Madam President,

This is a joint statement, delivered together with ILGA Europe and drafted in consultation with Women’s Initiatives Supporting Group.

During the 3rd Cycle, Georgia received 23 recommendations related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics issues. While we welcome the fact that Georgia accepted 22 of these recommendations, we are deeply alarmed by the situation regarding human rights of LGBTI persons in Georgia.

The recommendations accepted by Georgia urged the government to protect and fulfill the human rights of LGBTI persons to freedom of assembly and expression and to combat violence, hate speech and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Nevertheless, during the past several days when the Pride in Tbilisi was due to take place, there have been reports of violence, damage of property and a general fear of the community members installed throughout the country. The Guardian. Tbilisi Pride march cancelled after far-right attack on headquarters https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/05/georgia-lgbt-activists-cancel- tbilisi-pride-march-after-violence; Council of Europe. The rapporteur on the rights of LGBTI people in the Southern Caucasus denounces violence in Georgia during the Tbilisi Pride Week https://pace.coe.int/en/news/8387/the-rapporteur-on-the-rights-of-lgbt-people-in-the-southern-caucasus-denounces-violence-in-georgia-during-the-tbilisi-pride-week; OC Media. A state-sanctioned attack on Georgia’s free press; https://oc-media.org/opinions/editorial-a-state-sanctioned-attack-on-georgias-free-press?fbclid=IwAR2cv0BFsr5nLV9rE_W0g3S1nBVTnCQLg33LHxeddM0x4RJzdv/3-EHF0k; OC Media. Homophobic mob celebrates on Tbilisi streets after Pride march cancelled https://oc-media.org/homophobic-mob-celebrates-on-tbilisi-streets-after-pride-march-cancelled; Radio Tavisupleba. არ დაგიცვეს თუ ვერ არა კიდევ რას ეკითხებოდნენ დაშავებულ ჟურნალისტებს გამოძიებაზე? https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31345550.html; Net Gazeti: 5 ივლისის ძალადობის ჯგუფურ ორგანიზებაზე მიუთითებს ყოველფერი, გამოძიების გარდა https://netgazeti.ge/news/552711/
With this statement, we also call on Georgian authorities and leaders to swiftly respond to the recent instances of hate crime incidents with unambiguous public condemnation and prevent the proliferation of hate speech and incitement to violence and social divide.

Georgia should take immediate action to address LGBTI-phobic violence and the climate of fear that prevails within the LGBTI+ community, in order to prevent an escalation of violence and hate crimes, lack of trust in institutions within the LGBTI community, and to ensure that Georgia fulfils their international human rights obligations, in line with the 22 LGBTI recommendations accepted during this 3rd Cycle.

Thank you, Madam President.