

SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS BY UN OFFICIALS

References to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay

This document contains a summary of the speeches and statements made by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay since 2003.

Part 1 organizes a list of each one's speeches and statements that reference sexual orientation and gender identity by category.

Part 2 contains the text of each one's speeches and statements issued during the period 2010-2013.

It is up to date as of February 14, 2013.



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I G L H R C
HUMAN RIGHTS FOR EVERYONE.
EVERYWHERE.

Part 1: List of Speeches and Statements

UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon

- Message to Human Rights Council meeting on Violence and Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity, March 7, 2012 (available at http://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/sgspeeches/statments_full.asp?statID=1475#.URqtGc3UqJQ)
- Message to event on ending violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, delivered by Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, December 8, 2011 (“*Secretary-General, in Message to event on ending sexuality-based violence, calls homophobic bullying ‘a moral outrage, a grave violation of human rights’*”, available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sgsm14008.doc.htm>)
- Remarks to the Human Rights Council, January 25, 2011 (available at <http://www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=5051>)
- Remarks at the event on “Ending Violence and Criminal Sanctions Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity”, December 10, 2010 (“*Confront prejudice, speak out against violence, Secretary-General says at event on ‘Ending Sanctions Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity’*”, available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sgsm13311.doc.htm>)
- Message on ending violence and criminal sanctions based on sexual orientation and gender identity, delivered by Navi Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights, September 17, 2010 (“Secretary-General says social attitudes run deep, take time to change, but cultural considerations should not impede basic human rights”, SG/SM/13108/HR/5034, available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sgsm13108.doc.htm>)

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanetham Pillay

- Statement to the Panel on ending violence and discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity at the Human Rights Council 19th Session, March 7, 2012¹ (“*Pillay presents groundbreaking UN study on violence, discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation*”, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=11917&LangID=E>.)

¹ See also Report of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights on Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity (November 2011)

- Message to the Ugandan Government, January 15, 2010 (“UN human rights chief urges Uganda to shelve ‘draconian’ law on homosexuality,” Geneva, Switzerland, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=9722&LangID=E>)
- High Commissioner’s Strategic Management Plan 2010-2011, January 10, 2010 (available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/SMP2010-2011.pdf>)
- Address at Freedom Park, Pretoria, South Africa, December 10, 2009
- Address at event on gender identity, sexual orientation and human rights, Human Rights Council, 11th Session, Panel Event, June 12, 2009 (available at <http://arc-international.net/global-advocacy/ohchr/hc-statement-sogi-event-2009>)
- Statement at the World Conference on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Paris, May 15, 2009 (available at <http://arc-international.net/global-advocacy/ohchr/hc-statement-paris-2009>)
- Joint Statement by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), February 26, 2008 (available at http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/dataimport/pub/presstatemnt/2008/080226_humanrights_en.pdf)
- Address on the theme of gender identity, sexual orientation and human rights, 63rd Session of the General Assembly, New York, December 18, 2008

General Assembly Joint Statements

- Joint Statement from the Permanent Representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, France, Gabon, Japan, the Netherlands and Norway to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, 63rd Session, A/63/635, December 18, 2008

Part 2: Texts of Speeches and Statements for the 2010-2013 Period

UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon

Message to Human Rights Council meeting on Violence and Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

March 7, 2012

Madam Lasserre, President of the Human Rights Council, Distinguished members of the Council, Ms. Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address this historic Human Rights Council session.

Some say sexual orientation and gender identity is a sensitive subject.

I understand. Like many of my generation, I did not grow up talking about these issues.

But I learned to speak out because lives are at stake -- and because it is our duty, under the United Nations Charter ... and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ... to protect the rights of everyone, everywhere.

The High Commissioner's report documents disturbing abuses in all regions.

We see a pattern of violence and discrimination directed at people just because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

There is widespread bias at jobs, schools and hospitals.

And appalling violent attacks, including sexual assault.

People have been imprisoned, tortured, even killed.

This is a monumental tragedy for those affected -- and a stain on our collective conscience.

It is also a violation of international law.

You, as members of the Human Rights Council, must respond.

To those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, let me say:

You are not alone. Your struggle for an end to violence and discrimination is a shared struggle.

Any attack on you is an attack on the universal values the United Nations and I have sworn to defend and uphold.

Today, I stand with you ... and I call upon all countries and people to stand with you, too.

A historic shift is under way. More States see the gravity of the problem.

I firmly oppose conditionality on aid. We need constructive actions

The High Commissioner's report points the way. We must:

Tackle the violence... decriminalize consensual same-sex relationships... ban discrimination... and educate the public.

We also need regular reporting to verify that violations are genuinely being addressed.

I count on this Council and all people of conscience to make this happen.

The time has come.

Secretary-General, in Message to Event on Ending Sexuality-Based Violence, Bias, Calls Homophobic Bullying 'A Moral Outrage, A Grave Violation Of Human Rights'

December 8, 2011

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message to the event on ending violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, delivered by Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in New York, on 8 December:

I am pleased to greet participants attending this event on the homophobic bullying of young people and associated violence and discrimination. Let me offer a special word of thanks to the human rights defenders in the audience.

Like many of you, I continue to be dismayed at reports of children as young as 11 being subjected to sustained verbal abuse, taunting and serious physical attacks because of their presumed sexual orientation or gender identity.

Bullying of this kind is not restricted to a few countries, but goes on in schools and local communities in all parts of the world. It affects young people all the way through to adulthood, causing enormous and unnecessary suffering. Bullied children may become depressed and drop out of school. Some are even driven to suicide.

This is a moral outrage, a grave violation of human rights and a public health crisis. It is also a loss for the entire human family when promising lives are cut short. Consider the case of Matthew Shepard, whose mother is participating in today's event. A student of political science who spoke several languages and travelled abroad, he might well have contributed to the work of the United Nations. The tragic death of this young person and countless others diminishes us all.

We often think about homophobic bullying as a problem specific to school settings and adolescence. But, the roots go deeper; they lie in prevailing harmful attitudes in society at large, sometimes encouraged by divisive public figures and discriminatory laws and practices sanctioned by State authorities.

Tackling this problem is a shared challenge. We all have a role, whether as parents, family members, teachers, neighbours, community leaders, journalists, religious figures or public officials.

But, it is also, for States, a matter of legal obligation. Under international human rights law, all States must take the necessary measures to protect people — all people — from violence and discrimination, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

I hope that your discussions today will further the international dialogue on this important issue and raise greater awareness of the need for change. I look forward to working with all partners to protect young people from harm and uphold human rights for all.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful event.

Secretary-General's Remarks to the Human Rights Council

January 25, 2011

“ (...) We must reject persecution of people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity who may be arrested, detained or executed for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

They may not have popular or political support, but they deserve our support in safeguarding their fundamental human rights. I understand that sexual orientation and gender identity raise sensitive cultural issues. But cultural practice can not justify any violation of human rights.

Women's treatment as second-class citizens has been justified, at times, as a “cultural practice.” So has institutional racism and other forms of inhuman punishment.

But that is merely an excuse. When our fellow humans are persecuted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, we must speak out.

That is what I am doing here, that is my consistent position.

Human rights are human rights everywhere, for everyone.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The General Assembly founded this Council to promote universal respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction, in a fair and equal manner.

The Assembly charged you, the members of this Council, with upholding the highest standards of human rights.

Now you must act in a fair and equal manner, and uphold the highest human right standards, in your own countries and around the world.

Thank you.”

Confront Prejudice, Speak Out Against Violence, Secretary-General Says at Event on Ending Sanctions Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity²

December 10, 2010

Following are UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s remarks at the event on “Ending Violence and Criminal Sanctions Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity” in New York today, 10 December:

Thank you all for coming to this important event. Today is Human Rights Day — a day we dedicate to defending freedoms and protections for all people.

We know how controversial the issues surrounding sexual orientation can be. In the search for solutions, we recognize that there can be very different perspectives. And yet, on one point we all agree — the sanctity of human rights.

As men and women of conscience, we reject discrimination in general, and in particular discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. When individuals are attacked, abused or imprisoned because of their sexual orientation, we must speak out. We cannot stand by. We cannot be silent.

This is all the more true in cases of violence. These are not merely assaults on individuals. They are attacks on all of us. They devastate families. They pit one group against another, dividing larger society.

And when the perpetrators of violence escape without penalty, they make a mockery of the universal values we hold dear. We have a collective responsibility to stand against discrimination, to defend our fellow human beings and our fundamental principles.

² Available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sgsm13311.doc.htm>

Liberal democracy has spread in many parts of the world in recent decades. In general, more and more of us have learned to cherish our diversity. Today, many nations have modern constitutions that guarantee essential rights and liberties.

And yet, homosexuality is considered a crime in more than 70 countries. This is not right.

Yes, we recognize that social attitudes run deep. Yes, social change often comes only with time. Yet, let there be no confusion: where there is tension between cultural attitudes and universal human rights, universal human rights must carry the day. Personal disapproval, even society's disapproval, is no excuse to arrest, detain, imprison, harass or torture anyone - ever.

From my first days in office as Secretary-General, I have spoken out against stigma and discrimination. I have worked, with some success, to persuade Governments to lift travel restrictions on people with HIV. During my recent trips to Africa, I urged leaders to do away with laws criminalizing homosexuality.

I was particularly happy and pleased that, when I was visiting Malawi, I was able to secure the release of a young gay couple sentenced to 14 years in prison. President [Bingu wa] Mutharika kept his promise and he released them during my stay, on the very day when I urged him to do so.

Yesterday evening, I spoke to a Human Rights Day event at the Ford Foundation. It was called "Speak Up", a conversation with human rights defenders. Some of you are wearing badges.

One of my fellow speakers was a young activist from Uganda. Frank Mugisha has been working with a variety of civil society groups to stop legislation that institutionalizes discrimination against gay and lesbian people. With extraordinary eloquence, he appealed to us, the United Nations, for help. He asked us to rally support for the decriminalization of homosexuality everywhere in the world.

And that is what we will do. We have been called upon and we will answer.

In all these kinds of cases, I put myself on the line. I take pains to find the right balance between public and private diplomacy to reach difficult solutions. I will continue to do so. I will continue to speak out, at every opportunity, wherever I go. And I will do so because this is the right thing to do. Because this cause is just.

That is why this day, this very special day, means so much to me. Human Rights Day commemorates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is not called the partial declaration of human rights. It is not the sometimes declaration of human rights. It is the Universal Declaration, guaranteeing all human beings their basic human rights, without exception.

Violence will end only when we confront prejudice. Stigma and discrimination will end only when we agree to speak out. That requires all of us to do our part; to speak out at home, at work, in our schools and communities; to stand in solidarity.

Your discussions today are part of that larger campaign, yours and mine. Together, we seek the repeal of laws that criminalize homosexuality, that permit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, that encourage violence.

People were not put on this planet to live in fear of their fellow human beings. The watchwords of civilization have always been tolerance, understanding and mutual respect.

That is why we are here today. And that is why we ask the nations and the peoples of the world to join us. To join us in common cause in the name of justice and a better life for all.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay

Pillay Presents Groundbreaking UN Study on Violence, Discrimination against People Because of Their Sexual Orientation

Statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay to the Panel on ending violence and discrimination against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity at the Human Rights Council 19th Session

Geneva, 7 March 2012

Excellencies, Distinguished representatives, Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to present my study on discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. In doing so, I am conscious of the divergent view both within and outside the Council on the rights of individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity. However, I am certain that none among you will be willing to tolerate serious, systematic violations of human rights against them.

The Secretary-General says he didn't grow up talking about these issues. The same may be true for a number of us here today. Like the Secretary-General, we are in the process of educating ourselves. But **it is time to acknowledge that, while we have been talking of other things, terrible violence and discrimination has been perpetrated against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.** This Council stood up for the rights of all when, last June, States from all regions joined together to adopt resolution 17/19 expressing "grave concern at acts of violence and

discrimination, in all regions of the world, committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.”

By the same resolution, the Council requested me to prepare a study “to document discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, in all regions of the world”, and to examine “how international human rights law can be used to end violence and related human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity.”

That study, prepared by my Office, is before you today. The study starts by recalling the principles of universality, equality and non-discrimination, and setting out the applicable international standards and the obligations of States under international human rights law. It then describes some forms of violence including killings, rape, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, as well as provisions for asylum for those fleeing persecution on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The study considers discriminatory laws particularly with regard to three areas: laws criminalizing same-sex sexual relations between consenting adults, application of the death penalty, and arbitrary arrest and detention. It goes on to describe some discriminatory practices in areas such as employment; health care and education as well as restrictions on freedom of expression, association and assembly; discriminatory practices in the family and community; and the denial of recognition of relationships and related access to State and other benefits. The study also refers to some of the emerging responses recorded at a national level, and offers some conclusions and recommendations.

With regard to its method, the study draws on almost two decades worth of jurisprudence and documented material gathered by United Nations human rights treaty bodies and special rapporteurs. It also integrates findings of regional organizations and data from some national authorities and NGOs.

What emerges from all of the material we gathered is a pattern—a clear pattern of targeted violence and discrimination directed at people because they are, or are perceived to be LGBT. It is a pattern too-long overlooked by many States, and one that this Council has a duty to address.

Let me touch now, briefly, on the three main areas of focus of our study, starting with violence.

The first point to note is that **violence against LGBT persons takes place in all regions**. Commonly-reported incidents include: targeted killings, violent assaults, and acts of torture, including sexual violence. Official statistics are scarce. Many States lack systems for recording and reporting hate crimes against LGBT people. Others may have systems in place but police officers lack the appropriate training to deal with victims and recognize and properly record the motive for these attacks. We also know that in many cases the victims are reluctant to come forward to report incidents because of lack of trust in law enforcement.

But wherever we have figures, they consistently show startlingly high levels of violence and brutality. This is corroborated by reports of many hundreds of individual incidents brought to the attention of special procedures.

We have reports of gay men attacked by assailants shouting homophobic insults, left for dead in the street. Lesbians subjected to gang rape, sometimes characterized as so-called “corrective rape”. Transgender persons sexually assaulted and stoned to death, their bodies so disfigured as to be rendered virtually unrecognizable. And we have information on abuse carried out in police and prison cells – including cases of a lesbian couple beaten by police officers and sexually assaulted, and a transgender woman, placed in an all-male prison and raped more than 100 times, sometimes with the complicity of prison officials.

When such incidents are targeted, when they are part of a systematic pattern of violence, as they are in this context, then they constitute a grave human rights challenge to which this Council has a responsibility to respond.

In accordance with resolution 17/19, we also, in our study, address discriminatory laws. An immediate area of concern is laws that criminalize individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. At least 76 countries retain laws that either explicitly criminalize same-sex relations between consenting adults, or contain vague prohibitions that are applied in a discriminatory way to prosecute LGBT people.

These laws are an anachronism, in many cases a relic of colonial rule. As the Human Rights Committee has confirmed repeatedly, they breach international human rights law, violating rights to privacy and to freedom from discrimination. They also cause enormous, unnecessary suffering, reinforce stigma, fuel violence, and undermine efforts to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The study also documents a **range of discriminatory practices that affect the ability of individuals to enjoy their human rights in their everyday lives**. In the workplace, for example, where employers may fire or refuse to hire or promote someone simply because they are gay or lesbian, and where employee benefits may be subject to discriminatory limitations. In schools, where children as young as eight or nine are subjected to homophobic harassment, intimidation and physical attack. Many of these bullied children become isolated, depressed and drop out of school; some end up committing suicide. And in hospitals and other healthcare facilities, where discriminatory attitudes are also present and where transgender and intersex people are especially poorly served.

States often make it difficult for transgender persons to obtain official papers that reflect their preferred gender – without which, many are forced to live on the margins of society, excluded from employment, healthcare, education and other basic rights.

Even within some families, discrimination runs rife: adolescent children thrown out of home, disowned by their own parents, forced out of school or into psychiatric centres. Girls forced into marriage or pregnancy in an attempt to “cover up” their sexual orientation or,

conversely, young women forced to relinquish their children when their sexuality becomes known. Even reports of so-called “honour killings” of gay sons and lesbian daughters.

And **when human rights defenders speak out, they too face discriminatory restrictions.** NGOs working on LGBT issues have had their offices raided, their licences revoked or refused, requests to hold public meetings and marches rejected.

I know some will resist what we are saying. They may argue that homosexuality and expressions of transgender identity conflict with local cultural or traditional values, or with religious teachings, or that they run counter to public opinion.

We should not dismiss these concerns but listen carefully, focus on the violations, and try to make headway in spite of the difficulties. As always, people are entitled to their opinion. They are free to disapprove of same-sex relationships, for example. They have an absolute right to believe – and to follow in their own lives – whatever religious teachings they choose.

But that is as far as it goes. The balance between tradition and culture, on the one hand, and universal human rights, on the other, must be struck in favour of rights. That much is clear from the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which states, and I quote:

“While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

No personal opinion, no religious belief, no matter how deeply held or widely shared, can ever justify depriving another human being of his or her basic rights. And that is what we are discussing here: depriving certain individuals of their human rights – taking away their right to life and security of person, their rights to privacy, to freedom from arbitrary detention, torture and discrimination, to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

The study before you includes practical recommendations aimed at bringing national laws and practice into line with international standards, while also tackling discriminatory attitudes at the roots. I will restrict myself here to highlighting three proposals for action.

One is to improve State responses to homophobic and transphobic violence. Wherever such violence takes place, it should be recorded and reported by trained law enforcement officials. All such incidents warrant thorough investigation and action to prosecute and punish those responsible.

Second, States should change discriminatory laws that treat people as criminals on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In their place, we need new laws that provide adequate legal protection to people at risk of homophobic or transphobic discrimination.

Third, we should recognize that underlying all of this violence and discrimination is prejudice. We know from experience that you don't eliminate prejudice by changing the law alone; you must change people's hearts and minds as well.

Like millions of other South Africans of my generation, I grew up with prejudice around me. I know that it takes time, patience and persuasion to tackle it. But in the end, my life has taught me that ignorance and bigotry are no match for the power of education. Over time, as people start to talk with one another, they will overcome their discomfort. As they start to focus on facts not fear, prejudice will start to ebb away. States can speed up the process with effective public information campaigns that challenge homophobia and negative stereotypes.

It is not easy but we have done it before. The story of the United Nations is a story of progress in the fight against discrimination. It is a story that is incomplete, as we continue to work to make good on the promise enshrined in our Universal Declaration: a world where "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

Today we all have an opportunity to begin together a new chapter dedicated to ending violence and discrimination against all people, irrespective of their sexual orientation and gender identity. It is an historic moment for this Council and for the United Nations.

Thank you.

UN Human Rights Chief Urges Uganda to Shelve "Draconian" Law on Homosexuality

GENEVA (15 January 2010) – The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on Friday urged the Ugandan government to shelve a "draconian" draft bill on homosexuality that is due to be put before the Ugandan parliament later in January, saying it would bring the country into a direct collision with established international human rights standards aimed at preventing discrimination.

She welcomed recent statements by the President and other senior members of the Government, suggesting it might intervene to stop the private member's bill from becoming law.

The so-called 'Anti-Homosexuality Bill,' tabled by one member of parliament but believed to be supported by a number of others, prohibits any form of sexual relations between people of the same sex, as well as the promotion or recognition of homosexual relations as a healthy or acceptable lifestyle in public institutions.

"The bill proposes draconian punishments for people alleged to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered – namely life imprisonment or, in some cases, the death penalty," Pillay said. "It is extraordinary to find legislation like this being proposed more than 60 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – as well as many subsequent international laws and standards – made it clear this type of discrimination is unacceptable."

The draft bill also includes a provision that could lead to a prison sentence of up to three years for anyone who fails to report within 24 hours the identities of any lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered individual they know – including members of their own family – or who overtly supports the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered people.

The High Commissioner said the bill clearly breaches international human rights standards, as it is “blatantly discriminatory,” adding that, if passed, the bill would have “a tremendously negative impact on the enjoyment of a range of fundamental human rights by homosexuals, lesbians and transgendered individuals, as well as on parents, teachers, landlords, human rights defenders, medical professionals and HIV workers.”

“I would like to remind the Ugandan Government of the country’s obligations under international human rights law,” Pillay said. “Uganda is a party to the core human rights treaties and has generally had a good track record of cooperation with the various international human rights mechanisms. This bill threatens to seriously damage the country’s reputation in the international arena.” She noted that the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights also contains strong language against discrimination.

The High Commissioner said she was “encouraged” by the fact that a number of Ugandan civil society organizations were actively opposing the bill, and by the recent statement by President Museveni, reported in the Ugandan press, which appeared to suggest the Government would intervene to prevent the draft bill from becoming law. “This is the only responsible course of action for a government to take in such circumstances,” she said.

She also urged the Government, once it has dealt with the current bill, to begin the process of repealing existing Ugandan laws that criminalize homosexuality, albeit with less severe punishments.

“To criminalize people on the basis of colour or gender is now unthinkable in most countries,” Pillay said. “The same should apply to an individual’s sexual orientation. International human rights standards strongly suggest that the State should not dictate the nature of private consensual relations between adults.”

The High Commissioner said she was also concerned that, in Malawi, a gay couple who were engaged to be married were being prosecuted and had been denied bail by the court.