His Excellency President Abdoulie Wade. The First Ladies of; Botswana, Burkina Faso and Senegal The UK under Secretary for International Development, Stephen O’Brien MP. The Executive Director of UNFPA. Representative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Ambassador of United States of America to Senegal. Representatives of the Media. Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Mohammed Barry; I am a 20-year-old Gambian happily living with HIV for almost 14 years. Today I stand before all of you and before the world gracefully not to iterate scientific findings or statistics you know, neither condemn existing legal barriers preventing millions of people around the world from accessing family planning services specifically young people from access nor ask donor nations not to retreat!

But ask all of you sitting in this magnificent auditorium or watching via your TV screens. To remove the shroud of silence which has been draped over the issue of access to Family Planning services for young people across the globe who represent half of the global population today. But most specifically the over 5.4 million young people like me living with HIV from here in Senegal to South Africa to Indonesia to Mexico etc. Who like me remain in a deep family planning limbo on a daily basis.

Despite of living with HIV and worried constantly by my family planning needs, the absence of family planning services has affected me greatly and deeply. Thus at the age of approximately six years old, my cousin died because she could not access proper abortion services. Yet after almost 15 years since I lost my cousin, this misery remains the scenario of many young people globally. Shattering communities and leaving behind scars of stigma and silence.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is indeed remarkable that young people living with HIV with the help of antiretroviral therapies are able to live longer, productive and healthy. However this also asks for novel strategies to address our growing needs for family planning. Because at the end of the day, we do not want to bring to life HIV babies with HIV or accept sterilisation as an option or bury the sexual and reproductive aspects of our lives. In addition, there are current global efforts to eliminate incidents of babies born with HIV by 2015. Yet, this will only be attained if family planning is placed at the core of the global AIDS response and give choices to people living with HIV specifically young people living with HIV.

At this juncture, I want us all to pause and reflect on our acts both as individuals and as leaders in our respective fields. And act as eloquent as we speak otherwise we have not integrity. But I also remain optimistic that this conference will not serve as a learning, sharing of best practices, and networking but will serve as a new chapter in the history of family planning across the globe. I am also adamant that this conference will help remove the shroud of silence which has been draped over the issues of family planning for young people specifically young people living with HIV across the globe.

To conclude, I also want to recognise the importance of family planning to the Senegalese and I say "Jerreh Jeff" to the Senegalese president and all the first ladies present here. This undeniably emphasizes the significance of family planning to development and further proves that every nation built on the sphere family, is a nation built to last.

Of course we cannot achieve it all without leadership, without accountability, without youth engagement and without the continuous generosity and contribution of the donor and scientific communities respectively. Long live youth engagement. Long live family planning. Thank you!