**UN HRC Resolution 11/8**

**“Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights”**

**Information on practice in the Republic of Latvia**

Today maternal health is one of the important targets of all the Millenium Development Goals. Legislation of the Republic of Latvia includes legal regulations to improve maternal health and to prevent maternal mortality and morbidity.

Medical Treatment Law prescribes that health care for pregnant women and children are priorities. Thereof the health care services for children till age 18 are free of charge as well as those health services for pregnant women during pregnancy and 42 days after labour. During pregnancy a woman has to be observed by gynaecologist and by midwife or general practitioner. Assistance during delivery is provided by a gynaecologist (childbirth specialist) and a midwife.

Latvia has developed the regulation on puerperal help in pregnancy and postnatal period, including requirements for care of women in confinement and newborns.

A number of nongovernmental organizations provide counseling for people in crisis situations, for example, Crisis Pregnancy Centre offers counseling for unplanned pregnancy, post-abortion depression, miscarriage and loss of a child. There are also organizations that educate young people about sexual and reproductive health.

The aim of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Law is to protect sexual and reproductive health of every person. The priority of sexual and reproductive health is assistance during deliveries, as well as the provision of information on sexual and reproductive health. The Law prescribes that every person has the right to obtain information from a health care practitioner regarding the basic principles of sexual and reproductive health promotion and care, birth planning and contraception.

Health belongs not only to human fundamental rights, but is the base of quality of life, personal and family welfare. The fundamental rights of human are identified in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia. That means – the State shall protect human health and guarantee a basic level of medical assistance for everyone.

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia

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