



PRESS RELEASE

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ILGA Asia celebrates the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity at the UN Human Rights Council

ILGA Asia welcomes the decision of the UN Human Rights Council during its 50th session to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. In a defining vote on 7 July 2022, the Human Rights Council [adopted a resolution](#) to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert, focusing on the protection against violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. ILGA Asia, along with a global coalition of civil society organisations, was actively involved in advocating for the renewal of this crucial mandate to protect and promote the rights of LGBTIQ persons across the world.

“We welcome the decision of the UN Human Rights Council to renew this crucial mandate and congratulate member states that voted in favour of this resolution in order to counter violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ persons,” said Henry Koh, Executive Director at ILGA Asia. “Across Asia, human rights violations affecting LGBTIQ communities are compounded by several other crises due to the rise of authoritarian regimes and repression of human rights defenders. We must engage further and better with the mandate of the Independent Expert on SOGI to address some of these challenges that face us today.”

First created and established through Human Rights Council [resolution 32/2](#) in June 2016, and renewed under [resolution 41/18](#) in June 2019, this is the second time the mandate of the IE SOGI has been renewed. The first and current mandate holders, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn and Victor Madrigal-Borloz, have highlighted the commitment of the international community to combat structural discrimination and violence based on SOGI. Since 2016, the mandate has engaged with a wide array of issues, through country visits and thematic reports, including the [criminalisation](#) of same-sex sexual conduct, the harmful practices included in so-called “[conversion therapy](#)”, the experiences of gender-diverse persons in [forced displacement](#), the

struggles faced by [transgender and gender-diverse](#) persons, the impact of the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and the challenges faced by human rights defenders working under hostile legal and political regimes.

“The renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert on SOGI demonstrates that there is global consensus on the fact that LGBTIQ rights are human rights, and that we need to work together to advance the rights of LGBTIQ people everywhere. We look forward to engaging with the mandate on issues concerning LGBTIQ persons in Asia where people are subjected to harsh laws that criminalise their very existence, including the use of the death penalty for consensual same-sex sexual conduct,” said Ajita Banerjee, Research Officer at ILGA Asia.

ILGA Asia works to advocate for all people’s human rights to live free from violence and discrimination based on their real or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity. We are committed to working towards the protection and promotion of LGBTIQ rights in Asia, and around the world, by continuing to fight against structural discrimination and promoting access to justice for all. We look forward to continuing to support the work of the Independent Expert and engaging with the repeal of discriminatory laws that decriminalise same-sex sexual conduct and diverse gender identities and expressions in Asia. We hope that all governments will cooperate fully with the UN Independent Expert on SOGI to work towards building societies that are free from prejudice, violence and discrimination for all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

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