



Geneva, 13 May 2019

**Geneva**

*Ambassador  
Veronika Bard*

Excellency,

I have the honor to refer to the upcoming Seventy-Second Session of the World Health Assembly, to be held in Geneva, from 20-28 May 2019. During this session, the discussion on Universal Health Coverage will be important (UHC), as its outcome will inform the preparatory process of the UHC UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting, to be held on 23 September 2019, in New York. Given the current international environment surrounding the gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda, our delegation believes it important to unite all governments attached to protect it, in the context of the UHC discussions.

As you may be aware, the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Guinea, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom are working closely together to defend this agenda at the UN, through the intergovernmental Nexus Initiative. It is on behalf of the co-leads of this initiative, - the Governments of the Netherlands and Philippines - that I am writing to seek sponsorship from your Government for this joint statement, along with that of the abovementioned countries.

I am confident that with the long-standing commitment of your Government to gender equality, SRHR and UHC, the endorsement of this joint statement will help broaden political support and momentum for this critical agenda in these difficult times. The statement is expected to be delivered in conjunction with the WHA agenda item on UHC.

I would be most grateful if you could kindly **indicate in an email to Mr. David Lawson (dlawson@nexus-secretariat.org)**, who is assisting our Mission with this effort, whether your Government can support this statement. We are particularly targeting those countries that supported the joint statement at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development this year, but we are of course open to other countries that your delegation may rally.

I look forward to your sponsorship of this joint statement.

I thank you for your consideration and support.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

*Veronika Bard*  
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