



46th Human Rights Council Session

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General Debate Item 2

Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association, joined by International Service for Human Rights, OutRight Action International, Swedish Federation of LGBT Rights - RFSL

Madam President, Madam High Commissioner,

This is a joint statement.

We welcome the report on COVID19 presented by the High Commissioner and specifically the recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons as one of the groups suffering disproportionate impacts from the ongoing global pandemic, as well as the social and economic crisis resulting from it¹. We also appreciate previous efforts taken by your Office, such as the information note on LGBTI persons in the context of COVID19.

Over the last year our communities have been scapegoated by different actors, including religious leaders, for the covid outbreak. This has resulted in a sharp rise in **hatred, discrimination and violence**. The pandemic has aggravated violations of our **right to health (including mental health), right to work, right to food and access to adequate housing, secure employment, and to public participation**². We have been excluded from participating in pandemic responses, **civic space** for those who defend our rights has been restricted and attacks against human rights defenders have increased.

The pandemic has exposed and deepened existing discrimination, violence and other violations. It has exacerbated systems of oppression. There have been increased threats and attacks against women human rights defenders and LGBTI rights defenders including domestic violence, physical attacks and killings, increased online harassment, stigmatisation and defamation.

Action to address the pandemic must be comprehensive and systemic, applying a human rights-based, and intersectional lens, centred on non-discrimination, participation and empowerment of vulnerable communities, **who have faced heightened impact**. It is fundamental that national and international responses are developed in consultation with civil society, including LGBTI persons and those defending their rights. It is integral that SOGIESC is considered in planning and implementing social and economic measures taken. There is an urgent need to resolve delays and disruptions in health care access for people living with HIV, and trans and intersex people.

The specific vulnerabilities of our communities should be taken into consideration in developing vaccination plans, ensuring equitable and non-discriminatory access.

¹ A/HRC/46/19 para. 28.

² OutRight Action International. [RESPONDING TO A CRISIS](#): Insights from OutRight's COVID-19 Global LGBTIQ Emergency Fund. [A/HRC/44/NGO/65](#); [A/75/258](#).



Madam High Commissioner, we ask you to continue a strong focus on the impact of the COVID19 on marginalized communities and urge you and member states to share best practices on LGBTI-inclusive responses to the crisis.

Thank you, Madam President.