



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development

Human Development and Migration
Acting Director

Brussels,
 devco.b.4(2016) 766194

Dear Petitioners,

Thank you for your email calling for stopping funding the International Planned Parenthood Federation based on concerns that the organisation obtains profit from selling human body parts obtained from abortion.

The Commission is aware of the allegations related to the tissue donation programme of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), which is a member association of International Planned Parenthood Federation. The Planned Parenthood Federation of America however is not a recipient of European Union funding.

PPFA participates in a tissue donation programme for medical research which is legal in the United States (US). As for any medical research donation programme, the cost of transporting samples was paid by the scientific unit carrying out the research. In the US strict laws and ethical guidelines exist for tissue donation and foetal tissue samples require the donor's consent. Twelve states launched official investigations into claims that PPFA profited from foetal tissue donation and each one has cleared PPFA of wrongdoing.

The European Union (EU) supports the full and effective implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action¹ and the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 5 on maternal health and universal access to reproductive health² and the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals / Agenda 2030 with specific targets on sexual and reproductive health and rights. This approach is recalled in the Council conclusions on the EU Role in Global Health³, on a transformative post-2015 agenda⁴, on Gender in Development⁵ and in the Council conclusions on the Gender Action Plan⁶.

As agreed in the Programme of Action of the ICPD (Actions article 8.25)⁷, abortion policies are the competence of partner countries benefitting from EU development cooperation funding. The EU works towards assisting the achievement of the development objectives agreed at the major UN conferences⁸. The Commission does not

¹ <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/international-conference-population-and-development-programme-action>

² <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/maternal.shtml>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/health/eu_world/docs/ev_20100610_rd04_en.pdf

⁴ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=40802190987>

⁵ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9242-2015-INIT/en/pdf>

⁶ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/26-fac-conclusions-gender-development/>

⁷ ICPD link http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf

⁸ Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on European Union Development Policy: 'The European

discriminate against entities providing abortion services as long as they are provided according to national law.

The EU provides assistance through its external financing instruments⁹ which, in line with the Financial Regulation¹⁰, also support civil society organisations, among which the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). EU-supported services through IPPF reach the most vulnerable people in developing countries and provide them with access to life-saving services. Millions of women, men, girls and boys benefit from these programmes. Suspending these could result in risking women's and their babies' lives, as adequate support during pregnancy and childbirth might no longer be available, or in an increase in unwanted pregnancies due to unavailability of family planning.

Yours sincerely,

Jean-Louis Ville

Consensus' (OJ 2006/C 46/01); The Development Cooperation Instrument: Annexes I and II, REGULATION (EU) No 233/2014

⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/funding-instruments-programming/funding-instruments/>

¹⁰ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R0966&from=EN>