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The Role of the UN in Ending Violence and discrimination
against LGBT People

Dear Ministers of Foreign Affairs,
Colleagues,
Friends,

I am honored to be a part of this important event that gathers us today. As we all know, action must be taken and solidarity must be reinforced all around the world in order to raise the universal standard on respect towards LGBT people who suffer discrimination.

We know that the protection and promotion of human rights concerns a wide range of social actors, but we also know that as State representatives we have a huge responsibility on this regard.

We are aware that the fight against discrimination has become one of the most difficult tasks since discriminatory patterns permeate societies and many times are confused with “traditional” values.

In Argentina we have decided that the defense and promotion of human rights should be a State policy. We are well known for the policy of recognition of LGBT rights such as equal marriage or the gender identity law, but I am not here to tell you about the

policies that we have implemented in our country but to express my greatest willingness to open dialogue and to understand that each country has its own pace and there are no universal recipes.

Having said this, I also believe fundamental that we all work together in order to foster respect and non discrimination.

At the present moment, in 76 countries consent relations between adults of the same sex are a criminal offence. We are conscious that in order to eradicate discrimination legislative modifications won't be enough, but we also know that it is the State responsibility to prohibit certain practices, since intolerance and discrimination cannot be accepted much less legally allowed. As it happened with slavery, torture, impunity of crimes against humanity as well as many other aberrations against humanity that were eradicated, we must give our best in order to move forward to a world where sexual diversity isn't criminalized.

How can we, as UN, help to achieve this worthy objective? Important steps have been taken.

Argentina believes it is elemental in order to fight discrimination that we work together at the multilateral level, this is the reason why since the year 2008 we are part of the trans regional core group here, in NY, and we have delivered the first declaration

ever made in the General Assembly on December 18th of 2008, which had the support of 66 countries.

We have also supported the Resolution 17/19 on 2011, being the first Resolution on this matter which was approved in the Human Rights Council.

I also want to highlight that on last July our friend Navi Pillay launched the “Free and Equal” campaign, the first global public education initiative dedicated to combating homophobia and transphobia, and to promoting respect for the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.

We are convinced that it is a matter of time until the world is able to eradicate the criminalization of sexual diversity. It is our responsibility to make every possible effort in order to achieve that goal as soon as possible. I trust that our commitment and work together will help us be closer to a more respectful and free world.

Thank you very much.