**Intersessional Seminar on Youth and Human Rights**

**Session 2 - Challenges and discrimination faced by young people in the realization of their rights**

**12 April 2021**

**Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association**

Madam Chair, distinguished Panelists,

We welcome the realization of this Seminar, mandated by the Resolution 43/13 and of this session, shedding light in the important issue of challenges and discrimination faced by young people.

We would like to draw the attention to the human rights violations faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer young people across the globe.

Subjection to so-called “conversion therapies” [[1]](#footnote-1), normalizing surgeries on intersex children[[2]](#footnote-2), lack of legal gender recognition and access to health for trans youth[[3]](#footnote-3), lack of protection of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, persecution and killings of young human rights defenders[[4]](#footnote-4), bullying and harassment in schools and colleges[[5]](#footnote-5), homelessness[[6]](#footnote-6), social and economic exclusion[[7]](#footnote-7), lack of access to age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health services and rights[[8]](#footnote-8), are some of the many challenges faced by LGBTIQ youth.

COVID-19 and the current global crisis have aggravated this situation. Young queer people rely on safe and inclusive youth centres, groups and specialist support services that affirm their identities, where they can be their true selves, relate to others, and learn and socialize in a safe, non-judgmental space and environment. Many of these safe spaces and support services have been lost during the pandemic, further marginalizing this population[[9]](#footnote-9).

While different UN human rights mechanisms have been scaling up their efforts to protect the rights both of young people and of LGBTI persons, there is an urgent need to address the issues concerning those in the intersection of these two groups and, most of all, to properly hear their voices.

To address these challenges, there is an urgent need for the UN and member states to include LGBTIQ youth human rights defenders and youth-led civil society organizations in the creation, implementation and monitoring of the standards concerning their human rights, ensuring an active part in the decision-making and conversations that will impact their lives, including in the responses to the current COVID19 crisis. We at ILGA World are ensuring that LGBTIQ youth voices are central in any discussion about them, and our World Conference in LA Long Beach in May 2022 will specifically focus on empowering LGBTIQ Youth.

We would like to ask the panelists: how can the UN human rights mechanisms also ensure that LGBTIQ youth have their human rights properly addressed and ensure their participation in decision making?

1. [A/HRC/44/53](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/44/53), para. 36; ILGA World, [Curbing Deception](https://ilga.org/downloads/ILGA_World_Curbing_Deception_world_survey_legal_restrictions_conversion_therapy.pdf); OHCHR, [Born Free and Equal](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Born_Free_and_Equal_WEB.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [A/73/152](https://undocs.org/A/73/152), para. 33-35; Statement by human rights experts,, [Background Note on Human Rights Violations against Intersex People](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Discrimination/LGBT/BackgroundNoteHumanRightsViolationsagainstIntersexPeople.pdf); IHRA, [YOUTH &I](https://darlington.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/YOUthAndI-Layout-Final-Web.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [A/73/152](https://undocs.org/A/73/152), para. 33-35; Statement by human rights experts, [Embrace diversity and protect trans and gender diverse children and adolescents](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21622).. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. SR on human rights defenders. Final warning: death threats and killings of human rights defenders ([A/HRC/46/35](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/46/35)), para. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. IE SOGI & SR Education, [The inclusion of LGBT people in education settings; of paramount importance to “leaving no one behind”](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25094&LangID=E) and related p[ress release: States must act to stop bullying of LGBT students](https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25105&LangID=E) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. IE SOGI & SR Housing. [The right to housing of LGBT youth: an urgent task in the SDG agenda setting](https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24877&LangID=E) and related press release: [Scourge of homelessness adds to hardships faced by LGBT youth](https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24883&LangID=E). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [A/74/181](https://undocs.org/A/74/181), para. 42-45 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Choice for Youth And Sexuality. [Exploring Young People's Experience With SRH And HIV Services](https://www.choiceforyouth.org/news/youth-and-hiv/). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Jayathma Wickramanayake Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, United Nations ILGA World Youth Steering Committee. [Don't let the pandemic marginalize LGBTIQ people further](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/covid19-lgbtiq-youth-support-services). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)