

50th Session of the Human Rights Council

Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women (morning meeting)

Joint Statement by European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Federation and the International Lesbian and Gay Association

27 June 2022

Madame Chair, Distinguished Panelists,

We strongly welcome the holding of this panel that sheds light on the important intersection of climate change and the need to combat violence against women.

As shown by panelists, climate change, environmental degradation, the scarcity of natural resources, and environment-related emergencies deepen poverty and exacerbate the risks of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls.

This panel shows that climate **change adversely affects** people, especially women, at the receiving end of **systemic** discrimination, from systemic racism and poverty, to socioeconomic marginalization. In this context, women who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and/or sex characteristics are among the worst affected.

Discrimination, violence and exclusion based on SOGIESC is maintained by deeply rooted norms, institutions, and practices. Systems of power often fail to acknowledge or address these pre-existing **systemic** realities. Consequently, disaster risk reduction methods often leave underprivileged people with diverse SOGIESC to find solutions of their own, a reality that amounts to violations of human rights.¹

Women and girls who are perceived as not conforming to prevailing sexual and gender norms are often categorically excluded from recovery, relief and response efforts. For instance, LGBTQI women and girls can face exclusion and discriminatory attitudes when trying to access safe shelters that fulfil their needs.

When adopting disaster risk reduction measures or responding to climate emergencies, it is fundamental that states provide training, sensitization and awareness-raising for all authorities and service providers on multiple forms of gender-based violence, **taking into account the inalienable rights of lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex women and girls**².

Likewise, all health services operating in circumstances of natural disaster need to consistently address the specific needs of LGBTQI women and girls.

¹ Edge Effect, The Only Way is UP

² CEDAW GR 37para. 57

We therefore urge member states and stakeholders to ensure that women of diverse SOGIESC are protected from violence and discrimination in the context of climate change and ask the panelists to reflect on challenges and best practices to protect and include this group.