

## **ILGA World Trans\* Secretariat, annual report 2015-2016**

List of activities:

1. ILGA Asia Trans\* Preconference (October 26-27, 2015)
2. ILGA Europe Conference (October 28 – November 1, 2015)
3. New York Advocacy Week (December 7-12, 2015)
4. ILGA Oceania Trans\* Pre-conference (March 14-15, 2016)
5. New York CSW60 (March 21-24, 2016)
6. ILGA World Board Meeting (April 22 – 26, 2016)

### **1. ILGA Asia Trans\* Pre-conference (October 26-27, 2015)**

The two-day ILGA Asia Trans\* Pre-conference was held at the Chientan Youth Activity Center in Taipei, Taiwan in October 2015. This was arranged with the help of the ILGA Gender Identity & Expression Officer, Zhan Chiam, and with funding support from the UNDP and the American Jewish World Service. A total of 42 people attended the Pre-conference: 20 scholars, 1 independent, 4 from the ILGA World Board and Staff, and 17 from the APTN and UNDP.

The program began with a lecture on Intersectionality as an Approach to Trans\*-specific advocacy conducted by Professors Mira Ofreneo (Ateneo de Manila University) and Tesa de Vela (Miriam College). A panel on Islam, Trans\* Issues, and the Law followed with speakers from Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia. Jack Byrne also conducted an interactive session on Legal Gender Recognition, while Dr. Sam Winter conducted a session on Trans\* Pathologization.

The ILGA Asia Trans\* Caucus was facilitated by Mikee Inton, representative of the ILGA World Trans\* Secretariat and Toto Saowakun, the Trans\* Representative from the ILGA Asia Board. At the caucus, it was suggested that the ILGA Asia constitution be amended so that subsequent boards would have a seat reserved for the Trans\* Representative. At the ILGA Asia conference, the Constitution was amended so that each of the five sub-regions would have two representatives, with the addition of two more representatives for the Trans\* and Intersex populations, bringing the number of Board members to a maximum of 12 people.

After Dr. Winter's session on Trans\* Pathologization, the participants of the Trans\* Pre-conference decided to draft a statement to support the banning of Gender Identity Diagnoses in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), particularly those that affect diagnoses in childhood (Gender Incongruence of Childhood). The wording of the draft follows the Cape Town Declaration (dated July 18, 2014), and was drafted by Mikee Inton and Zhan Chiam. The draft of the statement was presented at the ILGA Asia Conference, where it was approved by the body and gathered a number of signatures. The full statement can be read on the ILGA Website: <http://ilga.org/the-ilga-asia-trans-pre-conference-statement-on-gender-incongruence-in-childhood/>

### **2. ILGA Europe Conference (October 28 – November 1, 2015)**

The four-day ILGA-Europe Annual Conference was held at Divani Caravel Hotel in Athens, Greece in October 2015. This was organized with the help of ILGA Europe and OLKE the Gay and lesbian community of Greece and with funding support from The European Commission for continued core funding and for the support of the Progress Programme of the EU, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U. S. Department of State, Open Society foundations, The National Government of the

Netherlands, We are all citizens, The Iceland Liechtenstein Norway eea grant, Solidarity Now and Bodossaki Foundation. And with support and financial contributions of Canada, The Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Eugenides Foundation. A total of 500 participants from all over Europe and other continents including America, Asia and Africa. The ILGA World Trans\* Secretariat was represented by Kaye Candaza at this conference.

The program began with an introductory session for new comers. A workshop conducted by TGEU and ILGA-Europe trans participants discuss their hopes and fears for the conference, explore different ways of contributing and develop strategies to ensure trans perspective are included in wider debates. ILGA Europe's 19th Annual conference Opening Reception held at Athens planetarium- the program began with a welcome Speeches from the mayor of Athens, German Parliamentary state secretary and ILGA Europe Officers. Tackling homophobia and transphobia in the media was presented by oui oui oui, French association of journalist. The workshop focused on the role of the media in LGBTI activism and was intended for activists facing difficulties with the media and those who would like to develop their advocacy against hate speech. Kitty Anderson of Intersex Iceland, Maria Amor Estebanez of EU Agency of Fundamental Rights, and Eleni Tsesekeou of council of Europe conducted an informal discussions on Advocating for the rights of intersex people in Europe TGEU conducted a session on trans strategy discussion- Metehan Ozkan of LISTAG Turkey, Olena Globa of Tergo Ukraine, Sue Allen of Fflag UK, and Katarzyna Remin of campaign against homophobia, Poland conducted an interactive panel discussion followed by a conversation with the audience on Parents of LGBTI. Experiences of violence against the trans\* community was facilitated Borlarka Fedorko of TGEU and presented by Artiom Savadovsky of GenderDoc-M, Moldova, Kristina Orban of Transvanilla Transgender Association, Hungary, Jelena Vidic of Gayten-LGBT, Serbia, and Kemal Ordek of Red umbrella sexual health and human rights, Turkey. The presenters conceptualize the common treats to the rights of various oppressed groups, e.g. State control over bodies, privacy, sexuality and gender.

A short presentation and Q and A by Sophie Uajen of ILGA-Europe on LGBT activism and Intersex. The aim of the workshop is to answer participants question on issues face by intersex people and how LGBT activists can better support Intersex activist and advocate for the rights of intersex people.

### **3. New York Advocacy Week (December 7-12, 2015)**

The Trans\* Secretariat, represented by Mikee Inton, participated in the UN Advocacy Week 2015 in New York, organized by Outright Action International and ILGA. Meetings with various delegations to the UN were held. The Secretariat sat and participated at meetings with the UNDP office, the UN Women, and Unicef, as well as meetings with the Press and an interview with LOGO TV for an advocacy campaign they will launch this year.

A one-day conference was held on December 12, 2015 – Outsummit. At this conference, Mikee was invited to participate in a panel called “Faith-based organizing and fighting Fundamentalisms” where the intersections of religion, faith, and LGBTI issues were explored.

The following week, a three-day consultation with the UNDP was held. The Trans\* Secretariat participated in this consultation, the goal of which was to establish a possible international LGBTI inclusivity index that measures and rates UN Member countries based on their policies and laws that affect LGBTI persons. This index is still to be completed, as the consultation was one of the first steps that the UNDP had done to develop this project.

#### **4. ILGA Oceania Trans\* Pre-conference (March 14-15, 2016)**

The 2-day conference was held at University of Otago in Wellington New Zealand on March 14-15 and it was a great, organized meeting of different organizations and individuals from the entire Oceania region with ILGA World, Proud and other volunteers making it all possible. The ILGA World Trans\* Secretariat was represented by Adri Pangilinan at this conference.

The conference started with an informal pre-conference, which started with introduction of ILGA World/Oceania and participants and workshop facilitators and an informative exchange of dialogues, discussions and speeches commenced particularly on trans\* rights and health, the youth. It included the presence of Georgina Beyer, first openly transsexual mayor and member of the Parliament and her message to everyone is to win the hearts of the public as this shall be the key to gain support from politicians.

The conference officially opened with women's and youth Hui report-backs and a discussion with the Human Rights Commission panel. Workshops were held after spread out on various topics and closed by an informative and emotional talk on LGBTI Health by Elizabeth Karere and Jack Trovolve. The second day of conference kicked off with a discussion with the ILGA scholars, Rodger Stanley from Samoa, Elizabeth Taylor from Papua New Guinea and Gigi Baxter from Vanuatu. Important issues were raised from these countries including access to hormone therapy, anti-discrimination laws and employment opportunities for Fa'afafines, Fakaleitis and Palopas.

The issue of trans\* people in jails was raised as well and ILGA World trans\* secretariat, headed by Zhan Chiam, the ILGA World Gender Identify and Gender Expression Program Officer wrote a media statement on this: <http://pacific.scoop.co.nz/2016/03/trans-pre-conference-from-ilga-media-statement/>

At the ILGA Oceania conference, one of the most important concerns that were concluded is for Pacific countries to be assisted and have more support from Australia and New Zealand in terms of global representation in the fight for better LGBTQI health, gender recognition and better employment opportunities. A pressing concern as well to have greater support for the LGBTQI youth.

#### **5. New York CSW60 (March 21-24, 2016)**

The Trans\* Secretariat also participated in the events of CSW60 – the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. A panel was organized by Kenita Placide, ILGA's Women's Secretariat, on March 21. The panel was titled "Diverse Women Empowerment to Increase Inclusion in Development" and included speakers from Fiji, Saint Lucia, Botswana, Jamaica, and the Philippines. At the panel, we talked about triumphs and successes in local organizing and advocacy, as well as the intersections of climate change and LGBTI issues, Women and Lesbian spaces, and Trans\* and Intersex empowerment, as well as challenges for the future.

The Trans\* Secretariat also participated in a meeting with the UN Women's Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, where activists pushed the UN Women to support the push for the inclusion of LGBTI/SOGIE-inclusive language at the CSW and CEDAW.

The ILGA World Trans\* Secretariat, represented by Mikee Inton, was also featured in the LOGO Global Ally online campaign produced by Logo TV. The campaign, which features various human rights activists who talk about personal issues and advocacy work, can be accessed through <http://www.globalally.org>

## **6. ILGA World Board Meeting (April 21-24, 2016)**

The ILGA Trans\* Secretariat was represented by Brenda R. Alegre for the World Board Meeting held in Holiday Inn, Rosebank, Johannesburg, South Africa. This is her first time to attend the world board meeting and it gave her the opportunity as well to meet in person all Board members and representatives. The meeting coincided with the Pan Africa meetings also held simultaneously. The Board worked on a lot of decision making and strategizing such as the planning for the World Conference, Scholarships review, membership screening and board structure discussions and other high level matters. Prior to the commencing of the meetings, the Board was treated to two contrasting experiences of possibly two faces of life in Johannesburg. The sweet and comfort was experienced in a fun bonding and friendly competition among the board for a cooking contest held in a plush village of Joburg's more affluent residents. Later the board was toured to the reality faced by more South Africans and Africans in Soweto, where the middle and lower class citizens suffering from lack of care and opportunities live. Truly such eye opening experience tot perhaps help the board understand the intersectionality of issues and narratives. The Board has initiated discussions on the U.N. Special Rapporteur which was eventually initiated already and the creation of additional secretariats as well as the possible creation of Regional representations. The Scholarships, memberships and program for the World Conference initiated during the Board meeting eventually came into fruition as we approach the World Conference.

## **7. ILGA World Board Meeting (April 21-24, 2016)**

The ILGA Trans\* Secretariat was represented by Juliana Giesel who is a STRAP member based in Los Angeles. This year the conference was jointly organized by the Dutch and Uruguayan government with participation from government, civil society and multilateral organizations.

### Major Outcome

Launching of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), a state-led initiative to further LGBTI rights globally. So far 30 states signed on to the guiding principles of the coalition. The states are: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Italy, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, Uruguay, UK, USA.

The formal structure, activities and other details of ERC have not been finalized. The states said they would do a consultation with local CSOs in the meantime and meet again in the Hague at the end of 2016 to concretize the ERC.

More information about ERC can be found here: <http://www.lgbtimontevideo2016.org/en/Pages/coalicion>

## CSO Pre-Conference

There was a one-day civil society pre-conference where the participants gave their input to the four thematic areas, which had been pre determined. Working groups were formed prior to the conference to work on these thematic areas and come up with a one pager to be forwarded to the government representatives. The four thematic areas were: LGBTI Inclusion in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Goals, International and Regional Diplomacy, Donor Coordination, and Legislation and Shrinking Space for Civil Society.

During the pre-conference, the working groups presented the one pagers and later on discussed each issue in groups. There were also regional caucuses where participants discussed some of the most pressing issues. The evening ended with a reception for CSO and government delegates by local organizer Ovejas Negras.

## Main Conference

On the first day of the conference, Foreign Ministers of Uruguay and Netherlands welcomed the delegates and together with other founding member states, launched the Equal Rights Coalition. Representatives from various states followed up with their speeches and signed up for the coalition. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Permanent US Representative to the UN Samantha Power delivered video messages wishing the conference and the ERC all the best. The rest of the day plenary sessions were held on the four thematic areas. In the evening, a cocktail reception was accorded to the conference participants by the Uruguay Foreign Ministry.

Much of the second day was spent fine-tuning the recommendations of the four working groups. In the afternoon, separate plenary sessions were held by the states and CSOs on the newly launched ERC. There were intense discussions around the structure, activities, aim, and mechanism of the ERC. At the closing plenary, which had both the state and CSO representatives, a better understanding of the coalition was achieved as both the parties agreed to remain engaged throughout the process.

The third day, which was actually a half-day session, presented the key recommendations from the working groups and closed on a high note with the wonderful singing of Joleen from Tonga.

## Parallel Events

There were a number of events held in parallel with the main conference. Some notable events were a panel discussion organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat, a meeting of the partners of the Global Equality Fund, a private sector meeting, UNDP's event on its LGBTI Inclusion Index and an event of Global Philanthropy Project (GPP) which launched the Global LGBTI Resources Report, the most comprehensive report to date on the state of foundation and government funding for LGBTI issues.

## Feedback

With the news of the formation of a new coalition spreading a week before the conference, it was no surprise that this coalition took up a lot of space and became the main agenda. The CSO pre-conference had heated discussions and alleged of not having enough information. The CSO representatives felt that they were being played upon and were brought in to validate a process of which they had no idea. The main concerns of the participants were:

- i The background of the formation of such a coalition
- ii The membership
- iii The structure, activities, mission, vision etc of the coalition
- iv Whether it would further polarize the LGBT movement
- v The potentially negative impacts of such a coalition
- vi Funding mechanism of the coalition
- vii How will it influence other states, which are not so LGBT friendly etc.

However, despite such concerns the coalition was launched on the first day some of the worries were addressed by the speakers.

It was evident that the states behind the process had every good intention to work with CSO to make the coalition effective. That is why the agenda of the second day was revised and created more space for the state and CSO to discuss.

While the discomfort of CSO was quite understandable given our experience with governments, but I personally thought it was significant that such a coalition was being shaped. Not having enough information meant there was no concrete mechanism and that there was possibility of CSO intervening. The states brought in the coalition as an idea, as a skeleton and it was the duty of both the state and CSO to put flesh on it. We complained of not having enough information, but if we did have concrete information we would have then complained of everything being already set up.

With the right intention and strong cooperation with CSO, the coalition has the potential to bring about positive change in the world.

However, one cannot disregard the geo-political impact of the coalition. If the LGBTI movement can bring states together, it can also create further division. The last thing the LGBTI community would want is to be used by governments to push through their dirty politics of power and wealth.

Moreover, many member states of the coalition are falling short in their own countries to protect LGBTI rights, especially the rights of trans and intersex persons. So there should not be any chance for the states to be complacent just because they are a part of this coalition. The coalition does not and should not make anyone holier-than-thou.

#### Transgenderers in the conference

Juliana was able to meet awesome and fierce transgender activists in the conference and as led by Mauro Cabral and Masen Davis, co-director of GATE (Global Action for Trans Equality) took the trans group to dinner the first night and discussing on how GATE can be of help as well as discussing current trans issues each country representative has been experiencing.

The only pending item for the Trans\* Secretariat is the project called Trans\* Terminologies which the Secretariat will briefly discuss in the pre-conference.

*Brenda Alegre, Mikee Inton and Juliana Giesel will all be present in the ILGA World Conference for Bangkok.*

End of report -----