members in the years to come.

Many governments here are, understandably, very concerned about the economic impacts of migration. However, migration is not only an economic issue but also a youth and human rights issue. Young people, aged 15 24, make up the largest proportion of migrants worldwide and one third to one half of all migrants are between the ages of 20 and 29. To empower young migrants, governments must ensure their access to quality education and decent work so that they can exercise their rights and realize their full potential.

Many young migrants face an increased risk of violence and discrimination in their country of destination due to their sex, ethnicity, HIV status, and sexual orientation or gender identity. Sadly, these same factors are often times the cause of their migration. Every individual has fundamental rights. This is affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights should not be violated simply because a person chooses or is forced to change location.

The right to health is one of the most basic human rights. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are of critical importance to young migrants. In many countries, however, young migrants are unable or afraid to access sexual and reproductive health services for fear of facing discrimination, detention or deportation due to their migration status. This lack of access is directly linked to poverty, poor health, and social inequality. Protecting these rights will enable and empower young migrants to make informed decisions about their bodies and lives.

Migrant girls and young women are more likely to experience recurring incidents of sexual violence and abuse than their non migrant peers. Without access to health services and social protections, they are placed at increased risk of violence, sexually transmitted infections,

unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion. This exacerbates their already difficult situation. You can change this.

This is an important week for our future. In the coming years, millions of young people will cross borders both voluntarily and involuntarily, in search of safety, better opportunities, or to escape persecution.

We therefore urge governments to recognize young migrants and respect, protect and fulfill their rights and take action by:

- Meaningfully engaging young migrants, especially girls, at every decision making level.