

Declaration by the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, on the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, 17 May 2012

“Today, people around the world celebrate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. On behalf of the European Union, I am proud to join this celebration.

Around the world, people experience discrimination and violence, and even die, because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Consensual same sex relations are still criminalised in 76 countries, and punished with the death penalty in at least five.

We are sometimes told that sexual orientation and gender identity conflict with traditional values. Let me be very clear: when we speak about the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex persons, it is not about introducing new rights for one group of people. It is about the same human rights being applied to every person everywhere without discrimination. I call on all States to make this a reality for everyone.”