

Human Rights Council
6 July 2020

Item 3
Interactive Dialogue: WG on discrimination against women

Statement by: International Lesbian and Gay Association

Delivered by: Kseniya Kirichenko

Madam President,

We welcome the Working Group's thematic report and specific references to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (LBTI) women are particularly vulnerable in work settings.

In Russia, after the adoption of 'anti-propaganda' laws, teachers – still mostly women – who are lesbian or transgender, were harassed by anti-LGBT groups and fired by school authorities.¹ I personally represented a lesbian teacher fired for 'immoral behaviour', namely a photo of her kissing her partner, published on her private social media account.

Only 40% of states protect on grounds of sexual orientation in employment,² on grounds of gender identity the number is even lower.

Covid-19 has affected women in a particular way. LBTI women, especially from marginalized groups, are hit even harder, leading to unemployment, further stigmatization and marginalization and violence.

In Argentina, a trans woman, unable to do sex work in the street because of the isolation measures, served in her private home where a client stabbed her several times in April.³

Parenting affects women's employment generally. LBTI women planning or having children face additional and specific complications. Marriage and second-parent adoption is only available to them in 16% of the UN Member States.⁴ LBTI women's families are denied parental leave, allowances and other support tools.

At the same time, LBTI women continue to demonstrate strong practices in professional organizing and community outreach. For instance, *Lesbians Who Tech & Allies* is a community working to promote women, people of colour and queer and trans people in the professional technology field.

Since no specific recommendations were made in the report, we would like to ask the Working group:

- What measures to states would you suggest to ensure the rights of LBTI women in the field of work?

Thank you.

¹ Human Rights Watch, License to Harm: Violence and Harassment against LGBT People and Activists in Russia (December 2014) <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/russia1214_ForUpload.pdf>.

² ILGA World: Lucas Ramon Mendos, *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update* (Geneva; ILGA, December 2019) <https://ilga.org/downloads/ILGA_World_State_Sponsored_Homophobia_report_global_legislation_overview_update_December_2019.pdf>.

³ 'Crónica de un intento de travesticidio en Grand Bourg' (*PH*, 23 April 2020) <<https://diarioph.com.ar/atacaron-a-cuchillazos-a-una-travesti-en-malvinas-argentinas-no-fue-un-crimen-pasiona/>> accessed 29 June 2020.

4 ILGA World: Lucas Ramon Mendos, *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update*.