

# The United States of America

## 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle UPR Review

**Laurel D. Sprague, Ph.D.**

Blachford/Cooper Distinguished Scholar and Research Director

# INTRODUCTION

This presentation reviews the compliance of the United States with its human rights obligations to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in light of the UPR Cycle 3 recommendations it supported to

- Eliminate discrimination and prevent violence against LGBT people (4),
- Combat racism and xenophobia (35), and
- Protect immigrants and asylum seekers (23).

In addition, our presentation highlights the new human rights issue which emerged when the U.S. withdrew lifesaving humanitarian assistance to countries worldwide.

The US has failed to protect LGBT people from

**DISCRIMINATION, INTOLERANCE,  
AND VIOLENCE**

# DISCRIMINATION, INTOLERANCE, AND VIOLENCE

No progress since the last review.

Compared to non-LGBT people, LGBT people continue to be:

- More than **2 times**\* to more than **4 times**\*\* more likely to live in poverty.
- **Five times** more likely to be violently attacked and **nine times** more likely to be victims of violent hate crimes,
- Homeless and housing insecure (**more than 1 in 4** LGBT youth) and hungry. **1 in 3** African American LGBT youth and **1 in 5** transgender adults lack enough food in a given week.
- Discriminated against in workplaces, experienced by nearly **1 in 2**.

**80%** of transgender people reported fear of hate crime victimization under the current presidential administration

\*All LGBT people

\*\* LGBT people of color and transgender people

# DISCRIMINATION, INTOLERANCE, AND VIOLENCE

**40%** of U.S. LGBT adults are Black, Latino, Asian, or Indigenous.

They face greater workplace discrimination, harassment, and poverty than either White LGBT people or non-LGBT people of color.

# DISCRIMINATION, INTOLERANCE, AND VIOLENCE

Since January 2025, mistreatment of LGBT people has accelerated\*, including:

Scapegoating and hate speech against transgender people from elected officials	<b>Escalating**</b>
Anti-discrimination protections for transgender people	<b>Rescinded</b> in many places**
Rights to legal recognition and freedom of movement for transgender people	Attempts to <b>rescind**</b>
Employment of transgender military members	<b>Terminated</b>
Policies to protect homeless and incarcerated transgender people	<b>Revoked</b>
Access to health care and sports participation for transgender children and youth	<b>Rescinded</b> in many places**
Access to washrooms and toilets that match one's gender identity	<b>Rescinded</b> in many places**
Health research and federal data for LGBT people and racial minorities	Grants <b>terminated</b> and data collection <b>dismantled</b>

\*Most of these policies are currently in litigation. \*\*State-level bans and hate speech have accelerated since 2020.

# DISCRIMINATION, INTOLERANCE, AND VIOLENCE

## Recommendations

### Nondiscrimination

- Adopt legislation that ensures **legal recognition of gender identity** and **prohibits discrimination** based on sex, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

### Violence

- Implement nationwide efforts to **end impunity for, and underreporting of, hate crimes** based on sexual orientation and gender identity by instituting protocols, training, and accountability systems throughout the justice system.

### Data, monitoring and accountability

- **Systematically collect data** on sexual orientation and gender identity, with a **focus on reducing disparities**, complying with **stringent protections against misuse** and unauthorized disclosure.

The US is engaging in activities contrary to human rights  
in its treatment of

# **LGBT IMMIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS**

# LGBT IMMIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

In U.S. immigration detention, LGBT immigrants and asylum seekers, and those living with HIV and other health conditions, face documented physical and psychological violations.

## Recommendation

### Immigration

Institute urgent measures to **ensure the safety** of LGBT people and people with HIV and other health conditions held in immigration detention centers and **allow independent human rights monitoring** of detention conditions.

An estimated  
**640,000**  
non-citizen  
LGBT  
immigrants  
live in the US.

In early 2025, the US abruptly terminated lifesaving

**FOREIGN AND HUMANITARIAN**

**ASSISTANCE** that it had already committed to

countries around the world

# FOREIGN AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CUTS

In good faith, countries relied this aid to organize their health systems in partnership with the U.S.

By providing support and then terminating aid without notice or taking steps to minimize harm, the U.S. violated the fundamental human rights principles of the right to life and of non-retrogression concerning core socioeconomic rights.

# OUTCOMES OF THE U.S. AID CUTS

More than **14 million** additional deaths, including **4.5 million** children, are projected over the next five years.

**One** infant is dying from an HIV-related cause every **31** minutes due to PEPFAR funding disruptions

An estimated **93,000** additional HIV-related deaths have occurred since the 2025 PEPFAR cuts.

**6 million** new HIV infections are projected over the next five years.

Sources of the estimates: [Boston University PEPFAR Program Impact Tracker](#), [UNAIDS](#), [The Lancet](#)

# OUTCOMES OF THE U.S. AID CUTS

## Community-led LGBTI organizations are needed more than ever.

- In 2024, up to **78% of HIV prevention services** for LGBT people were provided by LGBT-led and -serving non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- **Criminalization** of LGBTI people is rising globally.

The Council on Global Equality estimates a loss of **1/3 of the total global funding** for LGBTI groups by 2026.

Sources: [The Council for Global Equality](#), [UNAIDS](#)

# FOREIGN AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

## Recommendation

### Foreign Assistance

- Ensure that the withdrawal of U.S. foreign assistance does not cause harm to vulnerable communities—including people living with HIV, sexual and gender minorities, and other key populations—by
  - **Cooperating with independent human rights mechanisms** to assess impacts, and
  - **Restoring or providing transitional support** to critical health programs.

# CONTACT US

 [williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu](https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu)

 [williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu](mailto:williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu)

 [@williamspolicy](https://twitter.com/williamspolicy)

   [@williamsinstitute](https://www.tiktok.com/@williamsinstitute)

# ADVANCE QUESTIONS FOR THE U.S. REVIEW

- What is the U.S. doing to end discrimination, hate crimes, and other violence against LGBT people?
- How is the U.S. ensuring that immigration detention facilities meet the safety and health needs of sexual and gender minorities?
- With most SOGI data collection stopped, how will the U.S. track progress in protecting the political, civil, and socioeconomic rights of LGBT people?
- After dismantling humanitarian aid programs, how is the U.S. addressing the impact on health infrastructure and provision, and on LGBT and other community-led health and human rights programs?