

Recommendations

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the "inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family." The central principle of non-discrimination ensures that no one shall be excluded from the full enjoyment of human rights by virtue of characteristics of identity or status.

Based on the demands put forth by lesbians in various regions in the preparations for the World Conference on Women, and the reports contained here, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission presents these demands to the United Nations:

- Investigate patterns of murder and gross violations of human rights perpetrated against women on the basis of their sexual orientation or marital status.
- Solicit specific information about the status of sexual minorities in country reports submitted to all human rights monitoring bodies.

We call on governments to:

- Take penal actions and pursue other sanctions against any individual or group, including police officers, prison guards, and other workers in the criminal justice system, who subjects lesbians to discrimination, harassment, torture or ill-treatment, including rape and sexual abuse, because of their sexual orientation.
- Recognize forced psychiatric incarceration, drugging, and electroshock of lesbians as forms of torture in violation of international law, and prosecute the perpetrators of such acts. Revise medical definitions of lesbianism and homosexuality in accordance with World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines which state that homosexuality is not a "sexual abnormality" or disease.
- Promulgate laws to protect citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or marital status in all realms of life, including employment, housing, health care, and education.
- Repeal all laws and change all policies that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or marital status or which are used disproportionately against sexual minorities, including laws that penalize same-sex sexual relations or the promotion of homosexuality.
- Afford lesbian partnerships full protection of the law in the areas of pension and inheritance rights, taxation and social security, custody rights, adoption rights, access to donor insemination, and all other areas in which discriminatory policies and practices currently exist.
- Revise laws, policies and administrative practices regarding refugees and migrants to ensure lesbians equal treatment with regard to freedom of movement, immigration, and asylum, including the right not to be returned to a place of persecution.

- Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and all other international instruments for the protection of human rights. In submitting reports to the appropriate international and regional treaty-monitoring bodies, include information on the ability of lesbians and other sexual minorities to enjoy the relevant rights and freedoms; steps being taken at the national and local levels to remove obstacles to their full enjoyment of these rights and freedoms; and provisions for their protection.
- Recognize that widespread societal prejudice severely constrains the ability of lesbians to participate in civic and political life, and take steps to counter such prejudice with human rights education that emphasizes the need to protect the human rights of all persons, including lesbians.
- Ensure that all sex education and health care materials, campaigns, and services include information relating to lesbians and their needs.

We call on non-governmental organizations to:

- Work in coalition with existing lesbian organizations to promote and protect the human rights of all persons regardless of sexual orientation.
- Promote awareness among non-governmental organizations of the barriers that lesbians face in participating in public life. Promote human rights education that raises awareness regarding the human rights of all people regardless of sexual orientation.
- Institute policies prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in all aspects of the organization's work,

including employment practices.

- Incorporate freedom of sexual choice into all programs relating to sexual and reproductive rights.