



Human Rights Council - 36th Session

Item 6 UPR Report adoption – Philippines

Center for Reproductive Rights

Speaker: Ana Maria Nemenzo

Thank you Mr. President,

The Center for Reproductive Rights, Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, and Philippine Safe Abortion Advocacy Network are concerned that the Philippines has not accepted the recommendations to allow abortion even in limited circumstances.

We urge the Philippines to end the continued criminalization of abortion. We are concerned that a law was enacted last month increasing the fine a hundredfold for pharmacists who dispense abortifacients without prescription. We urge the Philippines to take immediate steps to address the increasing number of abortions, complications, injuries, and maternal deaths resulting from unsafe abortions. Most recent estimates show that approximately 610,000 abortions are performed in the Philippines with 100,000 women and girls suffering complications and 1,000 women and girls dying in a year.

We urge the Philippines to address the restrictions on accessing contraceptive information and services including emergency contraceptives and the limitations put in place by its national reproductive health law. Currently, minors are not allowed to access contraceptive services without parental consent and dedicated emergency contraceptives remain unavailable even for survivors of sexual violence. In particular, we urge the Philippines to take positive steps to ensure the immediate certification and recertification of contraceptives and make them available and accessible to the 7.3 million women with unmet need for modern contraceptives.

We reiterate the recommendations expressed by different UN treaty monitoring bodies to ensure access of women and girls to quality reproductive health services. In particular, we urge the Philippines to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women based on a finding of grave and systematic human rights violations in a special inquiry conducted in 2012. We likewise urge the Philippines to implement the recommendations of its national Commission on Human Rights on improving access to reproductive health and rights resulting from a national inquiry in 2016.

Thank you.