



Wilton Park

Programme

Promoting the human rights of LGBT persons: next steps for international institutions and civil society

Monday 1 – Wednesday 3 September 2014 | WP1312

Attendance is by invitation only

A broad spectrum of international actors is engaged in the discourse about ways in which to promote equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons. The first “Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity” (SOGI) resolution was passed by the United Nations in 2011, but there has yet to be a follow up resolution and it remains to be seen how the principles agreed at the UN can be best implemented on the ground. At the national level there are many countries where urgent improvements are needed to protect the human rights of LGBT persons. Up to 80 countries retain laws which discriminate on the basis of LGBT identity. Civil society groups have made a series of recommendations on the most effective ways to promote tolerance and ensure the protection of LGBT persons. Building alliances with related human rights groups is widely recognised as a key step. Development agencies seek to feed into this process in a way which supports the priorities of local advocacy groups. Regional organisations can also play a role in bringing countries together and by assisting to identify the human rights standards expected of governments.

Concerted international action is needed to move forward, particularly in terms of contesting criminalisation and bringing to an end violent discrimination. This conference seeks to identify future leadership and ways in which the human rights situation for LGBT persons can be best supported by all actors in the international system. Bringing together the relevant stakeholders from international and regional institutions, policy makers, legislators, civil society and academia, this conference aims to:

- Consider different perspectives on LGBT equality to identify how best to approach national legislators and promote tolerance.
- Draw out different perspectives to identify the challenges and potential areas for progress in promoting the human rights of LGBT persons.
- Share lessons learned and best practice measures amongst representative civil society groups to increase capacity to provide protection from harm.
- Strengthen international focus and collaboration on the issue of promoting the human rights of LGBT persons.

In association with:



Monday 1 September

1300 Participants arrive and buffet lunch available

1500-1515 **Welcome to Wilton Park**

Julia Purcell

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1515-1630 **1. The rights of LGBT persons in international and national law: challenges and opportunities**

How are the human rights of LGBT persons defined in international law? What are the landmark agreements? How do the laws of different nations address LGBT persons? How do international and national laws relate to one another? Where are the possibilities for further agreement? What motivates the different perspectives? What are the main obstacles and challenges and the current opportunities to move discussions forward? What needs to happen to keep momentum going and raise the issue on the international agenda?

Alice Nkom

Barrister; Founder, Association for the Defense of LGBT Rights in Cameroon (ADEFHO), Douala

Graeme Reid

Director, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rights Program, Human Rights Watch, New York

1630-1715 Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1715-1845 **2. Cooperation at the international level: possibilities and opportunities at the UN**

What is the current state of play at the UN? How can discussions be moved forward? How can countries support one another? What do countries need? How was consensus achieved around the first SOGI resolution? What are the prospects for a second resolution? What are the other achievements to date? What are the possibilities for future cooperation?

Session Chair: Jessica Stern

Executive Director, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, New York

Cathrine Halsaa

Senior Advisor, Section for Human Rights and Democracy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo

Charles Radcliffe

Chief, Global Issues, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), New York

John Fisher

Co-Director, ARC International, Geneva

1845-1915 Meeting with Julia Purcell for working group Chairs in the Library

1930 Reception followed by dinner

After dinner speaker: Nick Herbert

Member of Parliament for Arundel and South Downs, House of Commons, London

Tuesday 2 September

0800-0845

Breakfast

0915-1045

3. How to enhance LGBT equality in national legislation?

What are recent examples of legislation which promote equality for LGBT persons? How was consensus around these decisions achieved? How can these lessons be applied elsewhere? What are the different challenges and contexts? What factors are important to legislators? How can advocacy groups and international institutions maximise their influence with legislators? What support can they provide? How can alliances be built?

John Jeffery

Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Department of Justice and Correctional Services – South Africa, Cape Town

Paula Gerber

Associate Professor, Monash University, Clayton

Sunil Pant

Founder and President, Blue Diamond Society, Kathmandu

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1245

4. Working groups: what are the challenges and opportunities for further international consensus?

Questions to consider may include:

- What are the current challenges in international politics? What are the ways forward?
- How can constructive discussions on the human rights of LGBT persons take place between different perspectives? What can help move discussions forward?
- How can widespread agreement be achieved for ensuring protection from violence and criminalisation?
- Are there particular countries or regions in the world where the context is changing? How does this inform discussions elsewhere?
- Which countries can make the biggest difference in influencing others?

Working group Chairs:

Group 1: Alistair Stewart

Acting Executive Director, The Kaleidoscope Trust, London

Group 2: Jasmine O'Connor

Senior International Officer, Stonewall, London

Group 3: Annette Fisher

Specialist, Governance and Accountability, GRM International, Futures Group Europe, London

Group 4: Maxim Anmeghichean

Program Officer, Open Society Foundation, London

1300-1430

Lunch

1500-1630

5. Advocacy strategies in civil society

How can advocacy groups learn from each other's experiences? What are the most effective strategies for promoting the protection of LGBT persons? How can advocacy groups influence legislators? How can alliances be built amongst civil society groups? What are the priorities of civil society organisations? What are the shared difficulties they face? How can they work effectively with other organisations, such as international and regional institutions, NGOs, and the media?

Yuli Rustinawati

Chairperson, Arus Pelangi, Jakarta

Ruth Hunt

Chief Executive Officer, Stonewall, London

Lame Olebile

Coordinator, Pan Africa International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), Johannesburg

1630-1700

Tea/coffee

1700-1830

6. Working group: how can civil society and legislators work together to promote the protection of LGBT persons?

Questions to consider may include:

- What do legislators take into account in their decision making?
- What would be most likely to help promote tolerance in government policy?
- How can civil society groups aim to match these factors in their work?
- How else can civil society groups and legislators influence opinion in society?
- Outside of the legislative process, what else can provide protection to LGBT persons?
- Can governments and civil society groups work together more on these projects?
- What supportive role can other organisations in the international community play?

Working group Chairs:

Group 1: Jonathan Cooper

Chief Executive, Human Dignity Trust, London

Group 2: Kees van Baar

Human Rights Ambassador, The Hague, Netherlands

Group 3: Paula Gerber

Associate Professor, Monash University, Clayton

Group 4: Chris Dolan

Director, Refugee Law Project, Kampala

1830-1900

Meeting with Julia Purcell for working group Chairs

1915

Reception followed by conference dinner

Wednesday 3 September

0800-0845

Breakfast and checkout

0915-1000

7. Feedback from working groups

Group roundtable discussion to share points identified in the separate working groups.

1000-1130

8. Working between the national and the international: regional institutions and development agencies

How can regional institutions help to promote LGBT equality? Can they provide a useful forum for national governments to discuss the issue? Can they help to coordinate the work of national governments and international institutions? How can development agencies provide support to civil society groups? How can they seek to work with other international institutions? How can these organisations work to best effect with national governments?

Session Chair: Myles Wickstead

Member, Wilton Park Advisory Council; Former Head of Commission for Africa Secretariat

Edwin Huizing

Chief Executive Officer, Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS), The Netherlands

Kene Esom

Lawyer and Director of Programmes, African Men for Sexual Health and Rights (AMSHeR)
Johannesburg, South Africa

Lisa Peterson

Director, Office of Multilateral and Global Affairs, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, US Department of State, Washington DC

1130-1200

Tea/coffee

1200-1300

9. Next steps in the promotion of the human rights of LGBT persons: feedback and conclusions

Drawing on the main points identified in the preceding roundtable discussions and working groups, this session will focus on the practical measures and opportunities for future collaboration which can help move the agenda forward.

Session Chair: André du Plessis

UN Programme and Advocacy Manager, International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), Geneva

Panel to include:

Jessica Stern

Executive Director, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), New York

1300-1400

Lunch

1400

Participants depart