



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
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EI – PSI Joint Statement

UN affirms that LGBT rights are Human rights

Education International (EI) and Public Services International (PSI) welcome the first-ever resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity at the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC).

The resolution affirms the universality and indivisibility of human rights. The Council has requested the High Commissioner for human rights to commission a study on violence and discrimination on these grounds, in all regions of the world, to be finalized by December 2011. It also calls for a panel discussion to be held at the Council in March 2012 to discuss the findings of the study and to consider appropriate follow up.

EI and PSI congratulate South Africa for leading this important development. “When we were imprisoned, tortured and forced into exile, we received moral, political and material support from all sections of society all over the world. We never said we cannot accept your support due to gender identity” said South Africa’s representative in an introductory statement.

Many others countries also worked in alignment with South Africa to deliver the resolution and deal with any procedural obstacles (*). In 2003 Brazil was the prime sponsor of a resolution on human rights and sexual orientation in the Human Rights Commission, now HRC, but dropped the motion given the opposition in 2005.

Global Unions pay tribute to human rights defenders, including trade unionists: they have been raising these issues of crucial and urgent human rights concern, challenging misinformation and stereotypes along the last decades. We also pay tribute to those who actively lobbied for this resolution.

In too many countries, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people continue to face criminal sanctions, killings, violence or torture, hate crimes, rape and gender based violence. EI and PSI are working together to tackle discrimination. The third joint EI-PSI Sexual Diversity Forum to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 18-19 July will discuss ways to support the High Commissioner’s study, making sure that trade unions’ contributions are included.

(*) States supporting the resolution: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Hungary, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, Thailand, UK, USA, Uruguay. States against the resolution: Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Ghana, Jordan, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Moldova, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Uganda. Abstentions were recorded from: Burkina Faso, China, Zambia, while Kyrgyzstan and Libya (suspended) were absent from the vote.