



January 23, 2009

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

The undersigned organizations working to promote women's sexual and reproductive health and rights write to express deep gratitude for your repeal of the Global Gag Rule. We thank you for ending this restrictive policy, which has contributed to the deaths and injuries of countless women and girls and undermined the democratic participation of non-governmental organizations in many countries.

From our daily work with those most affected, we know that your action will have profound positive effects on the lives of millions of people. We are hopeful that it heralds a new era of U.S. partnership in global cooperation to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and the advancement of women's sexual and reproductive rights worldwide.

Historically, the United States has played a pivotal role in improving the sexual and reproductive health of vulnerable women in the developing world, including as a leading funder of international family planning, HIV/AIDS, and other sexual and reproductive health programs. In earlier years, policy leadership from the United States was critical in achieving landmark agreements at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. At both conferences, U.S. delegations led efforts to forge global consensus on strategies to assure individuals' and couples' rights to attain the highest standard of reproductive and sexual health and to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, free of discrimination, coercion and violence, including through access to safe abortion, where legal. After eight years of U.S. policies that undermined these and other commitments by the United States and many other countries, we are now at a moment to move forward once again.

The need for action is greater than ever. Worldwide, poor reproductive health remains the leading cause of death and illness for women of reproductive age, particularly in the most impoverished countries. More than half a million women die from pregnancy or childbirth complications each year. At least 200 million women lack access to family planning and contraceptive information and services, contributing to more than 40 million pregnancies that are terminated every year, half of them unsafely. Complications from unsafe abortion result in approximately 67,000 deaths and at least 5 million serious injuries annually, all of which are preventable. New cases of HIV continue to outpace the number of people placed on treatment,

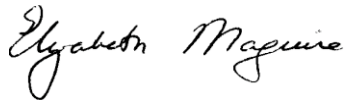
with insufficient attention to preventive measures, including greater access to basic sexual and reproductive health information and services, especially for young people.

Sound public health investments by the United States and other governments in sexual and reproductive health and rights can help women exert more control over their own lives and overcome these and other health challenges, which are likely to grow more acute in the midst of an unprecedented global economic crisis. We hope that your Administration will honor America's human rights obligations and strongly support the achievement of our global health commitments, including the Millennium Development Goal to halve maternal mortality by 2015, which includes a target for achieving universal access to reproductive health care. We specifically call on you to:

- significantly increase U.S. funding for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health, including family planning and maternal health
- support integration of HIV/AIDS and other sexual and reproductive health programs and removal of the anti-prostitution pledge in PEPFAR
- support removal of remaining legal and policy restrictions on U.S. funding for safe, voluntary, legal abortion information and services, including the Helms Amendment
- restore funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and
- ensure that officials from your Administration act as a strong voice for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in the United Nations and other international arenas and do all in their power to translate international agreements into actions that improve women's lives.

Your administration holds great promise for the health and lives of women and for the future of families and communities everywhere. We thank you again for removing the Global Gag Rule and stand ready to support and assist you in achieving our common goal of ensuring that all women can enjoy the sexual and reproductive rights they need to live happy, healthy, productive lives.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Maguire, President
Ipas



Nancy Northup, President
Center for Reproductive Rights

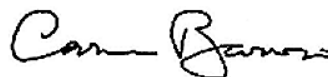


Ann Starrs, President

Family Care International



Dr. Gill Greer, Director-General
International Planned Parenthood
Federation



Dr. Carmen Barroso, Regional Director
International Planned Parenthood
Federation Western Hemisphere Region

Joined by:

Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada/Coalition pour le droit à l'avortement au Canada, Canada

Асоцијација за здравствена едукација и истражување (ХЕРА)/Health Education and Research Association (HERA), Macedonia

Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD)/Action Canada pour la population et le développement, Canada

Action Research and Training for Health, India

Advocates for Youth, USA

African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Africa

Aim for Human Rights, The Netherlands

Alternative Espaces Citoyens, France

Amanitare, Africa

American Civil Liberties Union, USA

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, USA

American Jewish World Service, USA

American Medical Student Association, USA

American Women's Fund, USA

Amnesty International, Global

El Area Salud, Economía y Sociedad del CEDES/Health, Economy and Society Department of CEDES, Argentina

Asia Safe Abortion Partnership, Asia

Asociación Apoyo a la Nueva Familia (ANFAM), Nicaragua

Asociación Argentina de Sexología y Educación Sexual (Filial Tucuman) (AASES)/Argentinian

Association of Sexology and Sexual Education (Tucuman Group), Argentina

Asociación de Mujeres por el Desarrollo Profesional (AMPDI), Nicaragua

Asociación de Mujeres Positivas de Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Associação para o Planeamento da Família (APF)/Portuguese Family Planning Association, Portugal

Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Global

Association Guinéenne bien etre Familial (AGBEF)/Planned Parenthood Association of Guinea, Guinea

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, USA

Associazione italiana donne per lo sviluppo (AIDOS)/Italian Association for Women in Development, Italy

ASTRA- Central and Eastern European Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Central and Eastern Europe

ATHENA Network, Global

Autonomni zenski centar/Autonomous Women's Center (AWC), Serbia

Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud AC/ Development Promotion and Youth, México

Balochistan Foundation for Development, Pakistan

Bangladesh Adolescent Girls Rights Forum (BKAF), Bangladesh

Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition, Bangladesh

BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Nigeria

Bill and Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA

Black Women's Health Imperative, USA

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canada

CASA Netherlands, The Netherlands

Catholics for Choice, USA

Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir (CDD)/Catholics for the Right to Decide, Nicaragua

Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir, AC/Catholics for the Right to Decide, México

Center for Creative Education, USA

Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), USA

Center for Inquiry Transnational, USA

Center for Inquiry, USA

Center for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities (CREHPA), Nepal

Centre for Social and Technological Change (CSTC), India

Center for Women Policy Studies, USA

Center for Women's Global Leadership, USA

Centro de Estudios y Promoción de la Salud (CEPS), Nicaragua

Centro de Investigación Epidemiológica en Salud Sexual y Reproductiva/Epidemiological Research

El Centro de la Mujer Peruana "Flora Tristan"/The Center for Peruvian Women "Flora Tristán", Perú

Center in Sexual and Reproductive Health, Guatemala

Centro las Libres de Información en Salud Sexual Región Centro/"Las Libres" Center for Information in Sexual Health, Mexico

Children and Youth in Broadcasting (CYIB), Ghana

Choice USA, USA

The Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program (CLPP), Hampshire College, USA

El Closet de Sor Juana/Sister Juana's Closet, Mexico

Colectiva de Mujeres de Masaya, Nicaragua

Colectiva por el Derecho a Decidir/Collective for the Right to Decide, Costa Rica

Colectivo de Mujeres 8 de Marzo, Nicaragua

Colectivo El Torito AC/Little Bull Collective Civil Association, México

Colectivo Feminista Mujeres Universitarias (COFEMUN)/ Feminist Collective of University Women, Honduras

Comité de Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos de la Federación Latinoamericana de Sociedades de Obstetricia y Ginecología Sexual and Reproductive Rights/Sexual and Reproductive Rights Committee of the Latin American Federation of of Obstetrics and Gynecology Societies (FLASOG), Latin America

Commission on Citizenship and Reproduction (CCR), Brazil

Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP), USA

Consortio Latinoamericana contra el Aborto Inseguro (CLACAI)/Latin American Consortium Against Unsafe Abortion, Latin America

Consortio para el Diálogo Parlamentario y la Equidad/Consortium for Parliamentary Dialogue and Equality, Mexico

Convergencia de Mujeres, Honduras

Cotidiano Mujer, Uruguay

Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevoelkerung/German Foundation for World Population (DSW), Germany
Development Connections, USA
Equalinrights, The Netherlands
Equidad de Género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia/Gender Equity: Citizenship, Work and Family, Mexico
Equilibres & Populations, France
Espacio Espiral, Promoción Cultural Desarrollo Sustentable y Equidad/Espacio Espiral, Cultural Promotion, Sustainable Development and Equity, Mexico
European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, Belgium
Falia Editions Enfance, Senegal
Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia, Ethiopia
Family Health International, Pakistan
The Family Life Association of Swaziland, Swaziland
Family Planning & Welfare Northern Territory, Australia
Family Planning New South Wales, Australia
Family Planning Queensland, Australia
Family Planning Tasmania, Australia
Family Planning Victoria, Australia
Family Planning Western Australia Sexual Health Services, Australia
Faranani-Health Solutions, South Africa
Federación Argentina de Medicina General, Argentina
Federation for Women and Family Planning, Poland
Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecological Societies of India (FOGSI), India
Feminist Majority, USA
Femmes-Santé-Développement (FESADE)/Women-Health-Development, France
Filia die Frauenstiftung/Filia Women's Foundation, Germany
Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres, Nicaragua
Foundation PH Suisse/Partnerships in Health, Switzerland
Fundación Arcoiris/Rainbow Foundation, Mexico
Fundación ESAR, Colombia
Fundación Huésped, Argentina
Fundación Oriéntame, Colombia
Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM)/ Foundation for Studies and Research on Women, Argentina
Fundación Popol Na, Nicaragua
Fundación Puntos de Encuentro, Nicaragua
Gender-Centru/Gender-Center, Republic of Moldova
Girls' Power Initiative, Nigeria
Global AIDS Alliance, Global
Global Doctors for Choice, Global
Golden Mothers Vision International, Ghana
Groupe de Recherche sur les Femmes et les Lois au Senegal/Research Group on Women and Law in Senegal, Senegal

Grupo AXAYACATL, Nicaragua
Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida (GIRE)/Information Group on Reproductive Choice, Latin America
Grupo de Interés Español en Población, Desarrollo y Salud Reproductiva/Spanish Interest Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health, Spain
Grupo Feminista de León, Nicaragua
Health Psychology Research Center, Bulgaria
Healthy Teen Network, USA
HIV-säätiö / Aids-tukikeskus/HIV-foundation / the Finnish AIDS Council, Finland
Human Rights Watch, Global
Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (Hivos), The Netherlands
Ibis Reproductive Health, Global
Indus Resource Centre (IRC), Pakistan
Iniciativas Sanitarias de Uruguay, Uruguay
Initiatives for Sustainable Human Empowerment, Ghana
Institute for Reproductive and Family Health, Vietnam
Instituto Mulher e Atenção Integral à Saúde (IMAIS), Brazil
International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research (ICDDR), Bangladesh
International Centre for Reproductive Health and Sexual Rights (INCRESE), Nigeria
International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW), Namibia
International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW), Global
International Consortium for Medical Abortion, Global
International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Regional Office (IPPF-ARO), Africa region
International Planned Parenthood Federation Arab World Region (IPPF-AWR), Arab region
International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF-EN), Europe region
International Planned Parenthood Federation South Asia Regional Office (IPPF-SARO), South Asia region
International Women's Health Coalition, USA
Investigación en Salud y Demografía (INSAD)/ Research in Health and Demography, México
Irish Family Planning Association, Ireland
Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), Uganda
Jamaica Family Planning Association, Jamaica
Jóvenes en Acción/Youth in Action, Honduras
Jóvenes Feministas Universitarias, Honduras
Jovenes por la Elección y el Placer/Youth for Choice and Pleasure (JEYP), Argentina
Κυπριακός Σύνδεσμος Οικογενειακού Προγραμματισμού /Cyprus Family Planning Association, Cyprus
Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), Kenya
Kisumu Medical and Education Trust (K-MET), Kenya
Law Students for Reproductive Justice, USA
MADRE, Global
Marie Stopes International, Global
Marie Stopes Society, Pakistan

Masimanyane Women's Support Centre, South Africa
Medical Students for Choice (MSFC), USA
Mouvement Français pour le Planning Familial/French Family Planning Movement, France
Movimiento Comunal Nicaraguense, Nicaragua
Movimiento Contra el Abuso Sexual, Nicaragua
Movimiento por el Rescate del Sandinismo, Nicaragua
Mujer y Salud en Uruguay (MYSU)/Women and Health in Uruguay, Uruguay
Namibia Planned Parenthood Association
National Abortion Federation, USA and Canada
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, USA
National Council of Jewish Women, USA
National Council of Women's Organizations, USA
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, USA
National Network of Abortion Funds, USA
National Women's Health Network, USA
Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center, USA
Network for Justice and Democracy, Nigeria
Network of Zimbabwean Positive Women (NZPW+), Zimbabwe
Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, Nigeria
Norsk forening for seksuell og reprodutiv helse og rettigheter (NSRR)/Norwegian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Norway
Northwest Women's Law Center, USA
Nursing Students for Choice, USA
Open Society Policy Center, USA
Organization for Community Development, Pakistan
Our Bodies Ourselves, USA
OUT LGBT Wellbeing, South Africa
Partnership for Development Center, Moldova
Pathfinder International, Global
Philippine NGO Support Program, Inc. (PHANSuP), The Philippines
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health (PRCH), USA
PLANeS Schweizerische Stiftung für sexuelle und reproduktive Gesundheit/Swiss Foundation for Sexual and Reproductive Health, Switzerland
Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), Ghana
Planned Parenthood Federation of America, USA
Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, USA
Population Action International, USA
Population and Sustainability Network, UK
Population Connection, USA
Population Council Mexico, Mexico
Pro-Choice Public Education Project, USA
El Programa Feminista Centroamericano La Corriente, Nicaragua

Programa Universitario de Estudios de Género de la UNAM (PUEG-UNAM)/University Program in Gender Studies at the National University of Mexico, Mexico

Programme on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, University of the Free State, South Africa

Progressive Women's Movement, Ghana

Promoting Human Rights and Education in Bangladesh (PHREB), Bangladesh

PROMSEX, Peru

PSI, USA

PSI-Europe, The Netherlands

Puntos de Encuentro, Nicaragua

Qadin ve Muasir Dunya Merkezi/Center "Women and Modern World," Azerbaijan

Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, Honduras

Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y la Diáspora, Latin America

Red Lésbica Cattrachas, Honduras

Red por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos en México (DDESER)/Network for Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Mexico, Mexico

Red Uruguaya de Autonomías (RUDA), Uruguay

REDLAC, Honduras

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, USA

Reproductive Health Access Project, USA

Reproductive Health Matters, UK

Reproductive Health Training Center, Moldova

Rutgers Nisso Groep, The Netherlands

The Ryan Residency Training Program in Abortion and Family Planning and the Fellowship in Family Planning, USA

Safe Motherhood Network Federation, Nepal

Save our Women International, Ghana

School of Public Health, Maseno University, Kenya

Secular Coalition for America, USA

Seimos planavimo ir seksualines sveikatos asociacija/Family Planning and Sexual Health Association, Lithuania

Sensoa - Flemish Centre of Expertise on Sexual Health and HIV, Belgium

Sex & Samfund, The Danish Family Planning Association, Denmark

SEXADO, Argentina

Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia (SH&FPA), Australia

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT) in the Australian Capital Territory, Australia

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), USA

Sierra Club, USA

Slovene Philanthropy, Slovenia

The Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo, Egypt

Social Sectors Development Strategies (SSDS), USA

Sociedad Científica de Sexología y Educación Sexual de Colegio Medico/Scientific Society of Sexology and Education of Medical Society, Argentina

Sociedad Paraguaya de Estudios sobre Sexualidad Humana (SPESH)/Paraguayan Society of Human Sexuality Studies, Paraguay
Sociedad Nicaraguense de Ginecología y Obstetricia, Nicaragua
Sociedad Nicaraguense de Médicos Generales, Nicaragua
Society for Health Promotion Links, Bangladesh
Southwest Women's Law Center, USA
Stichting Marieke Bevelanderhuis/Foundation Marieke Bevelanderhuis, The Netherlands
Stowarzyszenie Wspolpracy Kobiet/Network of East-West Women (NEWW), Poland
Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU), Sweden
Tibetan Nuns Project, India
Traction Action Fund, USA
Traction, USA
Treatment Monitor, Health Systems Trust, South Africa
Umuada Igbo Nigeria/Daughters of Igbo land, Nigeria
Union de L'Action Feminine/The Union for Women's Action, Morocco
Union for Reform Judaism, USA
Väestöliitto, the Family Federation of Finland, Finland
Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) Moçambique, Mozambique
Women and Law in Southern Africa, Research and Educational Trust Malawi (WLSA), Malawi
Women of Color United (WOCU), USA
Women on Waves, The Netherlands
Women on Web, International
Women Thrive Worldwide, USA
Women's Economic Agenda Project, USA
Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), Global
Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE), Ghana
Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, Global
Women's Health Research Unit, School of Public Health & Family Medicine, University of Cape Town, South Africa
The Women's Organization Networking for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA), Uganda
The World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), Global
World Population Foundation, Global
Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Global