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**United Nations Human Right Council 12th Session
Geneva, September 2009
~~UPR Malta~~ International Lesbian and Gay Association (European Region) &
COC Netherlands**

Mr President,

I have the honour to present a statement on behalf of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (European Region) and COC Netherlands.

Following working group recommendations, we recommend that Malta adopt further measures to fight discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. This is consistent with Malta's welcome endorsement of the joint statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity delivered at the UN General Assembly last December, on behalf of 67 States. In particular we urge Malta to take concrete measures ensuring that:

1. Policy is developed ensuring that same-sex couples enjoy equal rights and obligations as opposite-sex couples;
2. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have effective access to health advisory services, in particular those relating to sexuality and sexual health and reproductive rights.
3. Legislation is developed allowing the change of legal status of transgender persons, following Maltese court decisions and in line with the right to respect for private life protected by Article 8(1) of the European Convention.

In addressing recommendation 70, we would like to thank Malta for including sexual orientation and gender identity in awareness raising campaigns in the realization of human rights by all persons. We would like to ask the Maltese government:

1. To specifically inform the Human Rights Council about the means by which such awareness raising shall take place, and;
2. To include civil society organisations in the development, execution and evaluation of such campaigns.

We commend Malta for developing a policy on sexual health including sexual education following recommendations 35, 36 and 37. We recommend Malta:

1. To explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity in this policy, and;
2. To include civil society organisations in the development, execution and evaluation of these programs.

In closing, we note that this year's annual conference of the European Region of the International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex Association will take place in Malta next month. We believe that this conference can be an impetus to improve the national human rights situation for LGBT people and we hope the Maltese government will actively participate in and support this initiative.

Thank you Mr President.