



43rd Human Rights Council Session

March 11, 2020

Item 4 – General Debate

Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association

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Madam President,

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex persons have been disproportionately exposed to discrimination, violence and other severe human rights violations. Today we draw attention to some of these situations taking place around the globe.

LGBTI people face violence:

Last week in **Puerto Rico** a woman was shot dead simply because she used the bathroom according to her gender identity¹. In **South Africa**, the murder of a LGBTI human rights² defender marked the third killing of a member of the LGBTI community in this country in only two months³.

Freedom of expression of LGBTI persons is constantly restricted in the name of cultural and religious sensitivities, impeding the public debate on gender and sexuality:

In **Brazil**, attackers lobbed a Molotov cocktail at the headquarters of a comedy group due to a TV show that portrayed Jesus as a homosexual⁴. Meanwhile, authorities from the **United Arab Emirates**⁵ and from **Kenya**⁶ have banned the exhibition of a movie due to the presence of same-sex relationships.

We are left unprotected:

States still are falling short on enacting and implementing legislation that fully comply with the international human rights standards. In the **United States of America**, the State of California failed to legally ban cosmetic surgeries on intersex infants⁷. A High Court in **Zambia** upheld a ruling which sentenced two men to 15 years imprisonment for consensual same-sex sexual activity⁸. In **Australia**, the parliament is discussing a bill which would allow

¹ Independent, 'Transgender woman shot dead after using women's bathroom in McDonald's' <<https://bit.ly/3cgNF4U>>

² IOL, 'KZN gender activist's horrific murder sparks cry for tolerance' <<https://bit.ly/386NS7I>>

³ Irant, 'Gender Based Violence Continue in 2020' <<https://bit.ly/3a4NRIU>>

⁴ Reuters, 'Brazilian comedy group hit by Molotov cocktails after film on 'gay Jesus'' <<https://reut.rs/3agSI3z>>

⁵ Openly, 'Bollywood's first gay romantic comedy banned in UAE' <<https://bit.ly/2T6lvAT>>

⁶ KBC, 'KFCB bans same-sex relationship-themed movie' <<https://bit.ly/397TNdP>>

⁷ CNN, 'Ban on cosmetic surgeries on intersex infants fails key California vote' <<https://cnn.it/32GG5fC>>

⁸ The Star, 'Zambia court sentences two men to 15 years for gay sex' <<https://bit.ly/2I3PvZa>>

service providers, including hospitals, to discriminate against LGBTI people on the basis of religious freedom⁹.

Our communities are faced with hate speech and shrinking space:

A report published last month shows a sharp rise in anti-LGBTI hate speech carried out by public figures across Europe¹⁰. In **Croatia**, an effigy of a same-sex couple was set on fire during a city parade¹¹. While in **Poland** more than 100 municipalities have adopted resolutions declaring themselves as LGBT-free zones¹².

Madam President,

Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics cannot be used as grounds for violence and discrimination. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is clear on ensuring freedom and equality to all human beings, without any distinction. We call upon states to intensify efforts on implementing these provisions and stand ready to work with them, with you, with all relevant stakeholders on addressing these violations.

I thank you, Madam President.

⁹ The Guardian, 'Religious freedom bill's latest draft 'unacceptable and does not protect human rights' <<https://bit.ly/387Tj66>>

¹⁰ ILGA-Europe, 'Annual Review of the situation of LGBTI people paints a picture at odds with a widespread notion that in Europe the work is done' <<https://bit.ly/2vfZmZ4>>

¹¹ Independent, 'Outrage after effigy of same-sex couple and child burned at festival in Croatia' <<https://bit.ly/3agdbpd>>

¹² Balkans Night, A Third Of Poland Declared 'Lgbt-Free Zone' <<https://bit.ly/2vFJmO9>>