

## **Top UN human rights body condemns violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity**

(Geneva, September 26, 2014) – The United Nations Human Rights Council resolution on combatting violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (L.27/Rev.1), adopted today, is a critically important achievement for upholding the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 25 human rights groups said today. The resolution follows a resolution adopted three years ago in June 2011, when the Council passed the first ever UN resolution on human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, and 42 additional co-sponsors introduced the resolution. In its presentation to the Council, Chile stated that “this resolution does not seek to create new rights...there are some whose rights are more violated and need more protection.” Colombia added “the report that we request is part of existing international law.” The resolution survived a total of seven hostile amendments, introduced by Egypt on behalf of ten States, seeking to strip the resolution of all references to sexual orientation and gender identity. Brazil stated that the proposed amendments would “seek to radically change the purpose and focus of the resolution and changes its substance.” Ultimately, the resolution was passed by a vote of 25 in favor, 14 against, and 7 abstentions, with support from all regions and an increased base of support since 2011.

“The leadership of these Latin American states reflects strong commitment to human rights for all and follows the significant progress that is being made by governments and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, travesti, and intersex activists in the region, “ said Andres Rivera Duarte from the Observatorio Derechos Humanos y Legislación, Chile.

The resolution asks the High Commissioner for Human Rights to update a 2012 study on violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (A/HRC/19/41), with a view to sharing good practices and ways to overcome violence and discrimination. The resolution expresses grave concern at acts of violence and discrimination in all regions of the world committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. This resolution demonstrates that this issue remains on the agenda of the Human Rights Council and sends a message of support to people around the world who experience this type of violence and discrimination, said the 25 groups.

“While we would have preferred to see an institutionalized reporting mechanism, the council has still sent a strong message of support to human rights defenders working on these issues. We look forward to States implementing the outcomes of these reports,” said Jonas Bagas, of TLF Share in the Philippines.

Advocates welcomed supportive remarks made by the newly appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights earlier in the Council session. “There is no justification ever, for the degrading, the debasing or the exploitation of other human beings – on whatever basis: nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or caste,” said Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. These comments follow on ground-breaking work by his predecessor, Navi Pillay, and UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.

“This pattern of human rights violations is global in nature, and therefore requires a global response. In all regions of the world, including in Europe, discrimination and violence on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity are a daily reality for many,” said Nori Spauwen from COC Netherlands. “The Human Rights Council resolution is a significant moment for global LGBTI movements, and for people around the world who have worked tirelessly for human rights for everyone,” said Monica Tabengwa, LGBT rights

researcher and an ILGA Board Member, Kenya. "We intend to press the Council to keep these concerns atop its agenda, and ensure sustained attention and action."

The following groups support this statement:

Amnesty International (Laura Carter +44-7771-796091)  
ARC International (Kim Vance +1-902-488-6404)  
Asociación Internacional de Lesbianas, Gays, Bisexuales, Trans e Intersex para America Latina y el Caribe (ILGALAC)  
CariFLAGS  
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales - CELS  
COC Nederland (Nori Spauwen +31-611-748008)  
Conectas Direitos Humanos  
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Human Rights Law Centre (Anna Brown +61-917-594-4616)  
Human Rights Watch  
International Commission of Jurists  
International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission  
International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (Andre du Plessis +41-79-678-1229)  
International Service for Human Rights (Pooja Patel +41-76-787-3928)  
Iranti-Org  
MantiQitna Network  
Mulabi/Latin American Space for Sexualities and Rights  
Observatorio Derechos Humanos y Legislación  
Pan-Africa ILGA (Monica Tabengwa +254-788-736119)  
TLF Share  
United and Strong  
Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby

**Records of Vote on the resolution:**

States supporting: Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Montenegro, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America, Venezuela, Viet Nam

States against: Algeria, Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, The Russian Federation

Abstentions: Burkina Faso, China, Congo, Kazakhstan, India, Namibia, Sierra Leone

Absent: Benin

**Co-Sponsors of the resolution:** Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.