



ILGA Asia's Statement on  
Transgender Day of Remembrance 2020

**PROTECT TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE  
FROM THE PANDEMIC OF VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION**

Transgender women and men and gender non-conforming people are experiencing entrenched stigma and discrimination and transphobia across a variety of aspects of their lives. As a result, transgender communities in Asia have faced horrifying violations of human rights, including violence, extortion, physical and sexual assault, hateful attacks, and even murder without any legal protection, as well as the lack of legal gender recognition, education, employment, housing, and health services on a daily basis. The livelihood of trans and non-binary populations has again exacerbated in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly those transwomen who join beauty pageants as well as doing sex work, the deprivation of their profits and earnings are aggravated<sup>1</sup>.

Today, the 20th of November, ILGA Asia, along with community members and allies, come together, across Asia, memorializing the trans and gender diverse people whose lives have been lost due to hatred and violence.

In the Asia region, 21 transgender persons have lost their lives due to violence, discrimination, and murders between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2020, according to the TvT project report<sup>2</sup>, local community reporting and documentation, and media coverage. As a matter of fact, the actual number of cases in Asia is likely to be an undercount due to failures in reporting by police and the media.

In Asia, recent years have seen little progress in the protection of the human rights of trans people. In 2018, Pakistan has passed legislation to protect transgender people. However, countries in different parts of Asia have made little to no progress towards setting aside the laws that do the same. On the other hand, there has been a growing backlash against the recognition of the human rights of

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<sup>1</sup> Lyster, J. H., Johnson, K., Pongruengphant, S., & R. (2020, May 21). COVID-19 amplifying inequalities for transgender people. UNDP.

<https://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/blog/2020/covid-19-amplifying-inequalities-for-transgender-people.html>

<sup>2</sup> Transgender Europe (TGEU) and Carsten Balzer, 2020, The Trans Murder Monitoring (TMM) Update-Trans Day of Remembrance 2020, [https://transrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/TvT\\_TMM\\_TDoR2020\\_Namelist\\_EN.pdf](https://transrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/TvT_TMM_TDoR2020_Namelist_EN.pdf)

transgender populations. In 2020, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte issued a pardon to a U.S. marine who convicted of killing a transgender woman, Jennifer Laude, the decision of which has caused fears among the whole LGBTQI community justifying violence towards them; In South Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia, the legislators and government officials have shown reluctance to accept the existence of trans people -- all these serve to fuel hatred and violence, and murder of trans people.

Despite all atrocities, trans people have continued to resist and remain resilient in the most difficult of times. Today we commemorate those lives taken by senseless violence, purely because societies have not come far enough to accept that sometimes people's gender identity and gender expression does not match the sex assigned at birth.

“We’ve been witnessing these tragedies among our friends and communities every single day. We have to remind these governments to step up and monitor cases of violence and discrimination against trans people, and offer sensitive and appropriate support following any cases of violence, ensuring no more lives are lost and justice due is served to perpetrators.”

Wannapong Yodmuang, Trans Representative of ILGA Asia Board said.

ILGA Asia calls on national governments, local authorities institutions, and society-at-large in Asia to take all necessary measures to monitor, prevent, and address all forms of violence and discrimination against transgender and gender diverse people.

We are calling the Church communities and religious groups in the Asian region to avoid using religions, faiths, and philosophies/ideologies as pretexts against trans people and instead welcome them to your community with unconditional acceptance. We remind you that these religions should be used for love and acceptance and not hate and isolation and the worst of all- Violence.

We are calling for our fellow LGBTI+ organizations and communities to continue to fight for freedom from violence and discrimination, strive to create an inclusive society, and continuously advocate for trans people in every aspect of their lives (i.e. health, work, relationships, and home).

**Let us all boldly show our love and support and give more attention to the wellness, and livelihood of those most impacted by this epidemic of violence against transgender and gender diverse populations.**

#ToDR2020