

37th Human Rights Council Session

March 19, 2018

Item 6 – UPR Republic of Korea

Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association

Delivered by: Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera

Thank you, Mr. President,

This statement is delivered in consultation with Rainbow Action against Sexual Minority Discrimination, which is a coalition of 27 LGBTI rights NGOs in the Republic of Korea.

We commend the government of the ROK for its effort to engage with civil society and LGBTI NGOs during the UPR process. However, we express deep concern that the government of the ROK didn't accept any of the 22 SOGIESC recommendations proposed by more than 19 States.

This UPR came at a critical juncture of the changing political landscape in the ROK. With 22 SOGIESC recommendations noted, we cannot help but question the newly elected administration's commitment and political will towards equality and non-discrimination.

Regrettably, the government of the ROK used some troubling phrases, such as 'controversy' and 'social consensus', with regards to its SOGIESC recommendations in its views submitted to this Council. With these responses, the government underestimated and undermined the people of the ROK's acceptance of LGBTI rights and goodwill. The role of government should be to lead change and express the values of the society that it wants to create. The government should take the lead, not follow.

When LGBTI persons in the ROK face marginalization and discrimination in laws and their daily lives, the government of the ROK cannot keep claiming to be an advocate of human rights.

We reiterate key recommendations, such as the adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation including SOGI and the repeal of article 92-6 of Military Criminal Act. We call on the government of the ROK to commit itself to incremental progress on LGBTI rights before it is too late. We stand ready to work with our government to improve the lives of LGBTI persons.

I thank you, Mr. President.