Mr. President,

This statement is made on behalf of ILGA and has been drafted in collaboration with 14 transgender and gender-diverse activists from the Global South and East.

We greatly value the Independent Expert's report outlining how the right to freedom of religion or belief and sexual orientation and gender identity are mutually reinforcing and indivisible. There still are multiple laws, policies, and cultural practices worldwide that perpetuate human rights abuses against LGBTI persons in the name of religion.

We also celebrate the fact that the Independent Expert recognizes that the right to freedom of religion or belief is a right of individuals and not of states or religions. This recognition calls for true independence from States intervention in the individual choice of spirituality. This is crucial to stop the direct and indirect violence and discrimination inflicted on LGBTI people based on religion or belief.

We want to highlight that more exploration on “conversion therapies” practices in the name of religion would not only benefit the report’s premises but also provide more valuable data to stop these practices. Religious leaders are among the most vocal proponents of conversion therapy, and many advocate for the implementation of "conversion therapy" laws and form alliances with influential media outlets and political structures to support and protect this practice.

In this context, special attention should be given to trans youth who are forced into conversion practices with the aim of preventing them from transitioning /or making them stop or reversal this
process to fit the social binary stereotypes\textsuperscript{1}. In fact, research has revealed that trans persons exposed to these practices before the age of 10 are more likely to commit suicide\textsuperscript{2}.

Therefore, banning conversion practices is not enough. There is a need for individual crisis care and general counseling services for conversion practices survivors that are both LGBTI-inclusive and religion-friendly. Gender sensitive and gender responding remedies are necessary, including reparation, rehabilitation and compensation.

We ask the Independent Expert how would he promote reparations and compensations for the survivors of this practice?

We thank you, Mr. President.


\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.