Mr. President,

We celebrate the references to LGBTIQ+ communities made by the Working Group in their report, particularly when tackling the lack of access to justice and reproductive healthcare due to the interlinks between criminal laws and economic or social status. We also commend the intersectional approach of the report and its recommendations to establish systems to collect disaggregated data considering the multiple dimensions of inequalities and poverty.

We would like to further raise awareness about the heightened levels of poverty and economic inequality experienced by LBTI women and gender diverse people, and its roots and causes. LBTI women’s economic vulnerability is often shaped by labor market and employment discrimination, as well as the group’s crosscutting exclusion from social and civil rights’ systems. For instance, the ILO has highlighted that due to discrimination, trans women are sometimes excluded entirely from formal employment and pushed into survival sex work, including in dangerous conditions.\(^1\)

LBTI women often have reduced access to social and employment benefits. In the workplace, lesbian couples can be denied access to health insurance for their partner. In the event that one partner dies, a lack of legal recognition for lesbian couples can mean exclusions from benefits for the surviving partner\(^2\), such as access to the deceased’s pension and death benefit\(^3\). LBTI women, and especially trans women, engaged in sex work, including as a way to survive, are excluded from

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employment-related social protections due to the criminalization of sex work. In addition, due to intersecting forms of marginalization, LBTI women face additional barriers to securing housing and shelter. There is significant evidence to affirm that LBTI women and gender-diverse people in general are at greater risk of experiencing homelessness in many countries.

The increased risk of poverty and homelessness has an adverse effect on the health status of LBTI women, as well as the accessibility of healthcare for this group.

Lastly, intersectional factors well-known to be the accelerators of poverty risks, affect LBTI women and gender diverse people particularly leading to them being in even more precarious situations. This is the case when they are de facto or legally single mothers; when they migrate to safer countries and their previous work history is not recognised or their pension benefits are restricted significantly; or when they are aging. These factors are rooted in intersecting systems of oppression, such as patriarchy and heteronormativity, but also racism, capitalism, imperialism, ageism and ableism. Thus it is an intersectional and universal problem that concerns every state.

We encourage the Working Group to continue assessing the issue of poverty and inequality from the angle of SOGI and pay particular attention to the specific barriers and issues faced by LBTI women and gender-diverse persons. The intersectional stigmatization experienced by women and girls who are LBTI and living in poverty should be combated in all levels.

I thank you, Mr. President.

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