

**39th Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 6 - UPR Outcome Russian Federation
Statement by International Service for Human Rights**

September 20, 2018

Delivered by: Helen Nolan

Thank you, Mr. President

This statement is made in consultation with Intersex Russia.

We welcome the first UPR recommendation on intersex issues that Spain made to Russia which requested the prohibition of non-consensual medical interventions performed on intersex people. However, we regret that the Government of Russia did not accept the recommendation.

In Russia, people born with variations in their sex characteristics or intersex people experience violations of their human rights, including the right to fully informed consent, bodily integrity and self-determination. Intersex people in Russia are being subjected to medically unnecessary, harmful, mutilating and irreversible so-called “normalizing” surgeries and other outdated medical interventions, often while they are too young to provide consent.

Over the past years UN committees have issued over 30 reprimands condemning these unnecessary surgeries as human rights violations. The World Health Organization, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as well as many human rights organizations have spoken against this practice. Currently there is no law in Russia that protects intersex people.

As the recommendation states, if the person’s intersex variation doesn’t possess any urgent health risks (meaning it doesn’t affect the person’s lifespan and performance of vital bodily functions) then the medical interventions should be deferred until the person in question is old enough to provide free and informed consent.

Despite the recommendation not being accepted, we hope that the Russian government will still work towards the recognition of intersex human rights in Russia together with intersex activists. We stand ready to work with the Government.

We are still asking you to provide information on what steps are being taken by government bodies to end medically unnecessary, non-consensual surgeries and other medical interventions performed on intersex children, and to ensure that full and free informed consent is provided in all cases where surgical intervention is performed.

I thank you Mr. President.