

**UPR Republic of Ukraine
COC Netherlands and LGBT Council of Ukraine
United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, 21 March 2013**

Thank you Mister President,

This statement is also made on behalf of the LGBT Council of Ukraine, a coalition of NGO's striving for justice and equality lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in Ukraine.

We would like to applaud the Ukrainian government for its support to several recommendations made during the UPR process, but regret that the Ukrainian government has not accepted recommendations 97.18, 97.19, 97.25, 97.57 and 97.70-73, not recognizing the need to further safeguard protection of LGBTI people against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

We call upon the Ukrainian government to ensure full protection of LGBTI people against any form of discrimination; that in the nearest time, (hate) crimes against LGBTI people will be investigated and perpetrators will be prosecuted; that public awareness raising activities about sexual orientation and gender identity and human rights will be supported; and that appropriate actions will be undertaken to build broad support for LGBTI-rights in the new comprehensive anti-discrimination law.

Unfortunately, we need to recognize that the human rights situation of LGBTI people has worsened in Ukraine. Violence against people has increased, and peaceful and legitimate public demonstrations against homophobic legislation have been banned and led to the arrest of human rights defenders.

Five draft laws aimed to limit basic human rights for LGBTI people were introduced in the Ukrainian Parliament between 2010 and 2013, as has been noted during this UPR. We are concerned about the impact that this laws may have on the daily lives of LGBTI people, their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and assembly, and their right to health, knowing that homophobic legislation will deter LGBT people from seeking health services, including HIV prevention services.

Therefore, we urge the Ukrainian Government to **take immediate steps** to address the human rights violations, discrimination and violence that LGBTI people in Ukraine face on a daily basis; and **make human rights a reality for all people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.**

We **call** on the Ukrainian government:

1. To include sexual orientation and gender identity in the proposed comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation of Ukraine.
2. To refrain from adopting Draft bill 0945 and similar legislative initiatives, as these will hinder the peaceful and legitimate work of LGBTI human rights defenders in creating awareness of LGBTI issues and promoting respect for diversity in society;
3. To guarantee that all human rights defenders in Ukraine are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals, and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

Thank you.