



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexphobia, and Transphobia

As delivered by Deputy Chief of Mission Courtney Austrian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 18, 2023

The United States is proud to align with the statement just read by our colleague from Iceland. I'm making the following statement in my national capacity. Yesterday we commemorated 18 years since the inaugural International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT). This year's theme "Together always: united in diversity" is an important reminder that all human beings from all backgrounds and walks of life deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and to live in safety.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which all participating States have supported, clearly notes that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Yet across our OSCE region and around the world, LGBTQI+ persons are the targets of violence and other vicious hate crimes. Hate crimes against anyone, anywhere can never be justified. Hate crimes must always be condemned and their perpetrators brought to justice. Unfortunately, in many parts of the OSCE region, LGBTQI+ individuals still face legal and societal discrimination. Colleagues, ending discrimination against LGBTQI+ persons in all its forms—from so-called anti-LGBTQI+ propaganda laws restricting freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association to criminalization of same-sex relations—requires political and moral leadership.

As President Biden has said, the United States will continue to defend human rights and dignity for all, at home and around the world, and remains committed to ending this intolerance and advocating for equal protections under the law. We affirm that all LGBTQI+ individuals and their families are valid and valuable.

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