

27th session of the Human Rights Council
September 2014
ITEM 6 - Dominica
Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association

Delivered by Linda Reanate Baumann

Thank you Mr. President,

This statement is made in consultation with Minority Rights Dominica (MiRiDom) who works on the subject of human rights and sexual orientation and gender identity.

We want to express our disappointment with the response given by the Government of Dominica to the recommendations made on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, specifically about the laws that discriminate against lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people in the country.

The dismissive treatment of these recommendations perfectly illustrates the lack of response to the human rights abuses on ground of sexual orientation and gender identity in Dominica. The government has failed to respond to any of the concerns raised on these grounds and LGBT people are 'invisible' and continue to suffer from taunting, bullying, and physical and mental abuse in their communities. These abuses are encouraged by the government's refusal to repeal the anti-buggery law.

We are also disappointed that the government does not effectively respond to complaints on human rights abuses against LGBT persons. They are told to 'convert' from being homosexual, lesbian or bisexual to being heterosexual. They are threatened with psychiatric treatment to 'cure' their 'mental illness' and in worst cases to send them to prison up to ten years. This situation should change in Dominica.

We therefore call on the government to take the following measures:

- Remove the Anti Buggery Laws from the legislation of Dominica
- Create a Human Rights Institution that would look at human rights complaints in the country.
- Undertake an investigation on the status of the LGBT community in Dominica, to assess their situation in relation to fundamental human rights and to improve, where necessary, their current situation on the island; bringing together Government institutions, LGBT organizations and NGOs.
- Ensure training for the law enforcement officers to be sensitized to the fact that LGBT people are to be treated with dignity and are due their equal rights.

Thank you Mr. President.