



59th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council  
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Protection against violence and  
discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

Statement by Asia Pacific Transgender Network

Delivered by: Elyn Bhandari

President,

My name is Elyn, and I am a trans man from South Asia. This statement is delivered on behalf of the APTN and was crafted in collaboration with trans and gender-diverse activists from the Global South and East.

We begin by commending the critical work of the Expert documenting violence against our communities globally. The mandate has created vital space for our voices. We strongly support its renewal.

However, we are concerned that the lived realities of trans people in Asia Pacific remain underrepresented in the report. Our region faces unique and urgent threats that must not be ignored.

Majority of countries in Asia Pacific have limited-to-no access to legal gender recognition and gender-affirming health services exposing trans and gender diverse people to discrimination, violence, physical and mental health risks.

In our regions, religious leaders, laws, and practices have created a climate of systemic harassment and fear for trans people. Extremist mobilizations have led to the rollback of legal protections, contributing to a hostile environment that forces many to flee for safety.

We urge deeper investigation into how the lack of access to legal gender recognition and gender-affirming care, and religious extremism act as driving forces of displacement of trans people.

Lastly, we call the Expert to recommend the States in Asia Pacific to ensure regional asylum and refugee systems which are accessible, inclusive, and rights-based. Forcibly displaced trans people must be protected from discrimination and violence, as well as from exploitation, economic hardship, and social isolation throughout their asylum journeys.



I thank you.