



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA, INTERPHOBIA, AND TRANSPHOBIA (IDAHOBIT)
1314TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
20 MAY 2021**

Madam Chairperson,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the delegations of Andorra, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Canada to mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) on May 17th.

Madam Chairperson,

In marking this International Day, our states call for an end to all forms of discrimination, exclusion, or violence against persons based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics. We have all – as OSCE participating States – recognized that human rights are universal and indivisible. From this recognition stems the incontrovertible understanding that LGBTI persons are entitled to the same respect as all people everywhere. Yet same sex conduct is criminalized in sixty-nine countries around the world, and in two OSCE participating States. Furthermore, the important and concrete efforts of ODIHR to assist in combatting discrimination and hate crimes against LGBTI persons is criticized by some participating States.

Our OSCE commitments are clear. In Madrid 2007 (MC 10/07) we referred to combatting all forms of discrimination and intolerance, and in Athens 2009 (MC 9/09) we acknowledged that hate crimes are criminal offences committed with a bias motive. When LGBTI people are assaulted, harassed, attacked, or killed – which tragically happens throughout the OSCE region – simply because of their gender identity or expression, their sexual orientation, or their sex characteristics, it is exactly that: a form of discrimination and intolerance, and a bias-motivated criminal offence. This is something that we all, as OSCE participating States, have committed to address and combat. We must positively affirm that our responsibilities extend to the protection of all LGBTI people, and take corresponding steps to demonstrate that commitment. We must ensure that LGBTI people enjoy the same state protection from discrimination and intolerance that any other individual would enjoy.

Madam Chairperson,

Our states are working hard to fight intolerance, foster inclusion, and ensure that LGBTI people have access to healthcare, livelihoods, and security. The Covid-19 pandemic has – and continues to – exacerbate the challenges and difficulties faced by LGBTI people. We must ensure that everyone, including LGBTI people, is protected and included in our response to this crisis. Our states are committed to building open and inclusive societies that respect the human rights of all. We believe that by promoting the inherent human rights of all LGBTI people that we can break down the barriers to the full realization of these human rights, and that we can better fulfill our shared humanity.

In closing, we call again on all participating States to eliminate laws and policies that discriminate against persons based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, and to combat all acts of violence targeting LGBTI people. We trust that all OSCE participating States will join us in this endeavour, live up to their commitments, and reject all discrimination and violence against LGBTI communities, both in word and in deed.

Thank you.