

# World congress on Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity

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**Date :** 2009, May 15th

**Place :** Paris, Assemblée nationale

**Participants :** Ministers, representatives of States and public authorities, representatives of the multilateral institutions, independent experts, NGOs and Human rights defenders.

**Objectives :**

- Lay out the strategy to gather new signatures from other States in favour of the New York Statement of December 18<sup>th</sup>
- Strategize the next steps in the international fora in order to build up momentum for the Statement
- Determine how to coordinate this action with civil society initiatives on this issue

The main discussions, conclusions and recommendations of the Congress will issued in a conference document.

**Organisation :**

- **Official ceremonies** (opening and closing) : statements by Ministers, representatives of States and multilateral institution, VIPs and witnesses; presentation of a prize during the closing ceremony.
- **Round tables on specific themes** held simultaneously.

**Round tables :**

- **4 round tables**, each of them **led by a co-ordinator** and divided in **3 sessions** on different topics related to the main theme of the roundtable.
- Each issue will be led by a **panel of 4 experts, a moderator and a rapporteur** ; the latter will be tasked with drafting up conclusions and recommendations, taking into account previous discussions.
- **General conclusions** will be summed up for each round table at the end of the Congress, by the co-ordinator.

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## Schedule :

<b>08.30-09.30 a.m.</b>	Welcome of participants
<b>09.30-11.00 a.m.</b>	Official opening session (plenary)
<b>11.00-11.30 a.m.</b>	Break
<b>11.30-01.00 p.m.</b>	Round tables / Panels 1
<b>01.00-02.00 p.m.</b>	Standing lunch
<b>02.00-04.00 p.m.</b>	Round tables / Panels 2
<b>04.00-04.30 p.m.</b>	Break
<b>04.30-06.00 p.m.</b>	Round tables / Panels 3
<b>06.00-06.30 p.m.</b>	Break
<b>06.30-07.30 p.m.</b>	Presentation of the working groups' conclusions (plenary)
<b>07.30 p.m.</b>	Official closing session and presentation of a prize, followed by a standing dinner

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# Roundtables

## **Round table 1 : Progress and challenges towards universal decriminalization** (Coordinator : Joël Bedos / IDAHO Comity)

### **Panel 1 : The context/foundation of the UN Statement : What took us there?**

- How have advancements within the UN on related matters (gender, health, development, etc.) enabled a sexual orientation and gender identity agenda to move forward?
- What have been the past and more recent initiatives within the UN system, how the sexual orientation and gender identity issues have been addressed and how have they impacted on the decision to take it to the General Assembly?
- What has been the role of civil society, governments and the UN itself in these processes?

### **Panel 2 : Why does the UN Statement matter?**

- The Statement has been welcomed as a "landmark achievement" in the promotion of the respect of Human Rights for sexual minorities. But what benefits exactly can such a Statement already carry right now, especially for people at field level in the countries that this Statement is aiming at in the first place, i.e. in States that still penalize same sex behavior and gender variance?
- What can be done at local level to have a real impact on LGBT people and their defenders? And what are the necessary conditions for this to happen?
- What should NGOs, experts, supportive governments, media, etc... do in order for this Statement to translate into real action?

### **Panel 3 : The way forward**

- The UN Statement was never meant to be an isolated initiative. It fits into a wider strategy to ensure LGBT Human Rights concerns are effectively taken into account by UN bodies and mechanisms. How can we build on the Statement and past initiatives in the UN, and beyond, to go further towards this objective and what could be the next steps?
- What are the necessary conditions and processes for this to happen in a constructive and fruitful way that helps overcome rather than exacerbate existing tensions between existing blocs?

## **Round table 2 : How can States and civil society cooperate to fight against human rights violations against LGBT people?** (Coordinator : Bernard Scholl / Amnesty International)

### **Panel 1 : Policy, Dialogue Cooperation and Government support**

- How can NGOs help governments to combat Human rights violations that affect LGBT people? It will contain a discussion of typological examples of field level documentation on Human rights violations.
- An unproductive fragmentation within the community of human rights defenders does exist, resulting in diminished effectiveness and scattered support. How could this difficulty be overcome?
- What do local LGBT groups need? What does the global LGBT movement need to support them? How can NGOs support one another and form umbrella associations that regroup as larger entities? What kind of official support or approval might be needed?

### **Panel 2 : Funding the LGBT movement**

- All too often, LGBT groups remain small, with no office space, and very few full time paid activists. How can one leverage more funds into the international LGBT sector?
- What can be done to address this serious under-investment in the sector, that extends beyond ear-marked HIV / AIDS funding especially through increased government aid to the sector, and increased funding of research into Human rights violations around the world?

### **Panel 3 : Religion and religious LGBT associations**

- An essential component of civil society is the religious sphere but religious attitudes and government policy go sometimes hand in hand. Fruitful exchanges among LGBT associations, religious institutions and governments are needed to progress on this issue.

- What are the trends in each of the three monotheisms? What can be the role of LGBT associations that practice one or another of the three? What methodology they use to convince their religious hierarchies to accept them as believers and clerics?

### **Round table 3 : The respect of the right to health of LGBT people**

(Coordinator : Antonio Manganella / AIDES) There will only be two different panels within this third round table. The second panel will therefore be split in different sub-items, and will include about 8 experts.

#### **Panel 1 : The impact of the penalization of homosexuality on the universal access to health care**

Through direct testimonies from people involved in the fight against discriminations against LGBT people, in particular concerning access to health care, this first panel proposes to answer the following questions :

- How does not respecting Human rights slow down access to health care for LGBT people?
- How did prevention programs appeared within contexts of Human rights violations?

#### **Panel 2 : The role of the health-development aid policy in the fight against homophobia**

This second panel proposes to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of development aid policies within the fight for the respect of the Human rights of LGBT people. It will try to answer the following questions :

- How does the Human rights dimension incorporate itself within health care programs ?
- How can donators be sure that the aid benefits the entire population, including LGBT people ?
- How can they share and convey good practices?
- How did health programs favored the growing of an identity civil society fighting for the respect of Human rights of LGBT people?

Africagay's experience will be presented as an example of identity mobilization in French-speaking African countries.

### **Round table 4 : Human rights and gender identity** (Coordinator : Mauro Cabral / IGLHRC)

#### **Panel 1 : Transphobia, today, everywhere**

- The panel will address the issues of definition (cultural, social, religious and legal foundations) and representation of transphobia.
- Human rights violations related to transphobia will be analysed through key concepts, such as gender identity and gender expression. All analysis will be articulated considering intersectionality as a general framework, seeing the existent and pervasive connections among transphobia and ethnicity, migrant status, sexology, religion, poverty, physical and mental (dis-)ability, age, etc.
- This panel will also address penalisation and pathologization as common threats that affects Trans lives all around the world, and governmental and civil campaigns against transphobia.

#### **Panel 2 : Legal Recognition and Human Rights**

- This panel will be focused on legal approaches to gender identity issues –addressing, in particular, its legal recognition as its main topic.
- How do specific legal systems understand gender identity? (analysis of different juridical-normative frameworks around the world, including their actual implementation).
- A particular link will be established between the requirements and conditions for having access to legal recognition and human rights violations, such as those implicated by pathologization, sterilisation and genital surgeries as legal requirements.

#### **Panel 3 : Promoting social change, granting rights**

- Current possibilities and limits of Trans organisations around the world ( legality, validity and funding).
- Situation of gender identity and gender expression issues at national and supranational levels (including the UN, OAS, MERCOSUR, Council of Europe).
- How do gender identity and gender expression issues intersect with other agendas (such as human rights and sexual and reproductive rights agendas), and how are Trans issues specifically articulated by civil and governmental agendas?