

Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union 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.”

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland⁺ and Serbia*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Albania, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

⁺ Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.