



Statement by the Government of Canada

Delivered by Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of International Development

**On the occasion of the 2023 SDG Summit
*High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the 78th
United Nations General Assembly***

Accelerating SDG Commitments: 1.8 Billion Adolescents and Youth Transforming our World

**19 September 2023
New York**

Bonjour.

Good afternoon everyone.

Thank you, Minister Enrique Reina for convening this dialogue.

And of course, thank you to the youth leaders here today, sharing your ideas and calls to action.

It's an honour to be here for this important discussion.

In a world where young people represent the future, it's imperative that we invest in their well-being, amplify their voices, and work together to deliver on our Sustainable Development Goals.

Unfortunately, the needs and voices of our adolescents and our youth...especially girls...have often been overlooked.

But let me be clear: they must be at the forefront of everything we do if we want to achieve real meaningful progress.

They must be at the center of decision-making that affects their bodies, their lives and their future.

They must have a seat at the table.

I'm here today to tell you that this is a priority for Canada.

In fact, attention to the needs of adolescent girls is at the very core of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy.

Through our historic 10-Year Commitment to Global Health and Rights:

Starting this year - Canada is championing the rights of women and girls around the world by providing an average of \$1.4 billion a year.

And with \$700 million of this dedicated to sexual and reproductive health and rights ... we are making adolescent S-R-H-R a priority.

And we are working towards a future where every adolescent and young person understands their bodies and their rights.

A world where our youth are valued and empowered.

One where they participate in decisions that affect them in their homes and their communities.

One where they contribute to ... and benefit from ... development and prosperity.

That's the world I know we strive to create.

I call on all of us here today to invest in adolescents and young people ... especially girls ... and ensure their voices and needs are at the center of our collective efforts.

By doing so, we invest not only in their future, but in the future of our world.

Thank you. Merci.