



50th session of the Human Rights Council

Point 3 – Panel discussion on menstrual hygiene management, human rights and gender equality

Statement by Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg

Geneva, the 21st of June 2022

Excellencies,

I deliver this statement on behalf of the BENELUX countries, Belgium, the Netherlands and my own country Luxembourg.

Every day, about 500 million persons – ten percent of the world's population – are menstruating. The stigmatisation of this natural biological process, which concerns half of humanity, is causing many of these persons harm and distress. We thank the panel for the interesting exchange on this crucial topic in the framework of human rights and gender equality.

Discrimination based on menstruation is all too often the cause behind the denial of the full enjoyment of human rights and the achievement of gender equality. Women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are particularly affected by this situation. The impact reverberates through the right to education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, safe and healthy working conditions, as well as non-discrimination.

The Benelux countries strongly condemn all forms of discrimination and exclusion. We are committed to achieving menstrual health for all through a multi-sectoral approach.

Menstrual hygiene management is a cornerstone to achieving this result and is intrinsically linked to access to infrastructure, clean water, sanitation facilities and sanitary products. Simply said: all persons who menstruate need access to the fundamental means guaranteeing menstrual health and hygiene. The Benelux countries also consider comprehensive sexuality education to be a key element in achieving this goal. Knowledge is an important tool in de-stigmatisation, while also giving the opportunity to persons who menstruate to make informed choices on this topic.

More and specific indicators in relation to menstrual health are needed to monitor the situation globally and reveal the numerous barriers that women and girls in all their diversity still face.

Esteemed panellists, which avenues would you recommend for States and stakeholders to pursue in view of destigmatising menstruation?



GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Représentation permanente auprès de
l'Office des Nations unies et des autres
organisations internationales à Genève

Thank you.