



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOT)

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 21, 2015

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, marked this year on May 17, is a call to action, a call to stand with lesbian, gay, transgender, and intersex communities (LGBTI) across the world and reaffirm our commitment to the equality and dignity of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination against LGBTI persons must end – and it must end now.

The human rights of LGBTI persons are fundamental and are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But while some participating States have made tremendous progress in the fight to advance these human rights and fundamental freedoms, LGBTI persons in many other participating States face discriminatory laws and practices that attack their dignity, undermine their safety, and abuse their human rights.

One tragic example of such discrimination are laws that claim to protect children, but can, in effect, discriminate against children of LGBTI parents, among others. These include laws banning “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships,” also known as “gay propaganda” laws. Such laws do not protect children; they hurt families. More than 70 studies from North America and Europe have shown that children of same-sex parents suffer no adverse emotional effect in comparison to families with a male and a female parent. We urge all participating States to safeguard and protect all families so that all children may thrive without homophobic stigmatization.

The United States remains unwavering in our commitment to advance the human rights of LGBTI persons. In February, Randy Berry was appointed as the State Department’s first Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI persons. The United States also supports the Global Equality Fund, a Department of State program with over 20 donor partners, which is providing critical assistance to organizations and human rights defenders in more than 50 countries around the world who are courageously working to combat negative social attitudes and discrimination to support the human rights of LGBTI persons.

The United States will continue to promote and protect the rights of members of the LGBTI community at home, here in the OSCE, and around the world. We will continue to speak out against the marginalization and persecution of LGBTI individuals and their families. And we will keep moving forward toward our shared goal of justice and equality for all.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.