

“LGBT Rights are Human Rights and Should be Advocated and Defended by All Liberals”

Liberal International kongress, Manila 2011

Noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in that Declaration, without distinction of any kind;

Recalling the resolution on the prohibition of persecutions and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation as adopted by the Liberal International Congress in Belfast (2008) and the resolution on LGBT rights as adopted by the Liberal International Executive (2010, Berlin). Liberal International reaffirms the Yogyakarta Principles as guiding document in interpreting existing human rights in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity;

Considering that UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon stated in 2010 that “Laws criminalizing people on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity violate the principle of non-discrimination. They also fuel violence, help to legitimize homophobia and contribute to a climate of hate. ... cultural considerations should not stand in the way of basic human rights. The responsibilities of the United Nations and the obligations of States are clear. No-one, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. No-one should be prosecuted for their ideas or beliefs. No-one should be punished for exercising their right to freedom of expression.”

This statement was accompanied by the statement of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms. Navanethem Pillay “It can never be acceptable to deprive certain individuals of their rights, indeed to impose criminal sanctions on those individuals ... simply for being who they are, for being born with a particular sexual orientation or gender identity. ... Our first priority should be decriminalization worldwide.”

Considering that even though many citizens in Serbia are conservative towards open homosexuality, the Serbian Liberal International Member party LDP openly supports the gay pride and advocates gay rights as basic human rights. Thereby the Serbian liberals positively contribute to awareness and acceptance regarding the fact that gay rights are human rights.

Liberal International calls upon governments and member parties:

- to recognize that the right to choose a same sex partner is a fundamental human right;
- to agree that liberals have the responsibility to be the frontrunners on human rights; advocacy, including gay rights;
- to take responsibility for the broadening of acceptance of same sex couples and to advocate equal rights;
- to urge states to ensure adequate protection for human rights defenders who work on the issue of acts of human rights violation committed against individuals because of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- To take responsibility for the decriminalisation of homosexuality and ensure protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity

Noting that over 50 countries have legislation protecting lesbian and gay people against discrimination, over 26 countries have recognize same-sex couples. The Netherlands this year celebrates that ten years ago marriage legislation was made accessible for same-sex couples, making the Netherlands the first country world wide to allow same-sex marriage.