

34<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Council session

March 14, 2017

ITEM 4 – General Debate

Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association

*Delivered by Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera*

Thank Mr. President

In uncertain times, minorities are often targeted by others as scapegoats. Consequently, millions of lesbians, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer individuals face widespread violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and/or sex characteristics. We would like to call your attention to just a few examples.

In November of last year, in Yaoundé, **Cameroon**, 12 people were arrested and sequestered by the police for *homosexuality* because they had condoms and lubricating gels in their possession. In **Morocco**, in November, authorities brought charges of *homosexuality* against two teenage girls that were found kissing and hugging – something that straight couples are not targeted for. <sup>1</sup>Laws that criminalize either same-sex relationships or the use of materials that prevent the transmission of HIV is a real threat to the rights of LGBTI persons and in violation of international human rights law.

Last month, the **US** government withdrew guidance issued in 2016 that instructed schools to respect the gender identity of students, thereby putting transgender children in harm's way. Schools are frequently hostile environments for LGBT young people, not just because they are denied the use of safe bathrooms or locker rooms, but because students are insulted, cyber bullied or attacked, and teachers in some cases allow this to happen because they see it as normal behavior.

In almost all countries Intersex persons, especially infants, children and adolescents continue to face unnecessary medical interventions carried out without their free and fully informed consent. Most recently **Ireland**, **Germany** and **The Netherlands** received recommendations from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in this regard.

In **Malaysia**, in Pahang Sameera Krishnan, a transgender woman was brutally murdered. She was attacked with a knife and received slash wounds to her hands, arm, head, and legs. She was then shot three times. While we welcome the prompt investigation of the murder by the police, we note that Malaysia prosecutes individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned to them at birth: for simply being who they are.<sup>2</sup> With such laws on the books, how is it possible for the general population to accept and welcome gender-diverse persons into their communities. The law is without doubt a contributing factor to a social environment where it is somehow acceptable to carry out such attacks. Murders of Trans and gender-diverse persons are happening on a continuous basis around the world - last year more than 290 persons were killed in transphobic attacks.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, we are concerned at reports that since the start of this year, 17 hate crimes have been committed against LGBT persons in **El Salvador**: 9 against transgender women, 5 against lesbians and 3 against gay men. The systemic situation of extreme violence and discrimination faced by LGBT persons, and impunity for perpetrators, in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://bit.ly/2fbp6sm>

<sup>2</sup> Between 2007 and 2016, at least 10 cases of murder have been [reported in the media](#). In these 10 cases, the trans women were subjected to brutal violence, including being beaten with a hammer, strangled, gagged, stabbed multiple times, physically assaulted, pushed from a building, drowned in a water retention pond, etc. <http://bit.ly/2IOhTEu>

<sup>3</sup> <http://bit.ly/2mHlaVe>

this country is worrying and has a direct impact on forced displacement and migratory flow.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. President,

Let's remember that we are all born free and equal in dignity and in rights and commit once again to fight, protect and guarantee the rights of those who are so often silenced.

I thank you Mr. President.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://bit.ly/2mn6ZIH>, <http://bit.ly/2ljOEaf>, <http://bit.ly/2lWnMkm>, <http://bit.ly/2nojVcP>, <http://bit.ly/2nohvuS>, <http://bit.ly/2mnMzw7>