



#### 49th Session of the Human Rights Council

Meeting on enhancing technical cooperation and capacity-building in promoting and protecting the human rights of persons in vulnerable and marginalized situations in recovery efforts during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

**Joint Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association, Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie Van Homoseksualiteit - COC Nederland, Swedish Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights – RFSL and OutRight Action International**

Mr. President, distinguished panellists,

This is a joint statement. In June 2020, when we were just few months into this COVID19 pandemic, we presented to this Council a statement on behalf of 187 organisations drawing the attention of the UN Human Rights Council to the situation of LGBTI persons and those who defend their rights in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak<sup>1</sup>.

While the pandemic continues to deeply impact the human rights of all populations across the board, it has heightened effects on populations who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including LGBTI persons. These impacts have been visibly pronounced on LGBTI persons' access to health, their well-being, and livelihoods, and unveiled deeper structural injustices. There has also been rise in violence and discrimination and a shrinking of civic space.

We therefore welcome this meeting on technical cooperation and capacity building as a way for member states to share good practices, grounded on a human rights-based approach, as well as identifying gaps in the protection of vulnerable and marginalised populations, including persons of diverse SOGIESC, in the context of responding to the COVID19 pandemic.

In this spirit, we welcome the report of the Independent Expert on SOGI on COVID19<sup>2</sup> that had identified that response measures to the pandemic adopted by states must be compliant with principles of equality and non-discrimination, participation, empowerment and accountability.

The report also provides three fundamental processes that must be continued or put in place for recovery efforts during and after the pandemic: 1) the political decision of acknowledging and embracing diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity; 2) adopting decided measures to deconstruct stigma and 3) adopting evidence-based approaches with the involvement of LGBT organizations in designing and implementing State responses.

**We would then ask the panellists and other stakeholders: 1) what are the main impacts of the COVID19 pandemic in the LGBTI population you were able to identify and; 2) which measures were taken in order to protect the human rights of this population in responding to the pandemic; 3) how will you implement and follow-up on the good practices shared today for LGBTI populations**

Thank you Mr. President.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ilga.org/downloads/HRC\\_statement\\_LGBTI\\_persons\\_and\\_Covid\\_19.pdf](https://ilga.org/downloads/HRC_statement_LGBTI_persons_and_Covid_19.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> A/75/258 , para. 38.