

**29<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council**

**Annual Full Day Discussion on the human rights of women**

**Joint statement by the Allied Rainbow Communities International and  
the International Lesbian and Gay Association**

*Delivered by Helen Nolan*

Mr. President

We would like to draw attention to specific forms of domestic violence inflicted upon women and girls who violate traditional gender roles and stereotypes. As the most recent report of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women highlights, such women are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, violence and criminalization within their own cultural and religious communities. The forms of repression and control are accentuated when it comes to lesbian, bisexual and trans women and girls. To give an example, between 2013 and 2014, 30 murders against trans women were recorded in Colombia alone, most of which occurred in their homes or public spaces.

Mr President

In many parts of the world, women who love women are subjected to forms of escalating domestic violence which have in many cases driven lesbian women to suicide.

If women choose to violate the norms of gender through self-identification, dress, speech or mannerisms, they are subjected to severe violence in an effort to make them conform. Sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are often seen as the same thing by those who perpetuate violence against them. Lesbian women, butch or otherwise, trans men and gender fluid women are subject to corrective rape, beatings and even killings by family members, state and non-state actors.

We assert the right of women to full bodily autonomy as well as the right to freely express their identity, including through the intimate bonds they may choose to form with the partner of their choice. We condemn the fact that domestic violence is consciously used by both state and non-state actors such as the family, community and society in an effort to deny women the promise of equal rights.

Mr President

We would also like to state that when states endeavour to move one-sided resolutions whose purported aim is to protect the family, these attempts ignore the fact that for lesbian, bisexual and trans women, the family is often a source of violence. By doing so, they legitimize violence by families of lesbian, bisexual and trans women.

Any restrictions by both state and society on women's autonomy is antithetical to the text and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We urge the Council to continue addressing gender-based violence, in particular against lesbian, bisexual and trans women.

Thank you Mr President.