We made promises which we intend to keep. We promised that women and girls would be at the center of many of the Sustainable Development Goals which the world came together to agree to in 2016.

America’s Global Gag Rule breaks that promise as it has a chilling effect on health services for the world’s most vulnerable women and girls.

It will imperil millions of women and girls’ lives by increasing unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions. It will also reverse decades of progress on reproductive, maternal and child health by putting critical health and family planning services and supplies out of reach for those who most need them.

There are currently 225 million women in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy but are not using modern contraception. Maternal mortality is the second leading cause of death for girls aged 15 to 19 years old, and the burden of unsafe abortion also falls overwhelmingly on the poorest.

The evidence shows that access to contraception is transformative for girls, women and their families and communities. It is linked to greater gender equality, educational attainment and economic development.

Health providers around the world face a painful choice between losing their US funding and losing the freedom to offer a full range of reproductive health services.

We’ve been here before. Since its inception in 1984, the Global Gag Rule has been put into place at the start of every Republican administration and promptly rescinded under each Democratic administration.

It’s time to take politics out of gender rights.

As world leaders, we stand by our promises and will fight for the rights of women and girls wherever they live. We champion all organizations who are committed to providing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services. We will work to provide a counterbalance to the Global Gag Rule and ensure that support is provided to help improve access to services to help stop unsafe abortion.

We call on all governments to increase funding for contraceptive services and supplies and to support policies that will advance sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.
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