New York City, N.Y., Dec 14, 2009 / 08:03 pm (CNA).- Following an afternoon panel discussion about treatment of homosexuals by governments around the world, the Vatican’s legal attaché to the United Nations issued a Dec. 10 statement saying the Holy See continues to oppose “all grave violations” of homosexual persons’ human rights.

The letter named such grave violations as the use of the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

“The Holy See also opposes all forms of violence and unjust discrimination against homosexual persons, including discriminatory penal legislation which undermines the inherent dignity of the human person,” continued the letter, signed by Rev. Philip J. Bené of the Holy See’s Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations.

“The murder and abuse of homosexual persons are to be confronted on all levels, especially when such violence is perpetrated by the State.

“While the Holy See's position on the concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity remains well known, we continue to call on all States and individuals to respect the rights of all persons and to work to promote their inherent dignity and worth.”

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