Subject: PMNCH Call to Action on COVID-19 - Commitment to protect and promote the health and rights of women, children and adolescents

On behalf of the Government of Malawi, we commit to the challenge of protecting and safeguarding the health and rights of women, children and adolescents everywhere as part of our response to COVID-19, aligned with The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) Call to Action on COVID-19.

With this endorsement, we reaffirm our commitments to strengthen women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health through investments in improving equity and strengthening our primary healthcare systems, including our health and care workforces. We pledge our commitment to action that will arrest and reverse the risks to women’s, children and adolescents’ health and well-being during the COVID-19 response and recovery, leaving no one behind.

Already, Malawi has developed guidelines for provision of Maternal and Newborn Health and Family Planning (MNH/FP) services and youth friendly health services (YFHS) guidelines during Covid-19 to ensure that women, adolescents, and newborns have access to quality of care even during Covid-19. Furthermore, Malawi has allocated more financial support to the Ministry of Health during the mid-year budget review to support efforts of providing optimal healthcare services especially to women, children, and adolescents.

On behalf of the Government of Malawi, we commit to:

- Finalize the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and the YFHS strategies that will incorporate response to emergencies including Covid-19 by December 2021.
- Revise the National Reproductive Health Service Delivery Guidelines by December 2023.
- Develop FP2030 commitments in line with the women’s, children’s and adolescents’ needs during Covid-19 by December 2021
- Build on Malawi’s launch and adoption of the Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) Charter by ensuring that nurses and midwives have knowledge, skills, and equipment to provide quality, respectful, and dignified care to women, children, and adolescents by December 2023
• Complete the recruitment of additional 1,380 health workers with more of them being nurses and midwives who provide primary care to women, children, and adolescents by December 2021.
• Conduct the Functional Reviews in District health facilities to determine the staff recruitment needs and reduce the vacancy rate especially for nurses and midwives by December 2023.
• Increase accessibility and useability of DHIS2 and other online MNH/FP data platforms to enhance evidence-based decision making among service providers and partners by June 2022.

Our commitment is directly aligned to the following ask as outlined in PMNCH Call to Action on COVID-19:

• Ensuring access to information, health services and life-saving supplies for women, children, and adolescents
• Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality
• Guaranteeing quality, respectful, and dignified health care
• Providing training, equal, and fair pay and safe working conditions for health workers, notably midwives and nurses

To realize our commitment towards the Call to Action, we will work collectively to incorporate the inputs of all stakeholders, including civil society, the United Nations, health professionals, adolescents and young people, donor organizations, and private business as part of our national multi-stakeholder platforms and processes.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Honourable Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda, MP
MINISTER OF HEALTH