

**15th Session of the Human Rights Council  
Item 6: Universal Periodic Review**

**Presented by: David Clarke**

**Action Canada for Population and Development**

Mr President

Action Canada for population and development on behalf of the Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD) - Guyana makes the following statement.

SASOD welcomes the government's commitment to hold consultations on issues affecting LGBT people over the next 2 years and makes known our willingness to work with the government to improve the human rights situation for LGBT people in Guyana

In relation to Government's efforts in 2003, the attempt to include "sexual orientation" in the Guyana constitution as a basis for discrimination was not a genuine one, as the government presented "sexual orientation" in a separate bill from all other new grounds for consideration of the National Assembly and signalled its intention NOT to support the "sexual orientation" bill. This was an unprecedented parliamentary manoeuvre which saw the "sexual orientation" bill floundering without any vote being taken on it. Moreover, gender identity, as a basis for discrimination, has not been considered by the National Assembly to date.

It would be erroneous and misleading to say that there is no state-sanctioned discrimination based on sexual orientation in Guyana. Our laws criminalise any form of sexual intimacy between consenting adult men in private. We repeat our call for the government to repeal sections 351, 352 and 353 of the Criminal Law (Offences) Act, Chapter 8:01. These discriminatory laws legitimise and perpetuate socio-cultural prejudices and facilitate extortion, blackmail, violence and other violations by the uniformed forces and private citizens alike.

We further welcome Guyana's support for the OAS resolution on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity' in the years 2008, 2009 and 2010. Once again we signal our Organisations willingness to work with the government on bettering the human rights policies as it relates to LGBT people in the coming years.

Thank you Mr. President.