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## FINAL DECLARATION

### MY BODY, MY RIGHTS: TOGETHER WE CALL FOR UNIVERSAL MATERNAL HEALTH

NEW YORK, 4 MARCH

The International Community needs to seize the opportunity of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) to bring back the issue of sexual and reproductive health rights on the global agenda and ensure the achievement of the objectives and goals set out in 1995 BPA and at the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September 1994) remain the basic rights and values for all women throughout the world.

To mark the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action PES Women, ECOSY, the Global Progressive Forum and the Global Progressive Youth Forum have decided to dedicate 2010 to the overarching theme of sexual and reproductive health rights under the umbrella slogan '**My Body, My Rights**' with three windows of action; a call for **universal maternal health** in the context of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, a recommendation to the European Commission in support of the Spanish Presidency in introducing specific measures on **combating violence against women** and a mobilisation on **World AIDS Day**.

**Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, including maternal health** - as one of the MDGs to be reached by 2015 – go beyond the health issue only. They are basic human rights and **contribute towards women's empowerment in the fields of social, economic and financial development**; all the more within the framework of the economic crisis. Giving and securing women's rights, choice and access to information, sexual education for girls and boys, medical assistance, medical infrastructure, as well as prevention and contraception methods, such as female condoms and emergency contraception, and counseling tools leads to a progressive development of women's status in the society as a whole and ensures their personal and social wellbeing position.

Therefore we **call on all governments to strengthen their efforts concerning maternal health** in order to ensure the above-mentioned progress. We also encourage the inclusion of paternal leave measures as part of these efforts to give women and men better and equal opportunities in taking childcare responsibilities from an early age.

According to the recent United Nations figures, 536 000 women and girls still die every year as a result of complications during pregnancy, childbirth or six weeks following delivery. An estimated 68,000 women annually die as a result of unsafe abortions. The majority in developing countries as a result of medical problems which are largely preventable and treatable if the assistance, tools and infrastructure exist and are accessible and affordable. Moreover, in developed regions there are 9 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births compared to 450 maternal deaths in developing regions, where 14 countries have maternal mortality rates of at least 1,000 per 100,000 live births. We cannot accept such figures in the twenty first century.

The launch of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 was the result of social democratic and progressive movements advocating a global women's rights agenda since 1975. In evaluating the





progress after fifteen years, we seriously fall behind the achievement of commitments and objectives made in the Beijing Platform for Action in Europe and around the world. We are even witnessing a backlash, especially with respect to a range of women's health rights and sexual rights. Moreover, the current global governmental investment towards Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should be one of agenda priorities in order to reach the targets by 2015. Several of the MDGs targets contribute directly to improving women's rights and enhancing gender equality, including maternal health. Moreover, the forthcoming UN Gender Entity Structure should put Sexual and Reproductive Rights as a key priority of its working programme.

We will continue campaigning under the motto of **My Body, My Rights** in **combating violence** against women based on the current European Presidency proposals and in raising awareness regarding the issue of **women and AIDS**, as HIV is globally still the leading cause of death and disease of women of reproductive age. We will not allow fundamental values and rights to be put into question due to the consequences of the economic crisis.

