

**34<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council –  
Item 6 – UPR Outcome Iceland  
Statement by International Lesbian and Gay Association  
Joined by: European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Federation  
March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

*Delivered by: Senka Juzbasic*

Thank you, Mr. President,

This statement is made in consultation with Samtökin 78 the national queer organization of Iceland. We welcome the UPR first recommendation to Iceland based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) grounds, and we commend Iceland for accepting this recommendation.

However, of great concern are medical treatments in Iceland, carried out on intersex infants unable to give consent to “normalise” their sex characteristics. These violations are a breach of the rights of children as laid out in the CRC and confirmed by many recommendations to other countries than Iceland, which enact the same violations upon children. It is of note that the UNCAT has also issued multiple recommendations to various countries that these practices constitute torture, cruel, degrading or inhumane treatment. Intersex people have limited access to redress due to a ten-year statute of limitation on reporting medical mistreatment.

Although there is a general stipulation of other grounds within the constitution, Iceland has no legislation explicitly covering discrimination on SOGIESC grounds in the fields of employment, housing, or health and only covers sexual orientation or gender identity in other areas.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the inclusion of the grounds of sex characteristics in existing hate crime and hate speech legislation would serve to protect a vulnerable intersex community.

The Directorate of Immigration of Iceland offers no training to its staff or translators on issues about sexual orientation or gender identity as clearly stated in the UNHCR guidelines for claims of refugee status based on sexual orientation or gender identity, which the institution reports it follows.

We hope to see Iceland taking decisive actions to rectify these factors before the next UPR cycle and are hopeful they will, due to their track record of aiming to uphold LGBTI person's rights.

I thank you Mr. President

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<sup>1</sup> In the Council of Europe region, Iceland is in the 35<sup>th</sup> place out of 42 countries in these fields.