



Report of ILGA's activities for 2016 from the European Representatives to the ILGA World Board

The report is prepared by **Martin Iversen Christensen and Anastasia Danilova** based on the annual report of ILGA. We as European representatives have contributed to the following achievements:

THE 2016 ILGA WORLD CONFERENCE Bangkok, Thailand: November 28 – December 2

More than **700 LGBTI human rights defenders from 101 countries** gathered in Bangkok, Thailand to network, take stock of the many ground-breaking moments celebrated by our communities in the past years, and strategize about our future. Hosted by Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand and Purple Sky Network, and made possible also by the invaluable contribution of a huge team of volunteers, the conference marked a handful of firsts: a Bisexual Pre-conference made its debut along the ones dedicated to women, trans and intersex persons; participants were offered a mobile app to explore the conference programme and network with other attendees; topics like sex work, the struggles of LGBTI refugees and migrants, and indigenous communities were addressed for the first time in the organisation's gatherings. Furthermore, the conference hosted one of the first public appearances of Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn as the first-ever UN Independent Expert on SOGI.

There were:

- **9 pre-conferences**
- **20 Rainbow Talks**
- **30 workshops**
- **120 volunteers**
- **6 regional caucuses**
- **11 side events, receptions and social events**
- **2 United Nations Special Procedures mandate holders hosted**

The next ILGA World Conference is set to take place in **mid-March 2019** in Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara / **Wellington**, as a collaborative bid of three major Aotearoa / New Zealand LGBTI organisations (Intersex Trust Aotearoa New Zealand, Tiwhanawhana Trust, and Rainbow Youth). In fact, not only will the XXIX ILGA World Conference be held in Oceania for the first time, but it will also be an occasion to celebrate the organisation's **40th anniversary**.

ILGA AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The ILGA UN team.

Joining us were Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera from Colombia, heading-up ILGA's work on both the Universal Periodic Review and the Human Rights Council, and Kseniya Kirichenko from Russia, leading our work on the Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.

2016 also saw two **ground-breaking publications** by the team. Firstly, a new series of **annual compilations of UN Treaty Bodies' human rights jurisprudence on SOGIESC issues** with an analysis of trends and gaps for advocates use. Secondly, a **long-awaited analysis of the Universal Periodic Review process and LGBTI**, with a series of recommendations to States and civil society on how to maximise the impact of this powerful mechanism.

UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

The year was spent strategising, advocating and campaigning for the establishment of the new UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (UNIESOGI).

In January, ILGA co-organised a **two-day strategy meeting** with defenders from around the world that focused on the possibility of such a position. After a unanimous decision at the March meeting of the

Board, the UN team at ILGA then led the call for the **creation of the UNIESOGI**, talking with the governments whose support would be needed to carry the process through the UN.

In June, ILGA was joined by defenders from around the world in a truly **global advocacy outreach** effort that secured the requisite number of votes for the position to be created. **628 NGOs from 151 countries** worldwide called on the UN to take meaningful action to end abuses on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and create the UNIESOGI position.

Shortly after Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn started his work on 1 November, ILGA was again fighting to defend the very existence of the mandate in four separate votes brought to the General Assembly in New York by governments intent on destroying it. Advocates from around the world worked tirelessly together to successfully protect the very existence of the position.

UN Human Rights Council

Aside from the political advocacy involved around the establishment of the UNIESOGI at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), ILGA continues to ensure that LGBTI persons are included in the other political debates, including monitoring resolutions and discussions where LGBTI persons need to be represented or protected. **ILGA made 15 statements throughout the year at the HRC**, on issues ranging from housing to torture; from water and sanitation to health. And in partnership with advocates from the countries concerned we made another 15 on the situations in their specific countries: from Lebanon to Nauru; from Suriname to Singapore.

ILGA held three HRC awareness raising events: in March with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture on how to end impunity for torture and ill treatment of LGBTI individuals; in a June event we drew attention to the particular forms of violence faced by LGBTQ refugees and asylum seekers in places of immigration detention; and in a panel discussion again in June we looked at some of the legislative changes that have taken place over the last year balanced with the lived-realities of LGBTI persons on the ground, showing the need for the UNIESOGI.

UN Universal Periodic Review

During the last few years of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), there has been a steady increase in the number of recommendations made on SOGIE issues, and the first recommendation on intersex issues was made at the end of 2016. During 2016 we saw SOGIESC recommendations being implemented by the different States: decriminalisation, trainings of police, regular meetings with the government and constructive debates on LGBTI issues. Accordingly, in 2016 ILGA continued to strengthen its work on the UPR with ILGA members by informing them when their country is coming-up for review and by providing technical support, both online and in Geneva if needed. Two UPR Advocacy weeks were organized in 2016 in Geneva when 14 defenders from countries as different as Hungary, Lithuania, Samoa, Tanzania, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela and Zimbabwe were trained on advocacy strategies before then meeting with States to discuss their countries' upcoming UPR review.

UN Treaty Bodies

We have seen a strong uptake of SOGIESC issues in the Treaty Bodies (TBs). 53% of country reviews in 2016 resulted in concluding observations containing SOGIESC references, in comparison with 46% in 2015 and just 34% in 2014. Throughout 2016, ILGA continued notifying its members about upcoming deadlines and sessions of the TBs, providing defenders with technical assistance online and in Geneva, and assisting them in their advocacy. More than fifty groups and organizations from all regions were supported by ILGA this way in 2016. Groups from Slovakia, Uruguay and Finland were able to travel to Geneva with ILGA's support to participate in briefings, approach committee members and observe the review of their State by the relevant Treaty Body.

UN Special Procedures

The UN Special Procedures – 55 independent experts looking at a whole range of issues from health, housing and water rights, through to freedom of expression, women's issues and human rights defenders, to country situations such as Myanmar, Belarus and Syria – is one area that we have started to give more systematic attention to. Defenders are being informed about in-country visits of relevant

Special Procedures, and ILGA staff regularly meet with the experts or their staff to provide input and guidance on their work.

Other UN Work

The ILGA UN Programme also continued to engage with other parts of the UN system. In March 2016 we provided expert support to partner organisations engaging at the CSW in New York. ILGA is a member of the Global Platform to Fast-Track the HIV and Human Rights Responses Among Gay and Bisexual Men and Other MSM, organized by MSMGF and advising UNAIDS. We met with the other members in January 2016 to strategise for the year ahead. In May 2016, we provided together with Pan Africa ILGA, ARC International and COC Netherlands a two-day advocacy training for two dozen African defenders at the PAI conference in Johannesburg. With faith issues continuing to be used as arguments at the UN against LGBTI-inclusion, we engaged in dialogues related to faith, sexuality and human rights in Utrecht in January, in the UK in September and in Lebanon in December.

GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION PROGRAMME

2016 saw the publishing of our inaugural legal gender recognition research project, the Trans Legal Mapping Report. The report joins a number of other trans-led research in this area, and covers name and gender marker change policies, laws and administrative procedures in 111 countries world - wide. With the UN Programme, we also published a trans defenders guide to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, making our Treaty Bodies work more accessible to our communities. As part of the Programme's community engagement, we continue to provide expert input by reviewing publications, UN policy papers and information guides such as Transgender Europe's (TGEU) Welcome to Stay: Building Trans Communities Inclusive of Trans Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Europe. We are also actively engaged in regional trans organisations through the following positions: TGEU's Transrespect Advisory Board (Global Committee) since April 2016, and the Asia Pacific Transgender Network's Advisory Committee since December 2016. The Programme participated in the WPATH Symposium, and a two-day activist centred convening on depathologisation of trans and intersex identities. We continue to work closely with trans organisations on the International Classification of Diseases revision process, and speak at panels, provide input to papers and support trans communities in engagement with health policies and advocacy.

State Sponsored Homophobia report and Maps of sexual orientation laws in the world

ILGA's State Sponsored Homophobia report reached its eleventh edition in 2016, further establishing itself as a fundamental resource in the hands of human rights defenders, civil society organisations, governmental and UN agencies, allies and media interested in accessing the core information on legislation affecting people on the basis of their sexual orientation. Launched at the United Nations' Palais des Nations during a side event of the 32nd Human Rights Council, the report shows how the situation of LGBTI people worldwide has clearly evolved over the last decade: while the number of states criminalising same-sex activity has decreased considerably, the variety of laws relevant to sexual orientation has expanded greatly.

Other publications

- The ILGA-RIWI Global Attitudes Survey on LGBTI People in partnership with Logo
- Trans Legal Mapping Report
- Treaty Bodies compilation and guides
- Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics at the Universal Periodic Review

GOVERNANCE

The following internal documents have been approved:

- Financial Manual
- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Travel Policy
- Procurement policy