



**11th SESSION OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING FOR THE PURPOSE
OF STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS**

Statement delivered on behalf of

LGBTI UN Core Group by

Luxembourg

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New York

(Check against delivery)



Chairperson,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the LGBTI Core Group.

The LGBTI Core Group is an informal cross regional group established in 2008. The group is co-chaired by Argentina and The Netherlands, and includes Albania, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, the European Union, as well as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the non-governmental organizations Human Rights Watch and OutRight Action International.

The COVID-19 pandemic has a devastating impact on the lives of older persons, including older persons' right to life and to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The hard reality of the crisis has laid bare discrimination based on older age, lack of social protection, social inclusion and access to health services, lack of autonomy and participation in decision-making as well as increased online and offline violence, neglect and abuse suffered by older persons.



Sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics, intersect with age and can have a compounding effect on economic, social and cultural rights, including access to the labor market, social protection, education and life-long learning, access to justice, as well as access to health services.

As a result of the dramatic economic consequences caused by COVID-19, older LGBTI persons are even more exposed to poverty and multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination. Older LGBTI persons who work in the informal sector often lack access to paid sick leave, unemployment compensation, and coverage.

Restrictions on the freedom of movement influence the physical, mental and emotional well-being of older persons and may impede access to medical treatment and care. This affects individuals on medication for chronic conditions and persons with disabilities, as well as transgender and intersex older persons who may have specific health requirements. Given overloaded health systems, treatment and medical needs of LGBTI persons, including HIV testing and treatment, hormonal treatment and gender affirming treatments for trans persons, may be interrupted or deprioritized.

The LGBTI Core Group stands firmly against any form of violence, discrimination and marginalization on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and sex characteristics at all stages of life. For this reason, it is important to recognize that older LGBTI persons can face additional challenges, isolation, stigma and discrimination just because of who they are and whom they love.



Too often, discrimination against older LGBTI persons remains invisible due to their age and isolation, as well as lack of disaggregated data on their realities and programs that focus on their specific needs. We must work to raise awareness and overcome their lack of visibility and we need to identify and include specific measures in this process that ensure that all older persons, including LGBTI older persons, are able to participate fully, freely and equally in our societies. Empowering older persons in all their diversity is imperative to building back better.

At a time when international and intergenerational solidarity is needed the most, it is still a sad reality that LGBTI persons' access to education, social protection and the labor market as well as their access to decision-making processes and justice are limited by the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, harassment and violence they are victims of throughout their lives, meaning that their opportunities at later stages of life are further diminished. We believe that all measures undertaken to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights, fundamental freedoms and dignity of older persons should pay due regard to the needs of persons belonging specific communities such as older LGBTI persons, in order to create a virtuous circle of protection and human development for all.

The LGBTI Core Group reiterates that in order to strengthen the protection of the human rights of all older persons it is crucial that online and offline violence, discrimination, neglect and abuse, as well as political, social, and economic exclusion of any individual or group must end. The Core Group also makes a call to all those here at the Eleventh Session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing to join us in committing to include all older persons, including older LGBTI



persons, as active agents of change in our efforts to promote and protect human rights.

I thank you.