

# Global Call to Action for Women's Access to Safe Abortion

on the occasion of the Global Safe Abortion Conference,  
London, 23-24 October 2007

We are women and men, young and old, professionals, elected officials, civil servants, researchers, students, and advocates committed to the health and human rights of women.

We sign this Global Call to Action to demand that women everywhere facing unwanted pregnancies be treated with respect and compassion and have **full access to legal, voluntary, safe, and affordable abortions** as part of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care.

## It is intolerable that:

- Millions of women continue to suffer severe injuries and trauma, and more than **66,000 die needlessly each year** from abortions that are procured unsafely from unskilled providers or self-induced, almost all in developing countries. Others are criminalised or imprisoned.
- Women throughout the developing world are often **denied the information and means to prevent unwanted pregnancy**; many also face sexual violence, often resulting in pregnancy, without adequate protection or treatment.
- The **contraceptive and abortion technologies to save women's lives have been well known for decades, yet these technologies are often not used** because of politically and ideologically-motivated interference; restrictive laws; inappropriate, inaccessible, and poor quality services; lack of resources; or other barriers.
- With few exceptions, donor and government programmes aimed at the Millennium Development Goal to improve maternal health **neglect the 13 per cent of maternal deaths caused by unsafe abortion globally** and fail to support the full range of preventive actions required.

## We call for a global safe abortion movement promoting the following goals:

- **Women's rights to contraception and safe abortion are protected and supported through reformed laws and policies at all levels.**
- **Governmental authorities and donors commit increased resources** to ensure that comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, including contraception and safe abortion services, is widely available through skilled providers in both public and private health systems.
- **Medical training institutions routinely provide training in abortion-related care** for physicians, nurses, midwives, and other healthcare workers.
- **Women and healthcare providers are informed about women's legal rights and reproductive options**, and know where contraception, safe abortions and other reproductive health care can be obtained.
- **Women in vulnerable circumstances have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care** that responds to their special needs - including young women and women who are poor, are refugees or displaced, or are survivors of sexual violence.

We will form new alliances with all who support these goals and the need for urgent action. We will hold accountable all those who by their words or actions stand in the way. The lives and health of millions of women are at stake. We will be heard, and we will act now.

[www.globalsafeabortion.org](http://www.globalsafeabortion.org)

