





We the undersigned organizations and individuals from across the world come together in this letter to emphasize our shared belief that to achieve justice, equality and liberation, we must combat and dismantle the patriarchal systems of power which continue to oppress and exclude many of us. We affirm some key feminist principles and their alignment with issues pertaining to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics. We reinforce and defend the place that trans, intersex and nonbinary people have alongside many others in feminist movements. We underscore the recognition that human rights do not distinguish between persons, they are, in their construction, universal, indivisible and inalienable. We affirm that the realization of the human rights of any one group of persons does not come at the cost of the rights of any others. These shared principles and values have united diverse feminist movements everywhere.

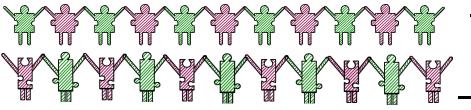
Many of us live in a world that is firmly based on the Western binary construction of gender and sex, which, along with heteronormativity, leads to the systemic oppression and structural discrimination of women and anyone who does not, or cannot, conform, and therefore poses a threat to the patriarchy.

Our shared struggle is premised on the knowledge that these social constructs uphold unjust power structures, like other categories of identity, such as race, class and caste. The harmful impact of discrimination based on gender, sex, sexuality and other aspects of identity has real consequences for oppressed groups and persons. International human rights precedents, numerous regional and UN human rights mechanisms including treaty bodies, experts, and jurists, have abundantly recognized gender as a social construct. The idea that we are born with specific, immutable traits by virtue of our 'sex' has been rejected with the recognition that socially constructed harmful stereotypes, gender roles and norms lead to overall gender inequality.

Many feminists have chosen, historically, to stand for the rights of all those who transgress the boundaries of gender, sex and sexuality, because we understand that our liberation is fundamentally and intrinsically joined together. Feminist human and social rights movements have to stand united against threats to democracy and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles of human rights, social justice and equality.

Our feminism analyzes power by recognizing that there is no homogeneity in our experiences of gender, sex and sexuality, and that diverse people experience varying levels of discrimination, oppression and privilege. We commit to continuously learning and deepening our understanding of intersectionality, feminism, and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and nonbinary people and unlearning internalized patterns of sexism, racism and colonialism.

We believe strongly that gender equality will not be achieved without the realization of the human rights of all trans, intersex and nonbinary people.



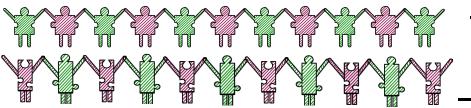
2.

#### Reaffirming some key feminist principles:

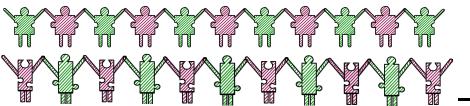
1. Universality of human rights, non-discrimination and freedom from violence:

Human rights are inherent to every person, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics. All individuals have the right to realize and exercise their inalienable rights and freedoms, and no individual or institution has the right to infringe upon the fundamental human rights of another. The realization of the human rights of any one group of persons does not come at the cost of the rights of any others.

- **2. Bodily autonomy**, **integrity**, **agency and the right to identity**: Every person has the right and the ability to make decisions about their own lives, bodies, futures, and the environments in which they live and work. Every person has the right to free, prior and informed consent when making these decisions, **especially** when it is related to their health and wellbeing. This means recognizing:
- a. Sex work as work;
- b. Safe, accessible, and legal abortion is a human right, and every person should have autonomy in their reproductive decision-making;
- c. Intersex people and trans people should themselves be the decision-makers when it comes to their bodies and lives;
- d. The right to identity extends to self-determine one's gender identity without interference including the freedom to self determine one's legal gender;
- e. The right of persons to choose their partners;
- f. The right to reject change efforts of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics and the right to live a life of dignity and without fear; and that
- g. Adolescents' human rights and dignity must be grounded in respecting their evolving capacity to make informed and independent decisions on matters concerning their bodily autonomy, sexuality, pleasure and fundamental freedoms.
- **3. Freedom from torture, ill-treatment and medical abuse:** We reject the colonial, patriarchal, medicalisation of certain bodies and of certain groups of people. We reject the need to 'fix' bodies and minds which are atypical, as well as the need to 'treat' those who do not conform to binary constructions of identity and expression. We remain deeply critical of the social discomfort with difference, and of attempts to erase difference. This means:



- a. Intersex infants, children and adults should never be subjected to medically unecessary surgeries or interventions, without their full and informed consent
- b. Gender affirming interventions, services, or needs, should not be withheld from trans people.
- c. Inclusive, compassionate healthcare should be universally accessible, acceptable, easily available, and free, as it is a human right, not a commodity or a privilege.
- **4. Rights of the child:** All children have the right to be free from all forms of violence, injury or abuse, to understand their rights, and have their rights to dignity, well-being, health, and development ensured. This recognizes that:
- a. Intersex children should be free from coerced, non-consensual surgeries and invasive treatments.
- b. LGBTIQ children and youth have the right to be free from facing social stigma, discrimination, and abuse including in education, healthcare, and family settings, among others.
- c. LGBTIQ children have a right to the recognition of their sexual orientation and gender identity, and have access to non-discriminatory and sensitised services and support.
- d. All children should have access to gender transformative comprehensive sexuality education in schools that embraces the diversity of human identity, sexualities, and the social construct of gender is non-discriminatory, rights based and feminist:
- e. Children that are born into or grow up in LGBTI families have the right to have their family legally, socially and otherwise recognised.
- 5. Sex, gender and sexuality are social constructs: Feminists have established that gender, sex and sexuality are constructed categories of identity, like other categories such as race, class and caste used to uphold and maintain power imbalances and perpetuate systems of oppression. The idea that we are born with specific, immutable traits by virtue of our sex has been rejected with the recognition that socially constructed harmful stereotypes, gender roles and norms lead to overall gender inequality.

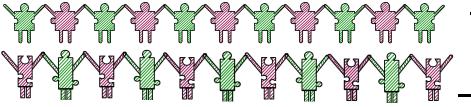


We take a firm and unwavering stand against any forms of discrimination, violence, dehumanising treatment, and the delegitimization of trans, gender-diverse and intersex people.

- **6. Intersectionality**: Individuals and groups face varying degrees of discrimination or disadvantages due to intersecting structures of oppression, based on where they are situated within interconnected categories of social classification such as race, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, and other statuses. Individuals are also bearers of privilege and power accordingly. It is imperative that we draw attention to and acknowledge this dynamic to ensure that we do not essentialize any group nor perpetuate binary notions in social categorizations. We recognize that there is no common human experience, including in the experience of gender.
- 7. Self-determination and liberation in and on all territories, of all bodies, collectives, institutions, societies, economics and ecology: Anti-colonial feminists have long since rejected the historical, and in some cases ongoing, colonial occupation of our territories and our bodies. All peoples have the right to determine their own futures and partake in political, social, cultural and economic decision-making within and outside their communities. We challenge racist, patriarchal, cis-heteronormative systems of power that, throughout history, have eradicated and invisibilized indigenous and diverse understandings of sexualities, genders and gender expressions. We reject colonial attempts to pathologize certain bodies and certain groups.
- **8. Challenging unjust power structures:** Feminist power analyses go beyond binaries; it is not about 'men' vs 'women', young vs old, global South vs global North, etc. This includes an ongoing feminist critique of the law, including international human rights law, which requires challenging concepts and ideas which are based on colonial thinking, patriarchy, racism, ableism and heteronormativity.

Feminist power analyses rests on identifying and challenging all unjust power structures and systems of oppression, including in ourselves and in our own movements.

None of us are free until all of us are free.



'The affirmation of feminist principles' has been drafted through a rigorous, collaborative process jointly by feminist women's and human rights organizations, and LGBTIQ+ and trans-led organizations. The initiators of this statement include:

- Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN)
- Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
- COC Netherlands
- CREA
- Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality
- GATE
- Global Network of Sex Work Projects
- ILGA World
- International Planned Partenthood Federation (IPPF)
- L'Associacio Drets Sexuals I Reproductius
- Outright Action International
- RFSL The Swedish Federation for LGBTQI Rights
- RESURJ
- Transgender Europe (TGEU)
- Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
- Women Deliver
- Women Engage for a Common Future

The statement is an attempt to reaffirm what we believe are core feminist principles and to amplify the positions that many feminists have historically chosen to take in relation to understanding gender, sex and sexuality. We invite both individuals and organizations to sign-on to this statement, and share it widely with your networks.

