



High-Level Political Forum 2018

23rd meeting: Voluntary national reviews (Individual: Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain) Voluntary National Review of Poland, July 18th

Statements prepared by Women's Major Group

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Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to speak. We note the efforts of Poland undergoing the Voluntary National Review Process.

We would like to point out that in its Polish version of the VNR Poland chose to "reinterpret" the 3.7 target of SDG 3 and target 5.6 of SDG 5 by referring to "procreative" instead of reproductive health and rights and thus undermining women's bodily autonomy and rights. This is clearly lack of alignment to the internationally agreed language.

Additionally, we welcome the Polish government's acknowledgement of the hurdles Polish cities are encountering in the face of shifting demographics, reactions to urban growth, and concerns with environmental issues. Poland has one of the worst air qualities in the region and breaches European standards. Stronger response from the government is urged in order to prevent deaths caused by illnesses related to air pollution.

Finally, Poland's unique and rich ecosystem needs to be preserved and protected. In terms of forest cover, Poland is at the forefront of Europe, however in recent years Poland began logging in the UNESCO-protected Białowieża forest, one of Europe's last parcels of primeval woodland, sparking civil protests and international debate. We expect stronger commitment from Poland to protecting its environment.

All these issues were raised by civil society gathered at the High Level Political Forum through a participatory, inclusive and transparent system in which NGOs, youth groups and trade unions were consulted. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.