

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (EI) and PUBLIC SERVICES INTERNATIONAL (PSI) Declaration

1st International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Forum

The participants of the First EI/PSI International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Forum meeting in Porto Alegre (Brazil) from July 19th to July 21st 2004,

Recalling the importance of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings as the foundation of freedom, social justice and peace in the world;

Reaffirming the principle of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, the full enforcement of which will require elimination of all forms of discrimination;

Calling on all members of Education International and Public Services International to recognize that we are all responsible for making sure that human rights are reaffirmed through our ways of thinking and in our actions;

Taking note of the progress that has been achieved during the past decades to eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;

Concerned by the obstacles that remain in many countries to the full enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all peoples, in particular those who are excluded or discriminated against on grounds such as gender, race, ethnic group, nationality, disability, religion or socio-economic status;

Concerned that the rights of sexual minorities are not explicitly recognized in most international and national standards and instruments; and that therefore discrimination and inequality based on sexual orientation and gender identity continue to persist at different levels. These include employment; access to public services; criminal and civil law; failure to recognize legally atypical personal relations such as same sex partnerships and de facto couples; lack of support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young workers; and the specific needs of transgender people;

Being aware of the diversity in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and lifestyles, the social, cultural and even linguistic diversity, the needs for different age groups and the differences in accessibility of information on these topics;

Convinced that the workplace must be a space free of discrimination of any kind, including bullying and violence, and that trade unions must play an important role in ensuring full respect for the dignity and fundamental rights of all workers;

Acknowledge that campaigns for equal rights for LGBT workers will be strengthened if they are integrated successfully into broader rights campaigns at national, regional and international level;

Taking into consideration the constitutions of both Education International and Public Services International and the policies and resolutions approved by both EI and PSI;

Acknowledging the work done on LGBT issues and the results obtained by individual affiliates of EI and PSI;

The participants of the First EI/PSI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum request EI and PSI that they recommend:

To the International Labor Organization (ILO)

- to refer explicitly to discrimination at work based on sexual orientation or gender identity in their programs and action plans, particularly in the follow up action plan to the Global Report on Discrimination adopted by the November 2003 Governing Body;
- to develop and disseminate guidelines related to the elimination of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, and information about best practices;
- to provide technical support to the social partners (governments, employers and workers) to evaluate employment and workplace practices in order to detect and eliminate discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, including in the education system, and in the provision of public services;
- to compile a Conditions of Work Digest focusing on best practices related to promoting labor and trade union rights of lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual workers;
- to endorse its code on HIV/AIDS, containing fundamental principles for policy development and practical guidelines and for all trade unions to implement this code.

To UNESCO and Education for All (EFA) programs

- to include in their materials and training tools, themes and issues related to sexual diversity, the cultural, social and historical roots of discrimination, and to make recommendations on ways to eradicate all form of discriminatory practices.

To UNAIDS

- to develop programs that are diverse, and contain non-discriminatory references to human sexuality and gender; and to address their linkages to poverty.

To Non- governmental organizations

- To work on specific actions and campaigns to remove all obstacles to the full enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all peoples;
- To document discrimination at the workplace and coordinate joint actions with trade unions at national, regional and international level;
- To exchange information, analyses and best practice with trade unions so as to improve the quality and impact of the work against all forms of discrimination.

To governments

- To promote, protect and enforce respect for existing standards for the promotion of human rights and non-discrimination on any ground;
- To amend national legislation in order to eradicate discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status including laws that penalize same-sex relations; and to eradicate exemption provisions, e.g. for religious organizations;

- To afford same-sex relationships the full protection of the law in the areas of pension and inheritance rights, adoption rights, taxation, access to housing, health services, and to take the necessary steps to recognize the diversity of family relationships including ending discriminatory legislation, policies and practices in all fields where this currently exists;
- To ensure the widest and earliest possible access to Quality Public Education, free of prejudice and to empower people, especially women and girls, to make their own choices;
- To ensure that sex education and health care materials, campaigns and services include information relating to lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their needs;
- To eliminate all discriminatory practices related to people living with HIV/AIDS, especially at the workplace, including arbitrary dismissal or transfer.

The participants of the First EI/PSI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum further request EI and PSI:

- to reaffirm the unequivocal commitment of EI and PSI and their member organizations to provide full support for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers;
- to request the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to establish a LGBT workers' network and to develop programs to work on sexual orientation and gender identity issues;
- to develop an action plan aimed at cooperation with other world trade union confederations to work on the protection of LGBT workers against discrimination;
- to submit a test case to the ILO regarding the application of ILO Convention 111 to the rights of LGBT workers;
- to adopt and implement resolutions on LGBT rights and to encourage member organizations to adopt and implement similar resolutions;
- to explicitly deal with the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination as they relate to women in the EI and PSI women structures;
- to develop capacity building programs and training materials, specially aimed to help member organizations to develop new capacities on LGBT issues;
- to organize staff training sessions on diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity, so as to develop strategies and tools to evaluate progress on anti-discrimination issues;
- to establish a web based data base and information service to exchange information on relevant cases, policies, legislation, news from affiliates, best practices;
- to encourage member organizations to adopt policies and mechanisms to detect and eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and to mainstream related issues into the collective bargaining agenda;
- to encourage member organizations to establish LGBT workers advisory structures;
- to review and extend existing equality programs to sexual orientation and gender identity issues;
- to take up campaigns in cases of human rights violations, e.g. murder, imprisonment of LGBT activists;
- to take up campaigns against bullying and violence against LGBT youth and to prevent youth suicides;
- to provide regular reports to their respective Executive Boards on affiliates progress in establishing these advisory structures;
- to implement a 2nd EI/PSI International LGBT Forum meeting in conjunction with the PSI Congress in 2007;
- to provide all the necessary staff and financial resources for the implementation of the follow up activities of the Forum's recommendations.

Further, the participants of the First EI/PSI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum further request EI and PSI to encourage their member organizations:

- To promote human and trade union rights education that raises awareness of issues related to discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- To adopt policies and mechanisms to detect and eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity both within their own structures and at the work place; and to mainstream LGBT issues into collective bargaining;
- To establish LGBT workers advisory structures;
- To work with local governments and employer organizations to promote changes in attitudes relating to any forms of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity;
- To establish networks with existing human rights and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organizations to promote and protect the human and labor rights of all person at the workplace regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity;
- To ensure that in the development of policies on HIV/AIDS in the workplace that the rights of affected LGBT workers are protected.

Finally, the participants of the EI/PSI Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum therefore request EI and PSI

- To establish a Steering group from this Forum to advise and assist the Executive Boards with the implementation of the follow-up activities of the Forum recommendations, which should be composed equally of representatives from EI and PSI affiliates.

Porto Alegre, July 21, 2004