

[HRC41 | UN renews crucial mandate for protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity](#)

12.07.2019

This is another historic victory, not only for communities of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, but for humanity as a whole: In a defining vote, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert focusing on the protection against violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.



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The resolution was adopted by a vote of 27 in favour, with 12 voting against and 7 abstentions.

HRC 2019 20.03.2019 LAST TEMPLATE		
L.16/Rev.1 - Mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity		
ABST	AFGHANISTAN	YES
YES	ANGOLA	ABST
YES	ARGENTINA	YES
YES	AUSTRALIA	YES
YES	AUSTRIA	NO
YES	BAHAMAS	YES
NO	BAHRAIN	ABST
NO	BANGLADESH	YES
YES	BRAZIL	ABST
YES	BULGARIA	NO
ABST	BURKINA FASO	YES
YES	CAMEROON	YES
YES	CHILE	YES
NO	CHINA	YES
YES	CROATIA	NO
YES	CUBA	NO
YES	CZECH REPUBLIC	YES
ABST	DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	YES
YES	DENMARK	NO
YES	EGYPT	YES
NO	ERITREA	NO
YES	FIJI	ABST
YES	HUNGARY	YES
YES	ICELAND	NO
YES	INDIA	YES
YES	IRAQ	YES
YES	ITALY	ABST
YES	JAPAN	YES
YES	MEXICO	YES
YES	NEPAL	YES
YES	NIGERIA	YES
YES	PAKISTAN	YES
YES	PERU	YES
YES	PHILIPPINES	YES
YES	QATAR	YES
YES	RWANDA	YES
YES	SAUDI ARABIA	YES
YES	SENEGAL	YES
YES	SLOVAKIA	YES
YES	SOMALIA	YES
YES	SOUTH AFRICA	YES
YES	SPAIN	YES
YES	TOGO	YES
YES	TUNISIA	YES
YES	UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	YES
YES	URUGUAY	YES

YES	27	ABST	7	NO	12
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The campaign calling on the Council to renew the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI was supported by 1,312 non-governmental organisations from 174 States and territories.

“This is another historic victory, not only for communities of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, but for humanity as a whole”, said Paula Sebastiao of Arquivo de Identidade Angolano in Angola and Simran Shaikh, Asia coordinator of the Trans Respect v. Transphobia project, on behalf of 63 human rights groups worldwide. “ Following the call from a record number of organisations from every region imaginable, the UN Human Rights Council has reaffirmed its commitment to combat discrimination and violence on grounds of SOGI and has reminded all States of their obligations towards these communities.”

Created in 2016, the UN Independent Expert on SOGI has been supported by an ever-growing number of States from all regions of the world. The resolution to create and renew the mandate was presented by a Core Group of seven Latin American countries - Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Uruguay.

“The renewal of this mandate demonstrates how United Nations States’ support for tackling violence and discrimination against people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities has grown tremendously,” said UN Trans Advocacy Week campaigners. “The Independent Expert is crucial in bringing international attention to specific violations and challenges faced by trans

and gender-diverse persons in all regions.”

Although the renewal process had to overcome 10 hostile amendments, the core of the resolution in affirming the universal nature of international human rights law stands firm.

“The existence of a specific UN human rights mechanism looking at SOGI issues is crucial for our communities to be heard at the global level,” added Ryan Silverio of ASEAN SOGIE Caucus from the Philippines. “If the world is truly committed to leaving no one behind, it can’t shy away from addressing the violence and discrimination that we face. Laws criminalising our identities and actions are unjust and should no longer be tolerated”.

The UN Independent Expert on SOGI is tasked with assessing implementation of existing international human rights law, by talking to States, and working collaboratively with other UN and regional mechanisms to address violence and discrimination. Through the work of this mandate since 2016, the impact of criminalisation of same-sex relations and lack of legal gender recognition, the importance of data-collection specific to SOGI communities, and examples of good practices to prevent discrimination have been highlighted globally, with visits to Argentina, Georgia, Mozambique and Ukraine.

“A record number of organisations from every region imaginable has been calling for the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert,” said Tess McEvoy, Programme manager at ISHR. “His vital work will now continue and help make our societies more fair, equal and inclusive. We at ISHR are very proud to have been part of this process, along with several of our alumni,” continued Helen Nolan, Programme Manager at ISHR.

We hope that all governments cooperate fully with the UN Independent Expert on SOGI in this important work to bring about a world free from violence and discrimination for all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

“Our communities have witnessed both fundamental victories and alarming setbacks in recent years,” said Manisha Dhakal of Blue Diamond Society from Nepal, and ILGA Asia co-Chair. “Amidst this challenging political and social climate, the presence of an expert who can foster dialogue and assist States towards more inclusive policies is of fundamental importance.”

For more information, please contact Tess McEvoy at t.mcevoy@ishr.ch or Helen Nolan at h.nolan@ishr.ch

Organisations signing the statement:

42 Degrees

ABGLT - ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE LESBICAS, GAYS, BISSEXUAIS, TRAVESTIS, TRANSEXUAIS E INTERSEXOS

Accountability International

Amnesty International

ARC International

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus

Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTNet)

Asistencia Legal por los Derechos Humanos A.C. (ASILEGAL)

Asociación OTD Chile

Caribe Afirmativo

çavaria

Centro de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos – Promsex
CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality
COC Nederland
Colectivo Alejandria
Comunidad Homosexual Argentina (CHA)
Conurbanes por la Diversidad- Argentina
Egale Canada
Equality Australia
ERA - LGBTI Equal Rights Association for Western Balkans and Turkey
Fundación Afrodescendiente por las Diversidades Sociales y Sexuales - SOMOS IDENTIDAD
Fundacion Arcoiris por el respeto a la diversidad sexual
Fundación Reflejos de Venezuela
GATE
Gender DynamiX
GIN-SSOGIE
Haus of Khameleon
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia
Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum
Human Rights Law Centre
IGLYO - International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Intersex Youth and Student Organisation
ILGA Asia
ILGA World
ILGALAC - Asociación Internacional de Lesbianas, Gays, Bisexuales, Trans e Intersex para América Latina y El Caribe
International Family Equality Day
International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)
International Service for Human Rights
Iranti
Korean Lawyers for Public Interest and Human Rights (KLPH)
Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret y Derechos Humanos AC
LGBTI Support Center
LSVD Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany
Namibia Diverse Women's Association (NDWA)
ODRI Intersectional rights
OutRight Action International
Pacific Human Rights Initiative
People's Matrix
People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy
Planet Ally
Red Latinoamericana GayLatino
REDTRANS Nicaragua
RFSL, the Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights
RFSU
RWS - India's Diverse Chamber
Stichting NNID
Synergía - Initiatives for Human Rights
The International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights
Trans Pasefika
TransAction (Aotearoa / New Zealand)

Transgender Europe (TGEU)
Transgender Liberation Front(abbr. TLF)
Valientes de Corazón Ecuador
Young Queer Alliance

Photos: Main illustration Lukas Berredo; picture of vote results: #RenewIESOGI Coalition

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