



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

As delivered by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Michele Siders
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 17, 2018

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The United States aligns with the statement just made by Georgia on behalf of 43 OSCE participating States marking the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia. I would, however, like to add a few words in my national capacity.

The United States is delighted that the overwhelming majority of OSCE participating States have affirmed that the human rights of all persons are universal and indivisible, and that these include the human rights of LGBTI persons. This is a matter that merits greater attention and discussion in this forum.

As U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo said in a statement on this important day: around the world, far too many governments – including, regrettably, governments in the OSCE area – continue to arrest and abuse their citizens simply for being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTI). Fear and bigotry are enshrined in laws that criminalize LGBTI status or conduct in more than 70 countries. In some, being LGBTI is punishable by death.

The United States was founded on the bedrock principle that we are all created equal, and that every person is entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We firmly oppose criminalization, violence, and acts of discrimination directed against LGBTI persons.

Mr. Chair, on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, the United States stands with people around the world in affirming the dignity and equality of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics. Human rights are universal, and LGBTI people are entitled to the same respect, freedoms, and protections as everyone else.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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