

47th Session of the Human Rights Council

Statement by Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Luxembourg

ID with IE on SOGI

I deliver this statement on behalf of the BENELUX countries, Belgium, the Netherlands and my own country Luxembourg. Mr. Madrigal-Borloz, we warmly welcome your report and we reiterate our full support to your mandate.

In many countries, different forms of discrimination persist and LGBTQI people continue to be victims of violence, torture, arbitrary arrests, harassment and even murder, committed with impunity, without the authorities taking appropriate action. To date, homosexuality remains criminalized in more than 70 states, and still carries the death penalty in ten. Still more widespread, there is the issue of pervasive discrimination, perhaps less conspicuous but equally dehumanizing.

Over time, we can see progress towards equality before the law for LGBTQI people. But, more and more reactionary groups are manifesting themselves and the tone on international platforms is becoming more aggressive and harmful.

The BENELUX countries oppose any kind of discrimination against and intolerance of people based on their real or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity. We believe that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. [Although our three countries are making many efforts to promote the rights of LGBTQI people, we are not perfect and look forward to working with you, Independent Expert, on bringing our countries closer to the objective of everybody having equal rights through our legislation and actions in the field.]

Mr. Madrigal-Borloz in your report you mention adapting legislation to integrate an understanding of gender and gender identity. How do you then best avoid sparking a debate during the adoption of this legislation which may give rise to a more aggressive and harmful opposition?

Thank you.

[263 words]