

**Declaration by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union on the occasion of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, 17 May 2015**

On this International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the EU stands together with LGBTI people all around the world in the struggle to end discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. All human beings are equal in dignity and all are entitled to enjoy their rights as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Over the past years in some parts of the world LGBTI persons have made substantial progress towards obtaining equal rights. Yet in many places they continue to suffer discrimination and violence on account of their sexual orientation and gender identity. In several countries, same sex sexual relations between consenting adults are still criminalised and carry sentences of imprisonment or even the death penalty.

We will continue to make the case for the respect of human rights for all individuals, irrespective of sexual orientation and gender identity, in line with the EU's Guidelines on the rights of LGBTI persons. Through dialogues with third countries, our work in multilateral fora, public statements, and through our support to civil society, the EU will continue to advocate measures to combat discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons, and to actively promote their rights.

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