

35th Human Rights Council session

June 13th 2017

Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women: Women's rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: health and gender equality

Statement by: the Swedish Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights – RFSL

Joined by: International Lesbian and Gay Association

delivered by Micah Grzywnowicz

Thank you Mr. President,

SDGs bring a promise of “a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed.” It also promises to be “people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.”

Lesbian and bisexual women and trans and intersex persons are at heightened risk of being discriminated and excluded. Structural and societal barriers result in discrimination and institutional violence. It is often linked with other factors, such as gender, race, socio-economic status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, drug use or HIV status.

Some of the most common forms of discrimination in health care settings include the denial of health care, unjust barriers in service provision, inferior quality of care, tendencies to medicalize human misery, disrespect, pathologization, abuse and other forms of mistreatment, and extreme violations of autonomy and bodily integrity.

Trans people face particular challenges within healthcare settings - sterilization, forced psychiatric diagnosis, abuse, humiliation, inferior quality of care, extreme violations of autonomy and bodily integrity, or denial of health care as such. Some research shows that almost a fifth of trans people were refused health care because of who they were. It negatively impacts their quality of life and has serious consequences on people's lives. It perpetuates a vicious circle of stigma, exclusion and poverty. This cannot be seen as leaving no one behind and it must change.

While implementing the Goal 3, states must acknowledge the devastating impact of intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization that LGBTI persons face within health care system. The SDGs promises “a world with equitable and universal access to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured” and it must be applicable to everyone without exception.

To close, what do the panel think should be the first 3 steps for states to ensure that LGBTI persons are not left behind in the implementation of the Agenda 2030?

I thank you Mr. President,