

Annual Discussion on the Integration of a Gender Perspective
September 24, 2018
Statement on behalf of Action Canada for Population and Development
Speaker: Meghan Doherty

Thank you Mr. President,

Action Canada makes this statement also on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative and AWID.

We welcome the panel's focus on integrating a gender perspective into the Council's human rights investigations. We particularly appreciate the panel's recognition that there has been insufficient attention to pre-existing gender-based rights violations that are exacerbated by conflict settings, as well as the need to ground understandings of gender-based violence in the lived realities of the people most affected.

We remind the Council that gender is not a synonym for women, nor are women and girls inherently vulnerable because of who they are. We object to the co-optation and instrumentalization of gender equality and women's rights as a means to further States' incompatible foreign policy objectives or to engage in pro forma exercises. We see how patriarchy and heteronormativity operate to minimize and homogenize the experiences of women, in all their diversity, into palatable and respectable discourses that challenges no one and nothing. This is not a bug, it's a feature.

States, UN Agencies, independent experts and civil society have a responsibility to deepen and broaden, rather than narrow, their analyses of gender and the underlying conditions that are designed to subjugate women and all marginalized persons.

Resolution 6/30 exists for a reason. It was adopted to serve as a constant reminder that we must not fall into this trap of limiting analysis about gender and human rights, including in the Council's methods of work. From administrative procedures regarding the delivery of statements, to the terms of references of Commissions of Inquiries, the Council must fulfill its duty to create the conditions for meaningful accountability and rich gender analysis for human rights violations.

I thank you