

[HRC45 | SOGIESC developments at the Human Rights Council](#)

21.10.2020

During the 45th session of the Human Rights Council, we saw the first ever joint Government statement on the rights of intersex persons, as well as continued efforts by civil society to condemn discrimination and violence committed against LGBTI persons which has been further exacerbated by the impacts of COVID.



For the first time, [34 States from all regions of the world made a joint statement](#), led by Austria, calling on the Human Rights Council to urgently protect intersex persons in their bodily autonomy and right to health. This statement was [supported by 33 intersex-led organisations](#). 'We welcome the call on all Governments to investigate human rights violations and abuses against intersex people, to reverse discriminatory laws, to hold those responsible to account and provide access to remedies for victims. It is essential that civil society working for the promotion of intersex persons' rights are involved in those developments,' said ISHR's Tess McEvoy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the social and political exclusion of LGBTI people and is exposing and deepening existing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Moreover, human rights defenders, as frontline responders to the pandemic, have been subject to exacerbated restrictions. ISHR joined a [civil society statement](#) at the Council calling for the adoption of national policies to combat violence, discrimination, and stigmatization based on SOGIESC. In making this call, civil society highlighted that LGBTI persons and organizations defending their rights should be central to the creation, implementation and monitoring of responses to the current and future crises.

This statement built on a [written call to action signed by 96 organisations](#) urging States and stakeholders to do more to ensure this public health emergency will not lead to increased violence against persons with diverse SOGIESC.

In addition, ISHR joined a civil society statement expressing concern about discrimination regarding sexual and reproductive rights of youth and adolescents at the annual discussion on gender mainstreaming. The statement highlighted that treaty bodies and special procedures have called on States to respect, protect, and fulfill the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescents. However, Youth and adolescents are excluded from recommendations and discussions. The statement called on the Human Rights Council to reaffirm the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all adolescents and young people through its resolutions, dialogues, debates and the Universal Periodic Review.

'We welcome these developments at this Council session, and emphasize that LGBTI rights defenders and

organisations must be central to any advances.'

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