

**COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**57<sup>TH</sup> SESSION, 11 MARCH, 2013**

**NEW YORK**

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER  
CAUCUS**

**Delivered by Noelene Nabulivou,**

**Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji**

Distinguished delegates and friends, my name is Noelene Nabulivou. I share with you a statement endorsed by 89 organisations from 48 countries, including my organisation, Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, in Fiji.

Around the world, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people and others with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities are targets of brutal physical and psychological violence. We are subject to harassment, assault and other violence; often under the guise of so-called 'honour', 'tradition', 'nations' and 'families'.

This violence remains invisible and unaddressed and the perpetrators, whether members of families and communities, police or other state or non-state actors, too often go unpunished.

The impunity must be ended, and the invisibility must be challenged, including here at the CSW.

Even where there are laws to protect against this violence, data from various regions shows that sexism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia continue, with patterns of abuse including brutal extrajudicial killings; sexual assault; violence in families and communities; bullying; harassment, and various other forms of violence.

But data collection is still a challenge: lesbians still often do not report violence because of distrust of the very systems and people that should protect them, and because of fear of reprisals, or threats to confidentiality.

In addition, activists are targeted for defense of rights related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Offices are raided; there is harassment of staff and volunteers; legal registration of organisations can be denied, and many defenders are arrested, suffer violations, and are otherwise harassed.

For decades, LGBT and women's groups have been demanding that this violence and discrimination be prevented, punished and denounced. Within the UN system, there is now an undeniable trend toward addressing all forms of violence related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

As far back as 1997, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women noted that women who live outside heterosexuality are at heightened risk. Other UN Special Rapporteurs have also reported on acts of violence and discrimination, in all regions of the world, that are committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. The Secretary General has also repeatedly raised his voice on this issue.

Over the past 20 years, six United Nations treaty bodies including the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, The Committee Against Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination on all Forms of Violence against Women, have addressed violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In 2011, the Human Rights Council approved a Resolution on Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, which led to a detailed report from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; there have also been General Assembly resolutions on extrajudicial executions that note these concerns, as well as regional resolutions from the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe.

It is worth noting that the Holy See has stated its concern about violence against homosexual persons in the General Assembly in 2009.

The violence and discrimination must stop. The silence of the Commission on the Status of Women and other UN multilateral tracks on these issues must also end now. Therefore, we call on all governments here at CSW57 to commit to ending all violence and discrimination on the grounds of

sexual orientation and gender identity, and to clearly reflect this commitment in the Agreed Conclusions.

It is time for us all, to act. Thank you Chair, and friends.

**This statement is endorsed by the following 89 organisations from 48 countries:**

ACCEPT Association, Romania  
Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD), Canada  
Adhikaar, India  
Advocates for Youth, USA  
Amnesty International, UK  
ARC International, Canada and Switzerland  
Australian Lesbian Health Coalition, Australia  
Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud, Mexico  
Bishkek Feminist Collective SQ, Kyrgyzstan  
Central Asian Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Network, Kyrgyzstan  
Centre for Secular Space, UK  
Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP), Malawi  
Closet de Sor Juana, Mexico  
COC Netherlands, The Netherlands  
Common Language, China  
Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Philippines  
DIVERLEX, Diversidad e Igualdad a Través de la Ley, Venezuela  
Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji  
Drodrolagi Movement, Fiji  
EduDivers, The Netherlands  
European Forum of LGBT Christian Groups, UK  
Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives (ECPI), Romania  
Feminist Alliance Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Justice (RESURJ), Brazil, Mexico, Lebanon, Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, India, UK, Poland  
Fundacion Arcoiris por el respeto a la diversidad sexual, Mexico  
Fundación Triángulo. Por la Igualdad Social de Lesbianas, Gais, Bisexuales y Trans, Spain  
Gay Japan News, Japan  
GAYa NUSANTARA, Indonesia  
Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), Zimbabwe  
Global Action for Trans\* Equality (GATE), USA, Argentina, Thailand  
Global Alliance for LGBT Education (GALE), The Netherlands  
Global Justice Institute, USA  
HERE NI, Northern Ireland  
House of Our Pride (HOOP), Swaziland  
House Of Rainbow Fellowship, Ghana, Nigeria, UK and Lesotho  
IDAHO Committee, France  
International Gay and Lesbian Association (ILGA), Belgium  
International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), USA

International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Youth and Student Organization (IGLYO), Belgium  
International Planned Parenthood Federation, USA  
Ipas, USA  
Iranian Queer Organization, Canada  
Justice for Sisters, Malaysia  
Knowledge and Rights with Young people through Safer Spaces (KRYSS), Malaysia  
Kris Prasad of Drodrolagi Movement, Fiji  
Labrys, Kyrgyzstan  
LADLAD LGBT Partylist, Philippines  
Lesbians Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana (LEGABIBO), Botswana  
LLH, Norway  
Malta Gay Rights Movement (MGRM), Malta  
Mama Cash, The Netherlands  
Matrix Guild of Victoria, Australia  
Men for Health and Gender Justice Organisation, Botswana  
Metropolitan Community Churches, USA  
Metrosexual Health Limited, UK  
Mouvement Francais pour le Planning Familial, France  
National LGBTI Health Alliance, Australia  
North Coast Lesbian Alliance of NSW, Australia  
OUT Well-being, South Africa  
Out-Right Namibia (ORN), Namibia  
Pan Africa ILGA (PAI), USA  
Partnership Law Japan, Japan  
Promoting Rights and Equality in a Societal Milieu (PRISM), Philippines  
PROMSEX – Centro de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, Peru  
Rainbow Rights Project Inc., Philippines  
Red Peruana TLGB, Peru  
Research Institute Without Walls (RIWW), USA  
RFSL, Sweden  
Rights for Change, The Netherlands  
Safra Project, UK  
Seksualiti Merdeka, Malaysia  
Seta, Finland  
Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan  
Swaziland Positive Living (SWAPOL), Swaziland  
Talking About Reproductive and Sexual Health Issues (TARSHI), India  
The Fellowship of Reconciliation, USA  
The Global Labour Institute, Switzerland  
Trans Support Initiative, Uganda  
TransBantu Association of Zambia, Zambia  
Transgender and Intersex Africa, South Africa  
Transgender Europe (TGEU), Austria  
UK Lesbian & Gay Immigration Group, UK  
UNISON National LGBT Committee, UK  
United and Strong Inc., Saint Lucia  
United Belize Advocacy Movement, Belize

Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF), USA  
Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby, Australia  
Women Living Under Muslim Laws Solidarity Network, UK  
Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR), Philippines  
Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (YCSRR), Canada