



29th Session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3 - Interactive Dialogue with The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences

Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association¹

Mr. President

20 years ago, UN Member States adopted the ground-breaking Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, taking up the global call to end all forms of violence against women, noting it as one of the main mechanisms denying women equality, imposing high social, health and economic costs. Violence against Women (VAW) continues to be a global concern.

(The UN Secretary General has also made VAW a priority area of concern, with his “In-depth study on VAW” and subsequent initiatives.)

We welcome the reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences in relation to her visits to Honduras and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. We commend the Special Rapporteur for drawing attention to the increase in violence against and killings of sex workers, LGBTI women of ethnic minority communities; the heightened risks faced by women human rights defenders by both State and non-State actors.

The reports make particular mention of lesbian and transgender women being subjected to violence, rape, bullying, harassment, abuse and many forms of discrimination, including in the context of employment and migration. Other concerns regarding negative narratives around single parenting; the infantilization of women with disabilities; the stereotyped assumptions of refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women; and LBT women’s bodily autonomy.

20 years after Beijing, legislative challenges remain. Neither cultural diversity nor freedom of religion may justify violence against women. States must continue to introduce and implement such legal protections, repealing all laws, including state-enforced religious laws that support the patriarchal oppression of women in families and in society at large.

Mr. President

States must move to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. This is a systemic problem that requires a systematic response. In all efforts made to address VAW, States must include disaggregated data, which identifies ways in which women experience intersectional discrimination, including targeted violence of LGBTI women. LGBTI women and girls across the globe urge Member States to ensure any legislation and policy on violence against women is implemented through targeted and sustained funding, with measurable goals and review mechanisms - ensuring concrete, positive impacts on the lived experiences of LGBTI women.

Thank you Mr. President.

¹ Delivered by Kenita Placide of United and Strong Inc. This statement has been made in consultation with Muslims for Progressive Values, Organization Intersex International Australia Limited and United and Strong Inc.