



UN TRANS ADVOCACY WEEK 2019

#RENEWIESOGI

41st session of the Human Rights Council

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Panel discussion on women's rights and climate change: climate action, best practices and lessons learned

Statement by the European Region of the International Lesbian and Gay Federation

Joined by: International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex association, and the Swedish Federation of LGBT Rights - RFSL

Delivered by Joleen Mataele

Mr. President,

We are speaking on behalf of trans and gender-diverse human rights defenders participating in this year's Trans Advocacy Week. We welcome this Panel Discussion by the Council on Women's Rights and Climate Change.

We remind member States that their continual subsidies for the fossil fuel industries resulting in the natural resource over-exploitation in many regions around the world, coupled with their co-operation to extend extraordinary protections to investors in mining and extractive industries has resulted in your failure to act which brings us to where we are now - time running out.

The poorest States will suffer the worse effects of climate change and for the lucky few that have the social status, gender, wealth and access to resources, they will survive. But when we add sexual orientation and gender identity status to the mix, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) persons will be the lowest on the ladder of survivors given 70 States still criminalise homosexuality and a significant number of states have cultural practices that reject the most vulnerable that face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination which include women and children, and LGBTIQ persons.

We have already seen the tide of humanity struggling with human mobility during extreme weather conditions. Women and children and other vulnerable populations including LGBTI people often suffer sexual and gender based violence and are susceptible to human trafficking during these events, with LGBTI people facing elevated risks of violent abuse.

Mr President, a recent report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights found that disaster displacement can push survivors into evacuation centres where women in these centres, including relief workers, often feel unsafe, are subjected to sexual and gender-based violence, harassment and discrimination including LGBTI persons who are uniquely vulnerable, due to stigmatization and discrimination and are often excluded from recovery, relief and response efforts because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

We call all States to take a truly intersectional approach to climate change by also addressing their own perpetuation of discrimination and inequality, and remove the remaining patriarchal structures and systemic barriers that discriminate against all people including LGBTIQ citizens to resources that allow them to combat climate change.

We need States in Oceania, Latin America, Sub Saharan Africa and other regions that have benefited greatly from mining and extractive industries that have contributed to the effects of climate change to step up in their regions and take a lead in ensuring the survival of the poorest and most marginalised populations – women and children, LGBTI persons and disabled persons.

We acknowledge the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty's report tabled at this 41st Session of the Human Rights Council and we share the Special Rapporteur's concerns that the previous actions prescribed by the Council are woefully inadequate and reflect a deep denial of the real gravity of the climate change situation.

In conclusion Mr President, we reiterate that climate change is a form of gender based violence legitimised by States, exploited by corporations for profit, and will result in the catastrophic decimation of the most marginalised populations including LGBTIQ persons that do not have the resources to survive.

Thank you, Mr President.