



**SOGIESC REMARKS DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 46<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
(22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021)**

This report contains all SOGIESC remarks made during the High-Level Segment of the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council. The report is based on notes taken by ILGA during the High-Level Segment.

## SOGIESC REMARKS DURING THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

Monday 22 February 2021

### H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General



Stoking the fires of racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, violence against minority Christian communities, homophobia, xenophobia and misogyny is nothing new. It has just become more overt, easier to achieve and globalised. When we allow the denigration of any of us, we set the precedent for the demonisation of all of us.

### H.E. Ms. Sanna Marin, Prime Minister of Finland



I am deeply concerned about the recent attempts in many countries to limit citizens' right to peacefully express their views, both online and offline. I am particularly worried about attacks against human rights defenders, LGBTI persons, and members of civil society.

### H.E. Mr. Alfonso Nsue Mokuy, Third Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Human Rights of Equatorial Guinea



In the Social Affairs and Gender Equality Sector it is worth highlighting the preliminary draft of the Organic Law on Comprehensive Protection to Prevent, Eradicate and Punish Violence against Women; and the Proposal of Law against Gender-Based Violence. The Draft Bill on homosexuality and LGBT is being studied.

### H.E. Mr. Felipe Carlos Solá, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina



Argentina will continue working at the national and international level to eradicate discrimination and ensure full enjoyment of the rights of vulnerable groups. During 2020, we also reaffirmed our commitment to guarantee the rights of LGBTI people. We have been able to comply with historical demands in my country such as the job quota for trans,

transvestite and transsexual people. This measure seeks to repair the structural inequality that this group has historically suffered, providing concrete tools for their inclusion.

**[H.E. Mr. Đorđe Radulović, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Montenegro](#)**



We remain committed to creating equal conditions and opportunities for all and are committed to strengthening the fight against all forms of discrimination. We are continuously implementing reforms to achieve gender equality and eliminate all forms of violence against women, reduce social exclusion and discrimination, to promote and protect rights of the LGBTI persons, migrants and displaced persons, Roma and minorities, persons with disabilities.

**[H.E. Mr. Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Malta](#)**



The Council has made important strides in identifying the causes of violence and discrimination against people due to their gender identity and sexual orientation. Malta will continue to place a special emphasis on promoting at the UN the human rights of LGBTIQ persons, and domestically through the implementation of the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and Action Plan for 2018-2022. I was pleased to see that for the fifth year in a row, ILGA-Europe Rainbow organisation has ranked Malta first from 49 countries assessed.

**[H.E. Ms. Ine Eriksen Søreide, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway](#)**



The pandemic has highlighted the importance of the right to health, the right to education and the right to information. Economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights are interdependent and are all essential to build back better and fulfil the sustainable development goals. [...] The weakening of protections for ethnic, religious and sexual minorities is deeply concerning.



**H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Solano Quirós, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica**



My country defends and promotes the participation of people of African descent, young women, those with disabilities, people from indigenous peoples, the LGBTI population, and populations on the move (migrants and refugees). We are convinced that global efforts to break down the structural barriers that limit their dignity and the full exercise of their rights require inclusive, honest and self-critical dialogue, accompanied by effective measures.

**H.E. Ms. Ann Christin Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden**



We are all entitled to the same human rights irrespective of whom we love, our sexual orientation or our gender identity. Our push for the protection of the human rights of LGBTIQ persons is consistent and will continue unabated.

**H.E. Mr. Stef Blok, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands**



As members of this Council, we must also commit to protecting the most vulnerable, as well as LGBTI people and women. Especially during the current crisis.

**H.E. Ms. Eva-Maria Liimets, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia**



Estonia continues to strongly oppose all forms of discrimination, including on grounds of race, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion and disability. All persons have the inalienable right to enjoy fundamental freedoms and a full range of human rights.

Tuesday 23 February 2021

[H.E. Ms. Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth](#)



No one, not a single human being should be left behind on account of vulnerability, disability, gender, sexual orientation, origin or race. Nobody must be left on the margins of efforts to advance human rights and inclusive development. The only way to build a sustainable post-COVID recovery will be to recognise the intersectional barriers to inclusive development and address the root causes of inequalities, exclusion, and discrimination. Simply put, we have to respect the dignity and equality of all citizens in the Commonwealth family and beyond.

[H.E. Ms. Aráncha González Laya, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain](#)



We will work to protect the human rights of the most vulnerable people. We will tackle racism, xenophobia and other related intolerance. We will promote gender equality

and LGBTI rights, as well as the defense of the rights of people with disabilities.

[H.E. Mr. Gudlaugur Thór Thórdarson, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development Cooperation of Iceland](#)



There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has tested governments and ordinary citizens alike. Finding the appropriate balance between restrictions and openness has been a challenge for all of us, as we strive to save both lives and livelihoods. Nevertheless, the pandemic should not be used to justify long-term restrictions of civil liberties and freedom. We need to call out efforts to this effect and we must, as a matter of priority, re-double our efforts on behalf of the values we hold so dear: peace and security, rule of law and human rights, including those of women and girls and the LGBTI+ community.

[H.E. Ms. Shireen M. Mazari, Minister for Human Rights of Pakistan](#)



Our Government has taken policy measures and created institutional mechanisms to alleviate poverty, reduce inequalities and create viable social safety nets. [...] This human rights-centric approach has optimized our State delivery system, which has, in turn, enabled us to respond at scale and with speed to the COVID pandemic. Using the platform of Ehsaas (meaning compassion) Programme, we have disbursed emergency cash of over PKR 175 billion to more than 15 million beneficiaries with specific focus on women, minorities, and transgender citizens.

[H.E. Ms. Nanaia Mahuta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of New Zealand](#)



Thematic priorities for New Zealand's human rights engagement will continue to include gender equality and women's empowerment - with a focus on the realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, LGBTI rights, the

death penalty, and democratic rights - including freedom of expression and assembly.

**Wednesday 24 February 2021**

[H.E. Mr. Simon Coveney, TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland](#)



Regrettably, in every region, including my own, we see unacceptable pressures exerted to limit the most fundamental of freedoms, sometimes under the pretext of responding to the challenges presented by the pandemic. Ireland is a long standing champion of civic space, in Geneva, in New York and in communities worldwide. We remain gravely concerned by the unacceptable pressures being experienced by civil society around the world, including human rights defenders, LGBTI defenders, journalists and media workers.

[H.E. Mr. Anthony J. Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America](#)





The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. And yet the rights of women and girls, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI people, religious minorities, and members of other minority groups are often violated or abused. We are committed to advancing gender equality and uplifting the rights of women and girls. And we will pursue a policy to end violence and discrimination of all kinds, including on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics.

[H.E. Mr. Marc Garneau, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada](#)



As the world tries to protect public health, including through the development and distribution of vaccines, it is our responsibility to ensure that no vulnerable community is left behind: women, children, the elderly, refugees and displaced people, as well as LGBTQ2 and indigenous people. [...] Human rights light the path through the tumultuous times. From the Black Lives Matter Movement, to the campaigns for LGBTQ2 rights, we are inspired by human rights defenders and all those advocating for justice. We all have a duty to ensure human rights are protected at home and we must stand by those who seek to uphold their rights abroad.