



## **Media release :** **EMBARGOED Wednesday May 13<sup>th</sup> 1pm CET**

### **May 17th : International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia** **Launch of the « World Appeal against Transphobia and for the Respect of Gender Identity »**

Every day, almost everywhere around the world, **Transexual, Transgender, Intersex people face violence, abuse, rape, torture and hate crimes**. The only motive : they are not conforming to social stereotypes about the way they should appear and behave in society as men or women.

Be it out of ignorance, prejudice, fear or hate, Trans people overwhelmingly face daily discrimination, which results in social exclusion, poverty and poor health care, with little prospects for employment.

Far from protecting Trans citizens, **States and International bodies reinforce social transphobia** through short sighted negligence or reactionary politics:

To have their preferred gender identity recognised by society, if at all possible, they have to undergo forced sterilization or other major surgery. Yet, States do little to ensure Trans people get proper access to the health care they want or need.

Adding insult to injustice, the World Health Organisation still classifies them as **« mentally disordered »**.

On May 17th 1990 (almost 20 years ago !,) the same World Health Organisation took homosexuality off the list of mental disorders. This is the reason why May 17th was chosen to celebrate the International Day against homophobia and transphobia, the IDAHO. **Actions now take place every year in more than 50 countries.**

On this symbolic day, a group of organisations working to promote fundamental Human Rights for lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, intersex and bisexual people launches an **International Appeal** to the WHO to take transsexualism off the list of mental disorders.

The appeal also calls for all States to **enforce legislation** that ensures respect for Trans people's Human Rights, and calls for the **UN Human Rights bodies** to effectively address the situation.

This Appeal has already been signed by more **than 300 organisations in more**

**than 75 countries accross all world regions**, from Fiji to Kyrgyzstan, China to the USA, Serbia to Brasil. Major international institutions have expressed their support, such as UNAIDS, the International and European Trade Union Confederations, the International Gay and Lesbian Law Association, the Gay and lesbian Intergroupe of the European Parliament, the Global Justice Ministry of Metropolitan Community Churches or...the Sydney Mardi Gras. So have political parties such as the French socialist, communist and green parties or the Meretz Party in Israel.

And we are proud of the support **of three Nobel Prize Laureats** : Elfriede Jelinek, Françoise Barré-Finoussi and Luc Montagnier., and of other people who have signed the text like Doudou Diène, former rapporteur special in the UN on racism (Senegal), Jacques Delors, former president of the European Commission, Gérard Onesta, vice-president of the European Parliament, Bertrand Delanoë, mayor of Paris, several ministers or former ministers, and many members of Parliament around the world.

We now invite all citizens, activists, organisations, political parties, local authorities and all other concerned groups or individuals to **join this appeal by signing the petition on [www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org)** where you will also find the complete up to date list of signatures.

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- The IDAHO committee is a network of dedicated activists aiming at making the 17th of May a worldwide celebration of the strength of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex movement, connecting it to the wider global Sexual Rights movement. The IDAHO committee facilitates actions, generates momentum, consolidates initiatives and supports organisations

campaigning and advocacy strategies that include actions on May the 17th. IDAHO committee has representatives and correspondents in more than 60 countries. The IDAHO committee advocates for the Universal Decriminalisation of same-sex relationships and for gender freedom.

- Transgender Europe (TGEU) is a European network of trans and other organisations that support or work for the rights of transgender/transsexual/gender variant people. The mission of TGEU is to be a powerful lobby and advocacy organisation for trans rights in Europe and elsewhere in the world. TGEU was founded by 120 participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> European Transgender Council 2005 in Vienna. The current executive and steering committee were elected at the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Transgender Council 2008 in Berlin, where more than 200 representatives from 38 countries participated.
- Gender DynamiX the first organization in Africa, and only in South Africa is a human rights organization promoting freedom of expression of gender identity, focusing on transgender, transsexual and gender nonconforming identities. Gender DynamiX was founded in July 2005.
- The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)'s mission is advancing human rights for everyone, everywhere to end discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. IGLHRC has offices in New York, Buenos Aires, and Cape Town
- ARC International seeks to foster alliances, information-sharing and strategic planning around human rights issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity at the international level, through the development of global networks, resource materials, and access to international human rights mechanisms.
- The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association is a world-wide network of national and local groups dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people everywhere. Founded in 1978, it now has more than 670 member organisations. Every continent and over 110 countries are represented. ILGA member groups range from small collectives to national groups and entire cities. ILGA is to this day the only international non-profit and non-governmental community-based association focused on presenting discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation as a global issue.
- REDLACTRANS is a network of organisations in 18 Latin America and the Caribbean countries, who work individually and collectively in support of the Trans community. It is a network for action by Trans people (travesti, transexuals and transgender), founded in October 2004 by NGOs from Argentina, Brasil, Mexico and Chile to enhance communication between Trans organisations, groups and individuals in the LAC region
- Mulabi is a non-for-profit, non governmental latinamerican organisation. Its mission is to work on issues related to sexualities and Human Rights