

## **THE COALITION OF LGBTTTI ORGANIZATIONS FROM 17 LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES WORKING WITHIN THE OAS ATTENDS THE APPROVAL OF THE SECOND RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY**

The Organization of American States (OAS), convened in its 39<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, approved last night a resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity in the countries of the Americas.

This resolution is the result of the advocacy and coordination activities realized in the past three years by 24 LGBTTTI groups of 17 countries forming a Coalition of Latin America and the Caribbean, that meets every year before the General Assembly to coordinate its advocacy work within the OAS.

During the informal dialogue between the Secretary General of the OAS and the civil society in San Pedro Sula, José Miguel Insulza highlighted the need that the secretariat realizes a special report focusing in particular on hate crimes and situation of human rights violations against individuals because of their sexual diversity.

The day after, in the context of the dialogue between the heads of delegations of member states and the civil society, Claudia Sosa Medina, Honduran transgender woman, read a statement as spokesperson of the coalition in which activists from Honduras, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Brazil, Ecuador, Suriname, Guyana, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and Belize, requested to the ministers of foreign affairs of the OAS member countries to intervene against acts of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex individuals of the region.

The Coalition expressed its concern for the lack of reference to the notion of gender identity and expression in paragraph 5 of the Declaration of San Pedro Sula, which makes reference to violence caused by discrimination: "Gender identity of travestis, transgenders and transsexuals is a fundamental element of our individual freedom and self-construction".

The representative of the government of the United States reminded the commitment of President Barack Obama in supporting laws for the development of policies that recognize the rights of LGBT people, highlighted the signature of her country to the UN declaration on sexual orientation and gender identity, and expressed their opposition to the so-called sodomy laws.

Brazil reminded their sponsorship to the draft resolution "Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity", while Colombia underlined that the issue is particularly important for the government, and that the parliament has approved instruments to eliminate discriminatory acts against LGBT people.

Finally Saint Kitts & Nevis expressed its opposition to any form of violence against any individual, regardless of the orientation of the human being.

Last night, during the fourth plenary session, the Annual Report of the Permanent Council (2008-2009), which contains the resolutions approved by the Permanent Council itself was presented. Among those, the resolution AG/RES. 2504 (XXXIX-

O/09) "Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity" was approved. Its text not only ratifies what established last year by the resolution AG/RES.2435 (XXXVIII-O/08) entitled "Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity", but also makes reference to the Declaration on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity presented at the UN General Assembly on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

The new resolution, sponsored by Brazil, not only condemns acts of violence and human rights violations perpetrated against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity, but also express its concern for violence against human rights defenders that work on these kinds of violations, calling on the states to ensuring their protection and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American system to taking action on the topic. Finally, the resolution reiterates its request to the Committee on Legal and Political Affairs to include the issue of "sexual orientation and gender identity" in its agenda during the next ordinary period of sessions.

As Coalition, we celebrate the approval of this second resolution that we consider one of the tangible and historical results of the advocacy work started in 2006 by Global Rights, Mulabi - Espacio Latinoamericano de Sexualidades y Derechos and IGLHRC - LAC, by coordinating the creation of this coalition that initially focused its work into the advocacy for the inclusion of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression in the draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and all Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.

We thank UNDP, OEA, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and Global Rights for their support to make sure our participation to this General Assembly.

The participants of the Coalition of LGBTTTTI Organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean within the OAS were:

AIREANA - Camila Zabala - Paraguay, Colectivo TTT San Pedro Sula- Claudia Sosa - Honduras, COLECTIVA MUJER y SALUD, Julie Betances - Dominican Republic, CORPORACIÓN PROMOCIÓN DE LA MUJER, Soledad Varela - Ecuador, CORPORACION OPCION, Diana Navarro - Colombia, ENTRE-TRANSITOS - Camilo Andrés Rojas - Colombia, GRENCHAP - Kimany Parke - Grenada, HUMANA NACION TRANS-Hazel Gloria Davenport - Mexico, IGLHRC-LAC - Marcelo Ferreyra - Argentina, ILGA-INSTITUTO RUNA-Belissa Andia - Peru, ASOCIACIÓN LIDERES EN ACCION -Germán Rincón - Colombia, SURINAME MEN UNITED - Kenneth Van Endem - Suriname, MULABI, ESPACIO LATINOAMERICANO DE SEXUALIDADES Y DERECHOS- Marina Bernal- México- Colombia, ORGANIZACIÓN DE TRANSEXUALES POR LA DIGNIDAD DE LA DIVERSIDAD Andrés Rivera - Chile, RED AFRO LGBTI - Edmilson Medeiros BRAZIL, J-FLAG - Maurice Tomilson - Jamaica, RED LACTRANS - Marcela Romero-Argentina, RED TRANS Nicaragua - Silvia Martínez - Nicaragua, SOCIETY AGAINST SEXUAL ORIENTATION DIDSCRIMINATION- Namela Baynes Henry - Guyana, UNIBAM - Devon Gabourel - Belize, VELVET UNDERGROUND Angela Francis - Trinidad and Tobago.

As Coalition partner: Stefano Fabeni - Global Rights

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