

Human Rights Council- 38th Session
Statement- Botswana UPR report
Action Canada for Population and Development
28 June 2018

Thank you, Mr. President. We make this statement also on behalf of The Botswana Group for Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women, the Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL) and the Sexual Rights Initiative.

We welcome Botswana's invitation to the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and for agreeing to standing invitations for UN special procedures, but remain concerned by its unwillingness to put in place guarantees for civil society participation and space. We hope the government's commitment to implement CEDAW and CAT will be extended also to accede and domesticate other international treaties.

We are also encouraged that Botswana will not further restrict access to safe and legal abortion. Botswana's continued denial of the right to safe and legal abortion, lack of recognition of sex-work as work, as well as rights relating to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression undermine its commitment to the right to health for all and combating gender based violence and discrimination. The intersecting nature of various oppressions necessitates a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and we urge the government to consider this.

In keeping with its acceptance of the recommendation to "Further consolidate its social and human rights policies, particularly in the area of economic, social and cultural rights in order to improve the quality of life, particularly of the most vulnerable groups of its population", we call on the government of Botswana to:

- Accept the recommendation to adopt legislation to protect victims of violence and other human rights violations, in line with resolution 275 of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Thereby protecting and promoting bodily autonomy and protecting LBQ women from violence.
- Incorporate in domestic law the international conventions ratified by Botswana, such as CEDAW, to guarantee the rights of all women, including LBQ women, to live free from discrimination.

Thank you.