

UPR INTERVENTION FOR CYPRUS
International Lesbian and Gay Association – European Region

Wednesday March 17th 2010

Mr. President,

During the working group session it was recommended that Cyprus reinforces existing non-discrimination legislation and takes all necessary measures to prevent discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation. We wholeheartedly subscribe to this recommendation and commend Cyprus for accepting this recommendation which is consistent with Cyprus' welcome endorsement of the joint statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity delivered at the UN General Assembly in December 2008.

Since 2004 a law preventing discrimination for all vulnerable groups exists, for which we commend Cyprus. We would like to emphasize that in order to move to effective implementation of this law awareness raising activities are needed.

Scientific Research by the Ombudsman and the Authority Against Discrimination in 2006, demonstrates that many homophobic attitudes prevail within Cypriot society. LGBT people are not only marginalized but also ostracized and treated as outcasts. This research demonstrates the need to support the working group recommendation that specific awareness-raising activities regarding sexual orientation at a national level are intensified, so as to contribute to a better protection of the rights and freedoms of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals. We thank Cyprus for also accepting this recommendation.

Education and awareness raising campaigns for the general public as well as for law enforcement personnel are thus necessary for the letter of law to become a reality in the society. Can the delegation indicate what steps are planned to give effect to this recommendation?

Whilst recognizing that the area of Northern Cyprus falls outside the effective control of the government, we would like to remind the Human Rights Council that homosexual acts are still criminalized in Northern Cyprus. This is contrary to existing Human Rights obligations and we call upon the Council, the government and all concerned to work together to end this practice.

Thank you Mr President.