



Oral Statement

ITEM 3: General Debate

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE MEMORIAL

UN Human Rights Council

Forty First session

1st July, 2019

Mr President,

I have the honor of delivering this statement on behalf of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation in partnership with Human Rights Center Memorial.

We welcome the report by the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and strongly appreciate the emphasis placed by him on the need of disaggregating data collection and analysis.

However, Russian authorities not only do not collect data on the level of violence and discrimination against LGBT people, but also establish conditions serving to perpetuation of the cycle of discrimination, harassment, and violence.

Thus, the law banning “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors” adopted in 2013 both contributes to an intensification of hate crimes against LGBT people and discourages hate crimes survivors from reporting their cases to the police. Between 2013 and 2018 no less than 377 hate crimes against LGBT people were committed in Russia, ranging from violent attacks to arbitrary killings. Most of them were never reported to the police because the survivors do not believe that the investigation will take place. Indeed, when the complaints were lodged, few investigations followed, and the hatred motive was never investigated.

The “anti-propaganda” law also directly harms LGBT children by denying them access to essential information and fostering stigma against them. This law has been used to discourage NGOs, activists and mental health professionals from working with LGBT adolescents. It also effectively prevents NGOs from collecting data on bullying and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity in schools.

In sum, Russian policy towards LGBT people can be described as effectively legalizing discrimination and violence, cutting LGBT children off the services and information they need to survive and impeding collection of data on actual situation of LGBT population of Russia.



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Thus, we urge the Human Rights Council to draw its attention to Russia's continuous refusal to follow its international obligations to ensure equality of individuals irrespectively of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thank you.