

Agenda Item: Anti-Racism Program of Action - Public Statement

Summary:

Further to the Anti-Racism Programme of Action (endorsed December 2021), a key recommendation was for the Federation to make a public statement. The Board decided to progress its own reflection and internal work, launch the statement, and use the opportunity provided by the General Assembly to energise Federation-wide work. Many of the recommendations in the management response are in progress. This public statement is now ready for approval.

Action Required:

The Board of Trustees to approve the statement. The statement will be shared prior to the GA to precipitate further dialogue on responding to colonial legacies and power imbalances.

Introduction:

The Public Statement is a pivotal piece of work agreed to in the Anti-Racism Programme of Action (PoA) journey. It sets a clear launch pad for member associations (MAs) individually and collectively to embark on a pathway that will be realised through the strategy. It signals a public commitment to our service users, staff, MA's, partners and the public of our intolerance of racism and commitment to eradicating it from our organisation; rather operating from a culture of respect, belonging and inclusion.

The December 2021 Board Meeting of the BoT decided that the Statement of Public Recognition would be delivered at the 2022 General Assembly. We now suggest issuing it before the General Assembly, circulating it to participants and using it as a starting point for further action.

Two years ago, many international development organisations made public commitments to tackle racism within their organisations. These included the likes of ActionAid and Amnesty International. At the time, the IPPF Board and Secretariat were of the opinion that they needed to '*Walk the talk*' and do the internal work to get to a place where we had made some progress on our own PoA.

The attached statement recognises that a broader developmental agenda feeding into global debates around decolonisation and decoloniality is needed. The GA provides the ideal platform to have the open and honest dialogues with

MA's to reflect on IPPF's work to date but to share some of our own struggles that we encounter in the sector.

The statement has been through a process of consultation with the Extended Working Group of the secretariat, the BoT sub-committee as well as an MA Working group.

The process of the statement development included the following steps:

- Development of a task team comprising 10 Member Associations, the BoT subcommittee and the expanded anti-racism working group of the secretariat.
- A call for MA participation was sent out through the MA Forum and 10 Member associations volunteered.
- The statement was developed through a series of meetings, with the task team including multiple drafts for comment.
- The draft was shared through the MA Forum with all Members and we received limited but intense feedback from a few MAs (some of them showcased below).

Dialogue at the General Assembly:

The anticipated running order for the one hour GA session on Anti-Racism is for the statement to be distributed as part of the pack, summarised at the start of the plenary and followed by a federation wide discussion / dialogue with the Anti-Racism BoT Sub-Committee Chair, Bience Gawanas, facilitated by Dona da Costa Martinez, and two MA representatives - Kalpana Apte (FPAI) and New Zealand (TBC) which would / could focus on

'What does a decolonised, anti-racist IPPF look like – The next 70 years – practical steps for us to work towards this'.

This discussion will focus on unpacking some of the following including:

- Colonial legacies within IPPF and how MAs progress on the Anti-Racism journey.
- Unpacking IPPF's history and discussing the future scenario of a decolonised and anti-racist IPPF.
- Understanding power imbalances and decision-making power at IPPF

The statement sets the tone for IPPF to make a public commitment to transforming the Federation into an anti-racist organisation. It's a step in the direction of engaging MA's through a process of dialogue at the GA to inspire support and engagement of the anti-racism agenda.

Action Required:

- The Board to approve the statement and discuss the proposed General Assembly session.

Feedback from MA's

Some feedback included below:

"Diversity is a term everyone knows nowadays. However, sometimes we find it as a term only. Therefore, this situation might end up in some racism activities. We can't deny diversity breeds differences. The ancestors had their own way to overcome it, including war, such as tribal war to the highest level of war, that we've been told that whoever fought for their race, religion, country, etc is a hero/heroes. Because of it, sometimes it's hard to know whether the situation is kind of racism or not. Those traumas still haunted us and make us confuse to be ourselves. For example, in my own country, sometimes we 'adore' white skin people and make it as one of those beauty standards. We obsessed to be white and forget 'how we should be'. That simple thing people barely realise it. Or else, we use jokes to cover our racism behaviour. And when someone stand for themselves, because their pride got hurt by those jokes, we call them 'too excessive'.

Racism breeds so much negative things and impacts, even it could take portion to decide which one is 'correct' and which one is 'false'. Worse yet, racism indirectly breeds fanaticism. And unfortunately, we can see it around us, instead of do something or take an action to reject it, we just keep silent, as if it never happened or we even justify it. And it's a public secret that some of leaders in this world perpetuate racism on behalf of 'protecting their country/region'.

Thank you IPPF for reminding us about the danger of racism and keep providing us some ways to prevent and against racism, both from internal and external. Hopefully, we all keep progressing to prevent and against racism in non-racism ways."

Magdalena Nadya

"I am sure each of us encounters racism at some point in our lives. As racism is a barrier to development, we have to learn to manage it or embrace it in order to live the life we want to live. Growing up in Tonga, South Pacific, in an elitist, hierarchical society, 'racism' exists more on class positioning, culturally structured lines. This draft statement, alerts us, to 'racism' issues when delivering our health care services to those in need."

Akanete Taái Lauti

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

DRAFT General Assembly Public Statement of Anti-Racism

In May 2020, IPPF commissioned an internal Secretariat anti-racism review.

The push for the review came not only from within the organisation but from global events that prompted us to rethink our own path. Challenged internally by staff and a growing anti-racism movement, that followed the tragic murder of George Floyd our aim was to understand and address the double impact of racism and our legacy that was shaped by colonialism.

The result is a sobering reflection of how our history was shaping our present. The review revealed the presence of interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism at the IPPF Secretariat.

The IPPF Secretariat has allowed institutional and individual racism to prevail in how we have navigated spaces whose histories have either been stolen, silenced, subdued, subjugated, side-lined, and even rewritten.

As we commemorate our 70th birthday this year we acknowledge that our past is a complex one. Launched in India, by three women with three different legacies, IPPF has championed women's rights during tough times, but acknowledges the racist ideology of past leadership, including Margaret Sanger. IPPF stood by those whose sexualities have been marginalised by right-wing governments and supported those whose identities were being repressed, and they did not have control of their sexual and reproductive health rights. However, IPPF did not equally stand in support of those harmed by colonisation and racism.

As an institution, **we hereby formally apologise to all clients, staff, volunteers and supporters, past and present**, and any individuals who may have been affected by any manifestation of racism and that might have suffered in silence as they felt powerless to speak out. We sincerely acknowledge and accept full responsibility for our organisation's actions and inaction.

But we know these are just words and in order for us to truly repair and rebuild, we must put these words into meaningful action. And as a Board and as Director-General, we take personal responsibility in ensuring that IPPF becomes an anti-racism organisation'.

At IPPF we also acknowledge that our past colonial relationships have played a part in shaping the secretariat's relationship with member associations, and member associations with each other. In this regard we will work to course correct on this and find a more equitable relationship in our future interactions.

We strongly oppose racism in all its forms. In this regard, we have taken our first steps in ensuring that the IPPF Secretariat operates within a framework built on equity, diversity and inclusion. IPPF recognises the need to reflect more broadly, across the Federation and move with expediency to dismantle and eradicate racism in all its existing forms. We need to install a framework that affirms the universality

and inalienability of human rights, recognising that racism violates human rights. These are the values that we aspire to, values that afford all our members and staff dignity and belonging, while holding IPPF accountable.

The time to unlearn, listen, re-listen and learn anew is now. There is no time to lose, as the world is facing a right-wing uprising and the new lines are being drawn. The notions of equity, diversity, inclusion, access, freedom of choice and bodily autonomy are increasingly being tested by the rising tide of religious and right-wing extremism, disinformation, undemocratic forces and racist ideologies.

In the way we work, we want to better reflect how discrimination based on gender and sexuality intersects with race, ethnicity, religion, and caste in a geographically diverse global federation such as ours.

We are revisiting our structures at the Secretariat and actively working to dismantle any racist and discriminatory practices including dedicating resources to ensure global diversity.

We will rewrite policies and consider how racism is dismantled, along with its interplay with intersectionalities. Task forces, training sessions, and forums will be convened with the aim of ensuring that all our systems, structures and safeguards reflect the anti-racist stance we are adopting. And to take this further – to continue our work to protect and fight for the rights of marginalised populations globally.

We need to make sure that racism does not continue to persist and is replaced by a culture of anti-racism in the federation. That colonialism is a story of the past and impacts on our present and has repercussions for our future.

We need to ***Come Together*** to reckon with our shared colonial past and use it to create more open and honest dialogue where we can address the persistent colonial legacies in our systems.

-ENDS-