

Coalition for Adolescent Girls CSW Oral Statement

I am an adolescent girl and I address you today on behalf of the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, a network of over 40 civil society organizations working on behalf of girls like me.

I am an adolescent girl.

I stand in a gap. I am no longer a child but I am not yet a woman: my needs are unique.

I live in every village, every town, every city and every region of the world, although you may have to look hard to find me – I may be out of school, already married or working in someone's home with no ability to leave.

I have a voice but it is often not heard.

I have opinions but it is rare that I am asked to share them.

Ask me what it means to be an adolescent girl where I live.

When adolescent girls are safe, educated, healthy and empowered, we can create lasting change within our communities and end generations of poverty.

All forms of violence against adolescent girls reinforce overall ill health and diminish our ability to fully realize our rights, obtain a quality education, become an economically

Help us care for our health and you will improve the lives of the children we may choose to have in the future.

Involve our families, religious leaders, teachers, men, boys, women and girls in shifting the cultural norms from those that condone violence against adolescent girls to those that prevent and punish violence against us.