DECLARATION FOR WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL RIGHTS AND HEALTH

Issued by the Reproductive Rights caucus at the NGO Forum and the 39th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, New York, USA, March-April 1995 The signatories to this Declaration demand that governments ensure access of all women, regardless of age, marital status, race, ethnicity, religion, economic status, ability, and sexual orientation, to:

- comprehensive factual information and non-directive confidential counseling regarding all aspects of reproductive and sexual health and services;
- comprehensive, unbiased sexual education;
- confidential, accessible and affordable quality reproductive and sexual health services;
- the full range of safe and effective methods of fertility regulation, including voluntary sterilization, prevention of and treatment for infertility, emergency contraceptive methods and safe, legal abortion;
- comprehensive information and education on STDs/HIV/AIDS prevention and quality, affordable condoms;
- compassionate counselling and treatment for HIV/AIDS and other sexual and reproductive conditions that incorporate dignity and respect for women's reproductive self determination;

 funding for and gender balance in all aspects of biomedical, behavioral, epidemiological and health research regarding women's health.

Governments must condemn and eradicate any and all coercive laws, policies and practices regarding sexual and reproductive rights and health, including: forced sterilization; forced abortion; forced motherhood; forced pregnancy; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; rape; sexual violence; virginity examinations; forced contraceptive use; and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

To ensure compliance with these demands, governments should mobilize resources for women's health, which is defined by the World Health Organization as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Women must be involved at all levels of the decision-making processes. Therefore, governments must ensure women's involvement on a equal basis at all levels of research and policy design, implementation, and evaluation. Evaluations must be based on specific goals and time-frames."