



High Level Political Forum (HLPF)
Statement by the UN LGBTI Core Group
July 2020

Chairperson,

(I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the LGBTI Core Group.)

The LGBTI Core Group is an informal cross regional group established in 2008. The group is co-chaired by Argentina and The Netherlands, and includes Albania, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, the European Union, as well as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the non-governmental organizations Human Rights Watch and OutRight Action International.

Chairperson,

The High Level Political Forum is the main United Nations platform for Member States, civil society and UN entities, to discuss progress and best practices in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the ultimate goal of “Leaving No One Behind”. This principle can only be achieved if all relevant stakeholders offer support and opportunities for all, including LGBTI persons, without discrimination and without violence of any kind, in full respect of their human rights, fundamental freedoms and dignity.



The theme of this year, *“Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”* and the review of the 17 SDGs are particularly relevant for LGBTI persons across the world. Therefore, resolute action is required to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence everywhere and to fully develop everyone’s potential, to ensure that no one is left behind.

The ongoing public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a serious threat to human security and unprecedented challenges that affect the global community as a whole but additionally have had particular and unique effect on those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. LGBTI persons specifically are facing increased discrimination and stigmatization, for example through the introduction of discriminatory policies or practices into emergency legislation and lockdown procedures. and are at much higher risk of violence during the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a human security crisis that is widespread in scope and impact, with survival, health, safety, economic security and human rights being endangered as a result. In order to effectively respond to the impacts and consequences of the pandemic so that no one is left behind, the Human Rights and the needs of those most vulnerable and most affected, including LGBTI persons, must be addressed.

Although there have been positive outcomes in the implementation of the SDGs, severe barriers for the inclusion of LGBTI individuals around the globe remain. For instance, criminalization, pathologization, social stigma and discriminatory laws and policies make the realization of the SDGs impossible. Moreover, the lack of meaningful participation and often even exclusion of LGBTI persons in governance decisions, decision-making and other political processes that affect them hinders their valuable contribution and results in ineffective policies not targeted to their particular development needs.

The LGBTI Core Group is convinced that the achievement of the 2030 Agenda is intimately linked with the recognition of Human rights, , and the guarantee of non-discrimination and



equality for all, including for persons belonging to LGBTI communities, individuals, advocates and human rights defenders in general.

Chairperson,

In this respect, the LGBTI Core Group fully supports the mandate of the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and we praise his efforts to encourage all countries' COVID-19 responses to take into account the impact of the crisis on LGBTI persons. We welcome the release of the ASPIRE guidelines recently issued by the Independent Expert in order to prevent and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on LGBT persons.

Furthermore, we believe that this mandate enhances the opportunities offered by the 2030 Agenda and goes hand in hand with the broader aspirations of human rights, freedoms, democracy, and peaceful and inclusive societies. To that end, we strongly encourage all Member States to cooperate with the Independent Expert's mandate.

Chairperson,

In this decade of action and delivery for sustainable development we must put an end to the multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination faced by LGBTI persons. We only have ten years ahead of us to do so. In that regard, we are committed to contributing to the HLPF discussion by highlighting the importance of implementing national policies that diligently integrate, protect and advance the human rights of LGBTI persons, thereby inclusively furthering the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank you.