

CONCEPT NOTE

**United Nations Security Council Arria-formula Meeting:
“Integrating the Human Rights of LGBTI persons into the Council’s Mandate
for Maintaining International Peace and Security”**

Monday, March 20, 2023, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

United Nations Headquarters, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Chamber

Live Stream on UN Web TV

Background

On Monday, March 20, the United States Mission to the United Nations, with co-sponsors from the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Albania, Brazil, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Japan, Malta, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, along with the LGBTI Core Group will hold an Arria-formula meeting to consider how to better integrate consideration of the human rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) persons into the United Nation Security Council’s work. The LGBTI Core Group consists* of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Timor Leste, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, and the European Union.

In recent decades, the Security Council has increasingly recognized how human rights violations and abuses against members of marginalized groups – women and girls in all their diversity, persons with disabilities, members of ethnic and religious minority groups, Indigenous Peoples, youth, children, and others – can fuel conflicts, destabilize fragile societies, and aggravate threats to international peace and security. By understanding this connection, the Council has improved its ability to tackle root causes of conflict and mitigate the effects of war.

In 2015, the Security Council broke new ground by looking at the role of human rights abuses against LGBTI persons in the struggle against the terrorist group ISIS. This meeting occurred as UN bodies had increasingly begun to focus on discrimination and violence perpetrated against individuals because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Despite this increased awareness, we continue to see the repression of individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and sex characteristics.

In countries where rights have been hard-won, there has been worrying regression or whole-scale roll back of these rights. LGBTI persons remain vulnerable in situations of armed conflict.

** The UN LGBTI Core Group, a co-sponsor of this event, is also comprised of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the non-governmental organizations Human Rights Watch and Outright International*

Yet, over time, the international community has learned lessons about how to incorporate the perspectives of LGBTI persons in strategies to resolve conflict, build peace, and recover from war. The

UN LGBTI Core Group – a cross-regional coalition of countries committed to LGBTI equality – has since expanded to over 40 UN Member States and maintained international attention on this crucial agenda. In July 2022, the UN’s Independent Expert on Sexuality and Gender Identity issued a report to the General Assembly calling for greater awareness of how gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity dynamics figure into the context of armed conflict, and within peace-building and peacekeeping.

Objective of the Meeting

This meeting seeks to identify steps the Security Council can take to better incorporate the human rights of LGBTI persons in carrying out its mandate to maintain international peace and security. International officials, including the UN’s Independent Expert, will highlight key recommendations to the Council. Civil society briefers from Colombia and Afghanistan will put these recommendations into a specific context.

Security Council members and UN Member States are invited to propose ways the Security Council, UN Secretariat, and other UN organs, bodies and agencies can ensure better protection of LGBTI rights in situations of conflict, incorporate LGBTI perspectives in peacekeeping/peacebuilding, and establish mechanisms to protect members of the LGBTI community and create more resilient societies. Participants may wish to consider questions such as these in their interventions:

1. How can we increase awareness within UN field missions on the need to better integrate respect for human rights of LGBTI persons into peacekeeping and peace building? How can the Security Council support this integration?
2. What can the Security Council do to increase protection for LGBTI persons who have unique needs and vulnerabilities in situations of armed conflict and fragile societies? What tools does the Security Council have to respond to reports of human rights violations and abuses against them?
3. How can we strengthen and build upon existing Security Council workstreams – such as UN Security Council resolution 2475 on the protection of persons with disabilities in conflict, Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC), and Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) – to include LGBTI persons?
4. How can we practically expand the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda to promote cross-cutting intersectional identities, including those related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression?
5. How can the UN Secretariat and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) improve and increase their reporting on the human rights of LGBTI persons, both in country-specific reports and in annual reports on Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), WPS, YPS, CAAC?

Briefers

- Victor Madrigal-Borloz, UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Artemis Akbary, Founder and Director of Afghan LGBT Organization (ALO)
- Maria Susana Peralta, Lawyer and Literature Scholar, Colombia Diversa

Format

The meeting will be held on Monday, March 20, 2023, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the United Nations Headquarters in the ECOSOC Chamber. The meeting will be broadcast on UN Web TV. Interpretation will be provided in UN official languages.

Security Council members are requested to limit interventions to five (5) minutes. Other Member States that wish to deliver an intervention are requested to limit interventions to three (3) minutes. In the event that all those inscribed on the Speakers List do not get to speak due to constraints on the meeting length, the United States will collect written statements for the record and distribute to Member States.

All Members States of the United Nations are invited to attend. Observer offices and accredited non-governmental organizations are also invited to attend.