SECTION 1
Highlighting
The women of ILGA World

ILGA World Co-Secretaries
Elected at the Wellington - New Zealand World Conference in March of 2019

ILGA World Women’s Committee

Since the 2019 ILGA World Conference in Wellington, New Zealand, the World Board includes five activists representing five new committees: bisexual, intersex, trans, youth and women. Each Committee is composed of seven people: one who coordinates the committee, and six activists, one from each region.

From left to right: Women’s Committee, Cristina González Hurtado (She/her), Organization Corporación Femm, Colombia. // Intersex Committee, Tony Brijfa (She/her), Organization Intersex Human Rights Australia, Australia. Trans Committee, Jabulani Pereira (He/him), Organization Iranti, South Africa. // Bisexual Committee, Rāwā Karetai (He/him), Organization, Rainbow Lifestyle Protection, New Zealand. // Co-Secretary General, Ymania Brown (She/her). // Director of Programs, Julia Ehrt (She/her). // Executive Director, André Du Plessis (He/him). // Youth Committee, Martín Karadzhov (He/him), Organization Metro Centre Ltd. ; and LGBT Consortium, The UK and Bulgaria. // Co-secretary General, Luz Elena Aranda (She/her).

The ILGA World Women’s Committee is composed of

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<th>Committee Coordination</th>
<th>ILGA Area</th>
<th>ILGA Region</th>
<th>Latin America and the Caribbean</th>
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<th>ILGA Oceania</th>
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<td>Cristina González Hurtado</td>
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<td>Sandra Kwikiriza</td>
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First Meeting of the Five ILGA Global Committees Geneva Switzerland- June 2019. Photo by: Ben Buckland
Who lead LGBTQI Organizations in ILGA World

IRANIAN LESBIAN AND TRANSGENDER NETWORK (6RANG)
Iran – ILGA Asia

Shadi Amin runs an organization called 6Rang – she is currently one of the two regional co-secretaries of ILGA Asia. 6Rang, the Iranian Lesbian and Transgender Network, was created following the first meeting of Iranian lesbians and trans people, which took place in 2010. Its network and contacts include more than 200 LGBTI people, most of whom live in Iran. Its mission is to raise awareness about sexual rights and eradicate homophobia, transphobia and violence against lesbians and, especially, transgender people, as well as violence against the LGBTI community in general. 6Rang highlights the fact that, due to the Islamic Republic’s discriminatory laws and codes, which favor heterosexual males over other people, and also because of the patriarchal power structure that is deep-rooted in Iranian culture, lesbians and trans people are the most marginalized groups in Iranian society. 6Rang is a member of ILGA World.

ALMAS CAUTIVAS ASOCIACIÓN CIVIL
Mexico – ILGA LAC

Ari Vera Morales leads an organization called Almas Cautivas (Captive Souls) – she is one of the regional co-secretaries of ILGALAC.

Almas Cautivas AC is a non-profit civil association created by trans women on June 3, 2013. They work to support the incarcerated LGBT population, but also take an interest in other groups in vulnerable situations, such as indigenous people, the elderly and persons with disabilities. The organization also works to create conditions that allow for greater development opportunities for LGBT people who are not in prison, and to promote a culture of respect and inclusion. Almas Cautivas AC is a member of ILGA World.

INTERSEX HUMAN RIGHTS AUSTRALIA
Australia – ILGA Oceania

Tony Briffa is the co-director of Intersex Human Rights Australia and is currently the Chair of the Intersex People’s Committee.

Intersex Human Rights Australia is an independent advocacy, education and policy development organization, by and for people born with differences in sexual characteristics or intersex traits. Her work focuses on human rights and bodily autonomy as well as self-determination and evidence-based, patient-directed health care. Intersex Human Rights Australia is a member of ILGA World.
Lesbians at the UN

In September 1995, the Fourth World Conference of Women took place in Beijing. More than 6,000 government delegates and 4,000 accredited representatives of non-governmental organizations took part in the negotiations, and more than 30,000 women from all over the world attended the NGO Forum, which was held in parallel in Huairou, 70 kilometers away from Beijing. The Chinese government arranged for the women (and especially, the feminists) to meet far away from where the high dignitaries of the member states, the delegations and diplomatic missions were meeting. Perhaps this was due to poor organization or “logistical convenience”, or perhaps it was because they knew in advance that, for the very first time, lesbians would be gathering together and would be visible, organized, noisy and invincible. We can’t know with certainty what motivated this choice of venue, especially more than 25 years after the event; but what we know for sure is that the lesbians were there, out in the open, in the middle of the Chinese mud and rain, in a vibrant tent with more than 23 permanent activities, for eight days in a row.

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The World Conference on Women is a high-level meeting organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) through the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Its objective is to guarantee the rights of women. Four World Women’s Conferences have been held. The first happened in Mexico in 1975, and subsequently in Copenhagen in 1980, Nairobi in 1985 and Beijing in 1995. All of these conferences have sought to reach a consensus among nations for the application of social, civil, political, economic and educational strategies, and each has had a specific theme. The fourth and most recent conference was a turning point for the global gender equality agenda. The Beijing Declaration and Action Platform are considered to be the most progressive and comprehensive program in the fight for the rights of women and girls. In addition, for the first time, this conference extended the framework of “women’s rights”, which was broadened to include the gender perspective and the interconnection of rights.

The unanimous approval and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Action Platform was achieved when the 189 UN Member States gathered in China signed it, affirming it as “…the leading global policy document on gender equality, as well as on the emerging issues that affect gender equality and women’s empowerment”.

Lesbians had never been so explicitly represented at World Women’s Conferences before. Lesbian and Mexican activist Nancy Cárdenas, along with other lesbians from around the world who were in the Mexico Conference in 1975, held a closed-door meeting, which marked the beginning of lesbian activism at world conferences. Later, lesbians attended the NGO Forum as part of the representative organizations of each region in Nairobi in 1985. They began to join forces with lesbians from other regions and were able to learn from the good practices of more established organizations. Upon their return, this experience allowed them to gain more clarity in terms of their direction and how to organize themselves and to advance towards the next world conference. Thus, many lesbian activists around the world were clear about the message and were determined to get “a room of their own” in the next NGO Forum and in the official conference. In this way, during the first five years of the 1990s, they attended the forums, the meetings, and of course, the Regional Women’s Conferences and the Beijing Preparatory Conferences. Many others gathered in New York in 1994 at the ILGA Annual Conference, where the 25th anniversary of the Stonewell riots was commemorated.

Gloria Careaga, psychologist, feminist, teacher and Mexican lesbian activist, was part of the lesbian groups that took on the task of creating a dialog with the organizing committee of the NGO Forum, as well as with the missions of each UN country, in order to bring to light the human rights situation of lesbians and to highlight the importance of allowing them to have a specific space within the Forum.
During the 39th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in early 1995 in New York, these groups of committed lesbians presented the Secretary of the Fourth World Conference of Women, Gertrude Mongella (Tanzania), with more than 6,000 physical signatures for a letter that was a demonstration of support for the presence of lesbians in the meetings. The Organizing Committee of the NGO Forum, headed by Masdid Supatra (Thailand), and its Executive Director, Irene Santiago (Philippines), subsequently recognized lesbians as having the right to a space of their own: they would be assigned an exclusive thematic tent for them alone. Significantly, that same year, lesbians, as represented by Patria Jiménez from Mexico, participated in a significant way and gave a presentation for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at the Committee’s 39th Session.

Strategically organized lesbians arrived in Beijing and Huairou, some as part of official delegations, others as members of lesbian organizations and as observers, and yet others as participants in the NGO Forum. The most important achievement was that they now had a definition of sexual rights in which they felt recognized, and, for the first time, the concept of “sexual orientation” was included in several sections of the text of the Platform for Action. This was all thanks to the tireless promotion and discussions initiated by these lesbians in social media and other publications in the months leading up to it.

At the conference itself, the international NGO IGLHRC (International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission) was able to participate and had its turn during the plenary of the conference for lesbians. Beverley Palesa Ditsie of the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand - GLOW Group from South Africa represented them by saying: “If the World Conference on Women is to address the concerns of all women, it must also recognize that discrimination based on sexual orientation is a violation of basic human rights.” On that September 13, 1995, lesbians made history at the UN.

25 years later, the work continues. That is why ILGA World advocates for the human rights of lesbians and BTQI+ women at the UN, collaborating with various United Nations groups, such as the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (SR VAW), the Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (WG DAW) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Escrito por
Cristina González Hurtado
Colombian feminist and lesbian
Coordinator of the ILGA World
Women’s Committee
lapochi@corporacion-femm.org

January of 2021
Sources consulted:
At ILGA World, we are working to ensure that the voices of women in our communities are present and visible at the United Nations. To that end, we collaborate with various United Nations treaty bodies and mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SR VAW), the Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls (WG DAW) and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Local community organizations have different opportunities to participate in the activities of these groups. Opportunities include, for example, the drafting and presentation of shadow reports, meeting with United Nations experts during country visits, and providing information for expert United Nations reports on these issues.

In April 2020, at ILGA World, we organized a webinar to discuss the different options for promoting women in our communities. You can watch the video of this webinar here.

In July 2020, in consultation with local LBTQI women’s groups, we made four statements during the Human Rights Council session. Our statements covered topics such as violence against women journalists, women and employment, so-called “corrective rape”, and the situation of LBTQI women during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also presented a report on rape and sexual violence against LBTQI women to the Special Rapporteur on violence against women (SR VAW), for use in its next report.

The following countries will be audited by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2021: Bahrain, Bhutan, Chile, China, China (Hong Kong), China (Macao), United Arab Emirates, Spain, Russian Federation, Hungary, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mauritania, Namibia, Nicaragua, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen.

If you are from one of these countries and wish to submit a shadow report to the Committee, please contact Kseniya Kirichenko (kseniya@ilga.org).

Similarly, the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, Claudia Mahler, has been mandated by the United Nations Human Rights Council to report on developments, issues, and protection gaps in the attainment of rights for older women; if you and/or your organization wish to provide information on the human rights situation of older LBTQI Women, please do so before March 22, or get in touch with Kseniya Kirichenko.

You can see the call from the Independent Expert here:


Kseniya Kirichenko (woman, lesbian) is a human rights defender, lawyer, and intersectional feminist. Currently, she works at ILGA as the person responsible for the defense of women before the UN and is also a member of the board of directors of the European Lesbian Conference. She has been working in the human rights movement since 2003, and before joining ILGA, her work focused on LGBTI rights, women’s rights, reproductive rights and the rights of sex workers; she has worked with a variety of groups and networks, particularly in the “post-Soviet” region.
The Feminist Review Trust
Support for projects that transform women’s lives

The Feminist Review is an interdisciplinary journal that contributes to the new agendas of feminism. The foundation (trust) is an effort for the journal to support women; it was created in 2001 in London and given charity status in 2005. These grants reflect the diverse lives of women around the world and support the creativity with which women fight against the inequalities they face.

The Feminist Review Trust funds projects that are difficult to finance or that have no other obvious sources of funding; they also offer funds to help kick start initiatives, with the aim of attracting enough funding that these can later continue, as well as engaging in training and development projects, and other projects related to specific activities.

Some priority issues are: the rights of the lesbian and transgender community, violence against women and girls, a focus girls and women with disabilities, and women and girls with refugee status.

Global Fund for Women

Directs resources to organizations led by women, girls and trans people. They support organizations that are led by historically marginalized groups and who are working to build strong and united movements for gender equality and human rights.

Given the limited available funding, only organizations that have submitted a proposal will be invited. If you would like your organization to be considered, please register it in order submit an organization profile.

The Fund for Global Human Rights

The Fund for Global Human Rights supports LGBTQ people who are working for protection against violence and discrimination when accessing essential resources, and who fight for social, economic and political equality. They support LGBTQ organizations in all the regions in which they work, amplifying the voices of courageous activists who are campaigning for equal treatment and equal opportunities as human beings and as citizens.

The LGBTQ Fund donor organizations courageously document and demand justice for violent attacks, guide national protection policies, and ensure that factors such as who a person loves and which identity they choose does not impact their ability to find a place to live, to find employment, or to receive an education.

For the year 2021, the submission and decision deadlines are as follows:

i) April 30, submission deadline for the July 31 decision (Round 2 - 2021)
ii) September 10, submission deadline for the December 15 decision (Round 3 - 2021)

Women Moving Forward Together | 07
SECTION 6
#ILGA2019NZ
ALL WOMEN ARE WOMEN

Women Moving Forward Together
Thank you for receiving the first version of the ILGA World Women's Committee magazine. This magazine will be published bimonthly in the year 2021.

You can send your contributions to the following email addresses: lapochi@corporacion-femm.org and women@board.ilga.org

Acknowledgements

Women of the ILGA World Committee of Women: Brenda, Teresa, Winnie, María and Sandra.
Women who were part of the World Committee of Women: Olena Shevchenko - ILGA Europa y Bess Hepworth - ILGA Oceania
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Luz Elena Aranda - Co-Secretary General
Daniele Paletta - Communications Coordinator
Kseniya Kirichenko - Program Coordinator (UN Advocacy, Women and Training)
Polyxeni Kallini - Senior Finance Officer - Grants and Report Submission
André du Plessis - Executive Director

And to all LBTQI women!