

Luxembourg, October 26, 2010

**Draft proposal for a statement on behalf of the EU Civil Society Forum on HIV/AIDS in Europe.**

**We want greater access to female condoms!**

**To prevent HIV, we need to use and promote all the evidence-based tools that we have at our disposal: clearly, a lot more can be done with regards to female condoms.**

Female condoms can give women greater choice and autonomy with regards to preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Female condoms can also be used as an alternative to regular condoms by men who have sex with men. Yet as of today, this important prevention tool remains largely inaccessible in Europe:

- Its cost is too expensive (often exceeding 3 euros per unit).
- Its distribution in Europe remains largely insufficient: Female condoms are very hard to find in many parts of Europe, whether in supermarkets, pharmacies, or via NGO-managed prevention programmes.
- Communications to the general public about its very existence has been very limited so far.

We therefore invite the institutions of the European Union as well as the EU member states to take the lead :

- in identifying and addressing potential regulatory and intellectual property issues that may contribute to the current low accessibility of female condoms.
- in promoting this prevention tool at the European and national level towards both the general public and specific groups who are most exposed to the risk of HIV contamination.
- in implementing specific research on the role played by female condoms as part of sexual health promotion programmes and the ways they can be further improved.

**References:**

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