



INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
HUMAN RIGHTS FOR EVERYONE. EVERYWHERE.

## **Regional Update: Asia**

*Published June 2008*

# **Our Sexualities, Our Genders, Our Bodies**

Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender RIGHTS

*The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) and lesbian-led groups in Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines are marking the confluence of 3 important events—the 16 Days of Activism Campaign to end violence against women, the international launches of the Yogyakarta Principles, and the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

*The following activities are proposed during the 16 Days of Activism campaign, which takes place annually from November 25 to December 10. Our theme for the proposed activities is:*

***“Our Sexualities, Our Genders, Our Bodies ~ Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender RIGHTS!”***

## **Activities**

### **1- Create a Banner.**

The banner will consist of panels of fabric that visually represent LGBT activism in Asia, particularly lesbian, bisexual and FTM transgender (LBT) activism. The visual theme of the banner is the image of a dandelion dispersing seeds [[yogyakartaprinciples.org](http://yogyakartaprinciples.org)].

Each panel must be no more than 23 inches by 18.5 inches including a 1 inch blank border on all four sides. We suggest that the panel be made of lightweight fabric, preferably cotton, of any color. Participating countries are encouraged to be creative with their panel—they can write/paint a poem, embroider or make a photo collage representing their activism or message. Make sure it's waterproof and firmly affixed.  
**DEADLINE: October 15, 2008.**

Submitted panels cannot be returned. Join the Banner Egroup for more details.

Participating countries should send their panels to:

Ma. Cristina M. Cristobal  
Asia Projects Coordinator, IGLHRC  
c/o 14-A Matulungin St., Brgy. Central  
Quezon City, Philippines 1100.  
**Email:** [gcristobal@iglhrc.org](mailto:gcristobal@iglhrc.org)

### **2- Gather Video and Stills Footage of Launches of the Yogyakarta Principles (YyP) in Your Countries.**

The footage should show:

- The significance of the YyP for local LGBT activists in Asia; launches of YyP
- Asian LGBT activism and particularly lesbian, bisexual and transgender (FTM) activism;

comments from local activists and allies including LGBT-supportive human rights commissioners about struggles and successes in defending LGBT human rights in Asia, specifically the rights of LGBT people who are frequently more invisible and marginalized.

A video team will include the footage received from around Asia to create a documentary that will be available in time for screenings during the 2009 International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO). The video team will also document the linking of the banner panels and creation of the final banner that will journey through countries in Asia before reaching its final destination in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. So far, the countries on the journey are Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. Contact IGLHRC if your group wants the video team to document activities in your country. Each country is responsible for organizing the activities, media outreach, and logistical arrangements for the banner's travel in that country.

Participating countries should send their video and stills footage to:

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Quezon City, Philippines 1100.  
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### 3- Gather in Yogyakarta on December 10.

Be part of activities in Yogyakarta being coordinated by Indonesian LGBT activists. Planned activities (tentatively) include a parade and performances to celebrate the arrival of the YyP banner, mark the end of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, and commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 2008.

### Join Us !!!

We are inviting individual LGBT activists and groups to join these activities. We have set up an Egroup for exchange of ideas about your local activities in line with this regional project. To join the Egroup, please email: [gcristobal@iglhrc.org](mailto:gcristobal@iglhrc.org) and give the following information: Name of Individual(s), Name of

group, Country, Contact information, Email address. Indicate which activities you are interested in joining. You can join in all the activities if you like. We will get in touch with your group as soon as possible.

### Possible Source for Activities Funding

#### Global Fund for Women

1375 Sutter Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94109, USA  
Email: [asiapac@globalfundforwomen.org](mailto:asiapac@globalfundforwomen.org)  
Phone: (1-415) 202-7640  
Fax: (1-415) 202-8604

#### Astraea Lesbian Foundation For Justice

(Movement Resource Fund)  
ATTN: Namita Chad, Program Officer  
116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10003  
Email: [nchad@astraeafoundation.org](mailto:nchad@astraeafoundation.org)  
Phone: 1.212.529.8021  
Fax: 1.212.982.3321

#### Mama Cash

1e Helmersstraat 17  
P.O. Box 15686  
1001 ND Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
Email: [info@mamacash.nl](mailto:info@mamacash.nl)  
Website: [www.mamacash.nl/english](http://www.mamacash.nl/english)  
Phone: 31-20-689-36-34  
Fax: 31-20-683-46-47

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Q: What are the Yogyakarta Principles?

In 2006, in response to well-documented patterns of abuse against LGBT people, a distinguished group of international human rights experts met in Yogyakarta, Indonesia to outline a set of international principles relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. The result was the Yogyakarta Principles: a universal guide to human rights which affirm binding international legal standards for how governments and other actors should end violence, abuse, and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and ensure full equality. Each principle is accompanied by detailed recommendations to states on how to end discrimination and abuse. The principles also call for action from the UN's human rights system, national human rights institutions, the media, nongovernmental organizations, and others. The full text of the Yogyakarta Principles, along with



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80 Maiden Lane, Suite 1505, New York, NY, 10038 U.S.A.  
Phone: (+) 1-212-268-8040 Fax: (+) 1-212-430-6060 Website: [www.iglhrc.org](http://www.iglhrc.org)

supporting materials, can be found online at [yogyakartaprinciples.org](http://yogyakartaprinciples.org)

**Q: What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?**

Adopted in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the first international document to define a set of human rights that are universally applicable, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and inherent to every person in the world without distinction of any kind, such as those related to sex, race, age, color, language, political or other opinion religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Human rights laws and documents provide the framework and foundation for all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities, to challenge the torture, abuse, discrimination, and criminal status that so many of us face. For more details please visit: <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>

**Q: When did the 16 Days of Activism Campaign start?**

According to the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) website, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign that was started in 1991. The 16 Days runs from November 25, International Day Against Violence Against Women, to December 10, International Human Rights Day, to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. This 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including December 1, which is World AIDS Day, and December 6, which marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre in 1989, when 14 women students were massacred by a lone gunman opposed to the affirmative action policies promoted by feminists at the University of Montreal.

Since it began, the 16 Days of Activism has been used as an organizing strategy by women's groups to call for the elimination of violence against women by: raising awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue at the local, national, regional and international levels; strengthening local work around violence

against women; establishing a clear link between local and international work to end violence against women; providing a forum in which organizers can develop and share effective strategies; demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world organizing against violence against women; creating tools to pressure governments to implement promises made to eliminate violence against women. Visit: <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/>

By linking the activism and struggles of lesbians, bisexual women and transgender communities to the 16 Days of Activism, we are highlighting communities that are marginalized by many social justice movements, including women's movements. For more details about this activity, contact: [gcristobal@iglhrc.org](mailto:gcristobal@iglhrc.org)

**Q: Why is the theme focusing on lesbians, bisexuals and FTM and not all LGBT?**

The objective of the event is to highlight LGBT activism in Asia, with a special focus on lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) women in order to pay attention to the concerns of communities that are still largely marginalized and unprotected from discrimination and violence on the basis of sexual orientation and expression, and gender identity and expression.

**Q: Why is the video team only traveling to 3 countries in Asia—Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia?**

Due to budget constraints the journey of the banner is limited to Southeast Asian countries, preferably those closest in proximity to Indonesia where the banner's journey will culminate in Yogyakarta. So far, Thailand and the Philippines have already planned activities that will fall within the 16 Days of Activism—Thailand on November 29 and the Philippines on December 6, 2008. Interested organizations from other countries can contact IGLHRC if they want the video team to cover their activities or they can document their activities and send photos or video footage to:

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**Q: What is IDAHO?**

The International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) is celebrated every May 17 to commemorate the date when homosexuality was removed from the International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization (May 17, 1990). In 2003, the Canadian organization Foundation Emergence instituted a similar event, the National Day Against Homophobia, on June 1 but has subsequently changed it to May 17. IDAHO aims to coordinate international events calling for respect for LGBT people worldwide. There are 86 countries in the world today where it is a criminal offense to be gay, and in seven of these countries the punishment is death. Unlike LGBT Pride Day, which is meant to emphasize pride in one's sexuality and a refusal to be ashamed, IDAHO is meant to highlight that homophobia still exists and needs to be confronted and dismantled. For more details visit: <http://www.idahomophobia.org/>

**Q: What is the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)?**

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) is a US-based non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO), that aims to secure the full enjoyment of the human rights of all people and communities subject to discrimination or abuse on the basis of sexual orientation or expression, gender identity or expression, and/or HIV status. IGLHRC monitors and documents human rights developments affecting LGBT people, and conducts advocacy—at the United Nations, within regional treaty bodies, and in alliance with groups promoting human rights, sexual rights, women's rights and worker's rights—to ensure that human rights standards apply to all sexual minorities. IGLHRC responds to human rights emergencies affecting LGBTI people in countries as diverse as Nepal, Nigeria, Egypt, Jamaica, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Russia, Argentina, and Mexico. Through IGLHRC's Global Emergency Response Network, almost 10,000 people receive action alerts drawing international attention to human rights violations within our communities. IGLHRC also conducts human rights training and capacity strengthening

for grassroots LGBT groups. For more details visit <http://www.iglhrc.org/>

**Q: What is the significance of the dandelion image?**

The visual theme of the traveling banner is the image of a dandelion dispersing seeds as seen on the main page of the Yogyakarta Principles (<http://www.yogyakartaprinciples.org/>). We interpret this image to represent four ideas: the act of dispersing the 29 human rights principles in the Yogyakarta Declaration; sowing seeds of knowledge to fight myths and rationales that promote homophobia, discrimination and violence; human rights standards are not static but shifting according to the winds of change; the resilience of core human rights ideals and mobilization by human rights activists are necessary for the sustainability of human rights. The panels of fabric from different countries will capture some of these ideas.



**Q: Why can't the banner panel we send from our country be returned to us?**

Banner panels that are received will be attached permanently to the central panel with the dandelion design. After the December 10, 2008 culminating activity in Indonesia the banner will stay in Asia for safekeeping so that it can be made available for other LGBT regional gatherings in the future. Also, panels that are received after December 10 can still be added to the main banner.



**Q: Who should/can come to the December 10 events in Yogyakarta?**

All LGBT groups or activists and our social justice colleagues can come. See the list of funders on page 2.

**Q: Where is Yogyakarta? How does one get there?**

Yogyakarta is located in the southern part of the Central Java province of Indonesia. It is a major

tourist destination in Indonesia. Despite the official spelling, the name is usually pronounced as Jogjakarta or just Jogja (JOGH-jah). This is the place where the “Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Law in Relation to Issues of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity” were adopted by a meeting of experts in international law on November 6-9, 2006 at Gadjah Mada University. There is an airport about 8 km away and near-hourly connections on Garuda airline to airports in other cities like Jakarta (50 mins away) and Denpasar.

