

## [HRC41 | Human rights defenders around the world urge States to #RenewIESOGI](#)

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Around the world, millions of people face human rights violations and abuses because of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI). In 2016, the Human Rights Council took action to systematically address these abuses when it created an Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination on the basis of SOGI (find out more [here](#) and [here](#)).

As 1316 organisations from 174 States and jurisdictions have demonstrated in [a public call at the Human Rights Council](#), 'the Independent Expert is a beacon of hope that violence and discrimination will not be ignored.'

'A decision by Council Members to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert would send a clear message that violence and discrimination against people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities cannot be tolerated. It would reaffirm that specific, sustained and systematic attention is needed to address these human rights violations and ensure that LGBT people can live a life of dignity.'

1,316 NGOs working on diverse human rights issues from 174 States and territories around the world are calling the [#HRC41](#) to [#RenewIESOGI](#). Full statement <https://t.co/0K5Iroo8S1pic.twitter.com/aITd6y4bel>

— ISHR (@ISHRglobal) [8 July 2019](#)

**Watch the statement here:**

Since 2016, progress has been made in many areas, including in countries that have decriminalised consensual same-sex sexual acts, legally recognised the gender identity of trans persons, and introduced SOGI-inclusive anti-discrimination and hate crimes laws.

Despite these advances, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans and gender diverse people everywhere face daily discrimination and violence. 69 countries criminalize consensual same-sex sexual acts, seven with the death penalty. Alarmingly, 3000 killings of trans and gender diverse people were reported in 72 countries in the ten years.

Often, those who face the most severe violations are the persons at the forefront of combating these abuses, standing up and speaking out for equal rights: human rights defenders.

In a [separate statement before the Human Rights Council](#), ISHR and 30 other organisations expressed deep concern that in many parts of the world, striving for a more inclusive world and greater human rights protection puts these defenders at risk of killings, attacks, arbitrary detention and harassment online and offline.

Hope, visibility, protection: the work of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on [#SOGI](#) means so much for many, and it must continue!  
[#RenewIESOGI https://t.co/V55q657fdQ](#)

— ISHR (@ISHRglobal) [5 July 2019](#)

This second statement highlighted that these violations should be examined within the wider context of multiple and aggravated forms of discrimination; occurring within a prevailing culture of social stigma around issues of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics.

**Watch this statement here:**

The challenges often overlap and intersect with the threats and backlash that women defenders and those working to promote sexual reproductive health and rights also face. With the rise of anti-rights groups, the risks are escalating.

The Independent Expert has spoken out regarding threats against human rights defenders combating violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The statement calls on States to work with the Independent Expert to examine the situation of human rights defenders in greater detail and to

seek his guidance on good practices to ensure better protection of these individuals, organisations and their allies.

We urge this Council to ensure we continue building a world where everyone can live free from violence and discrimination. To allow this important and unfinished work to continue, the Council must renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Read the full text of the statement on renewal of the mandate [here](#).

Read the full text of the statement on human rights defenders [here](#).

ISHR