



# INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA

IDAHO MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>



ANNUAL REPORT 2010

## *The editorial from the IDAHO Committee team*

*The 17<sup>th</sup> of May of 2009 was not just the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. It was not just the Day we announced that 300 organizations in 75 countries and several personalities, including Nobel Prize winners, signed an International Statement against Transphobia, advocating the declassification of Trans identity as a mental condition.*

*It was also the day Auntie Victoria, a Tanzanian Trans woman, was admitted into hospital where she died a few days later. She died because she attempted suicide because she could no longer bear the Transphobia she was subjected to. Auntie Victoria was probably not even aware of the international mobilization, nor that Governments had announced that they would engage in major progress for Trans people. We wonder whether it could have saved her life to know this. We wonder whether it has saved other people's lives, by helping them to reclaim their just feeling of self-worth, and by breaking their isolation.*

*In 2010, on the morning following the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga were sentenced to 14 years of hard labor in Malawi. Whatever the reality of their relationship or their own assertion of gender, they were perceived and condemned under the homophobic and transphobic laws that still prevail in so many countries around the world.*

*Every Day, everywhere, countless human rights abuses are being perpetrated by the State and its institutions such as hospitals, schools, etc... or by individuals, churches, corporations, organizations,... against people on the sole ground of their actual or perceived Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity.*

*This is why, on this very Day every year, organizations, citizens, political parties, international institutions, progressive churches, trade unions and other civil society movements, scientists, opinion leaders, media, and others around the world and in all regions raise their voice against hate, violence and discrimination. They express their support to the freedom for all to live their emotional and sexual life in consensual relationships, and to express their true personality outside of rigid gender norms.*

*Our ambition, the one that created the Day back in 2004, is to give these voices a collective visibility and at the same time show the diversity of expressions and mobilizations across the continents.*

*In many countries with extremely hostile political and social contexts, incredibly courageous individuals stand up and face threats, imprisonment, physical and verbal violence, simply because they claim the fundamental human rights that they should be guaranteed under International Human Rights agreed standards. This report is a tribute to their courage, and it hopes to support their mobilization by giving their actions more exposure. This report only contains a few examples, though. The mobilization is far more vibrant than these few pages suggest. We hope nevertheless to give readers a flavor of the strength and imagination that we have witnessed. And we hope it will spur even more people into action next year.*

*This report also presents the initiatives and actions that we, as the Committee promoting the Day at international level, have developed in our attempt to bring added value to the international Human Rights movement. The two jailed Malawians were released a few days after their sentence, thanks to international pressure. All through the year, citizen mobilization frees people who are unfairly jailed or persecuted. It does work!*

*We are proud to be able to be a small part of this mobilization and we hope that every year, with your ongoing support, the global voice for freedom, diversity and respect will keep resonating around the world.*

*The IDAHO Committee team*

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# IDAHO Committee Activities June 2009-June 2010



## 1 ▲ A BIT OF CONTEXT: WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA (IDAHO)?

In more than 80 countries around the world, loving someone of the same sex is still considered illegal, at times involving life-time imprisonment. In 7 countries, homosexual acts are punishable by death. In almost all countries, freedom not to act as socially determined by one person's sex at birth is being limited by Transphobic laws and attitudes.

But even in progressive countries, Homophobia and Transphobia still exist in the form of discriminatory laws, unjust representations in the media, unfair treatment by employers, negative social attitudes, etc....

Homophobia and Transphobia target all people who don't conform to majority sexual and gender roles.

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia ("IDAHO") was created in 2004 to draw the attention of policy makers, opinion leaders, social movements, public opinion, the media, etc... to this issue, and to promote a world of tolerance, respect and freedom regardless of people's sexual orientation or gender identity. As much as it is a day against violence and oppression, it is a day for freedom, diversity and acceptance.

The date of May 17th was chosen to commemorate the decision taken by the World Health Organization in 1990 to take homosexuality out of the list of mental disorders.

The sheer diversity of social, religious, cultural and political contexts in which the rights to express gender freedom and to engage in same-sex relationships need to be addressed makes it impossible for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia to take one specific form or agenda. This is why the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is not one centralized campaign, but an opportunity for all to fight for sexual diversity and gender freedom according to the context they work in. It is a moment, a space, that everyone, including beyond

the LGBTI movement, can take advantage of to take action.

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia is now celebrated in more than 70 countries across the world, in the most varied ways and expressions. LGBTI organizations, governments, cities, human rights organizations, etc...have engaged in activities around May 17th in all world regions and in places as diverse as Australia, Cameroon or Albania...



### **It creates an opportunity for all to:**

- Draw media attention to the issue of Homophobia and Transphobia
- Organize events which mobilize public opinion
- Demand attention from policy makers and engage in lobbying activities
- Network with like-minded organizations and develop new partnerships, at home or beyond
- Mobilize existing constituencies and address new audiences

## 2 ▲ A BIT OF CONTEXT: WHAT IS THE IDAHO COMMITTEE ?

The IDAHO Committee was set up by the founders of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Its objective is to make the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia a global awareness and mobilization moment that constitutes a useful opportunity for everyone to take action at all levels.

### **Its core strategies are to:**

- Give the initiative, the scope, visibility and recognition that will maximize its potential as a political force at all levels, and specifically :
  - Develop the scope and the diversity of the mobilization on the Day around the world
  - Develop the visibility of the Day
  - Promote the recognition the Day gets from official stakeholders (States, local authorities, Institutions, etc...)

- Support organizations, especially organizations working in very difficult contexts, to develop actions around the Day and maximize the use of the Day in their lobby and campaigning strategies.
- Develop and facilitate international mobilization initiatives and campaigns on specific LGBT issues using the Day as a campaigning focus.

### **Campaigns by the IDAHO Committee :**

2004/2005: "For the recognition of an International Day against Homophobia"

2005/2006: "For a universal decriminalization of homosexuality at the UN"

2006/2007: "No to Homophobia, Yes to education"

2007/2008: "No more Lesbophobia"

2008/2009: "Against Transphobia and for the Respect of Gender Identity"

2009/2011: "Religions, Homophobia, Transphobia"

## 3 ▲ OUR ACTIVITIES IN 2009-2010

### **GIVE THE INITIATIVE, THE SCOPE, VISIBILITY AND RECOGNITION THAT WILL MAXIMIZE ITS POTENTIAL AS A POLITICAL FORCE AT ALL LEVELS:**

#### **Develop the scope and the diversity of the mobilization on the Day around the world**

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia has been traditionally very actively celebrated in a large number of countries. In other countries where the context is more difficult, such as Africa, the Middle East or Eastern Europe, activity level has been as high as the local situation realistically allows.

However in other countries the interest for, and engagement in, the Day has been largely below its potential. We therefore continued the strategy, initiated from the very beginning of the Day, to contact stakeholders at national or regional levels in order to discuss the potential of the Day within their strategies and to identify relevant activities.

In addition to constant electronically networking and interacting with organizations worldwide, a series of direct engagement with organizations during international and regional meetings was made possible thanks to external and internal contributions:

During the summer of 2009, the IDAHO Committee Coordinator participated in the international IGLYO meeting in Amsterdam and the International Human Rights Conference in Copenhagen, ensuring extensive exposure of the IDAHO initiative and allowing for large networking.

For both Latin America and Asia, support from Dutch organization HIVOS helped the IDAHO Committee to develop regional workshops aiming at increasing awareness of the Day and of its added value. Both workshops have been prepared during this period but will be implemented over



the next period, with impacts to be achieved from next year onwards. Yet even the preparation process, that included participation in the Asian and Latin American regional ILGA meetings, has already triggered renewed interest and engagement from various organizations in the regions.

The invitation to the ILGA Europe annual meeting in October in Malta has also allowed to take up direct contact with a series of organization and to hold several meetings to discuss the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and its potential contribution to national and regional strategies, resulting in increased or renewed interest from some countries and from the European Institutions.

In April, a visit to New York/Washington allowed for meetings with major US stakeholders like the Human Rights Campaign or the Task Force. Although the contacts were too late to allow planning of significant actions in 2010, discussions are underway to plan a concerted implication of US organizations in the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia from 2011 onwards. Participation of the IDAHO Committee team in the 2011 Creating Change conference and additional contacts with national networks should ensure the steady increase of US organizations' participation in the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

In China, an invitation from the French Embassy allowed the IDAHO Committee Coordinator to engage in strategic discussions on IDAHO actions with the Chinese LGBT organizations and to deepen momentum.

Thematically, the campaign on "Religion, Homophobia, Transphobia" (see below) has allowed the Committee to increase the exposure of the Day with the specific constituency of progressive religious organizations and movements.

We have also maintained a limited interaction with the HIV-AIDS oriented organizations and are aiming at developing this direction more intensively over the next years.

We also aim at increasing links with the world of Development agencies, as we share a wider common agenda around the cultural specificity of development, the importance of sexual rights in the broader development agenda, and the importance of economic development in the promotion of Human Rights.

### **Develop the visibility of the Day**

In addition to ensuring exposure of the Day at the above mentioned meetings, the visibility of the Day was generated through extensive communication in the run up to May 17th 2010. Several information updates with action plans were compiled and disseminated to a list of approximately 20 000 contacts (organizations, media, networks and individuals).

With the support of the Arcus Foundation, the organization further developed its website which is still under construction but already allows for a good visibility of activities per country and issue, thanks to an interactive geographical and thematic map and constitutes a global portal of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, allowing for a consolidated visibility of actions.

The present annual report and other communication material have also been developed and will be strategically disseminated thanks to Arcus' support and thus contribute to the Day's visibility. A very specific visibility project was developed this year thanks to a joint initiative between the IDAHO Committee and the French media Tetu and Libération. The project consisted of inviting media (LGBT and mainstream) around the world to publish the same editorial for May 17th and to edit it with the logos of all participating media, in a global display of unity.

28 media in 22 countries joined the project, creating an international visibility and supporting the message that the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia is truly international in scope and spirit. LGBT organizations in the participating countries were invited to take advantage of the initiative and invite the participating media (and others) to do a more in-depth coverage of the issues of Homophobia and Transphobia.



**Promote the recognition that the Day gets from official stakeholders (States, local authorities, Institutions...)**

The official recognition of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is an essential element of its impact. Official recognition lends the Day more credibility with the public, the media, partner institutions, etc... and of course with the political authorities.

The IDAHO Committee has therefore always placed a strong emphasis on this specific objective, encouraging organizations at all levels to take this objective up with their specific constituencies. In 2010, we had the immense pleasure of seeing the year long advocacy by the Brazilian federation ABGLT resulting in President Lula announcing the country's official recognition of the Day, which had already been recognized by several regional States and cities throughout the Brazilian Nation.

Brazil hereby joined other Institutions in Latin America, such as the Parliaments of Mexico and Costa Rica, the city of Buenos Aires and other local governments, which have given the Day official recognition.

To harness the regional experience and to help it spill over to other countries in the region (and beyond) and to regional institutions, the IDAHO Committee developed with the financial support of the Dutch organization HIVOS a project to hold a regional workshop to discuss the potential of the political use of the IDAHO in lobby and campaigning strategies.

**SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS, ESPECIALLY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN VERY DIFFICULT CONTEXTS, TO DEVELOP ACTIONS AROUND THE DAY AND MAXIMIZE THE USE OF THE DAY IN THEIR LOBBY AND CAMPAIGNING STRATEGIES.**

Although providing direct financial support to local organization was not part of the IDAHO Committee's strategy, we managed to provide some financial support to organizations in Cambodia, Belarus, Burundi.

In order to increase the support to local LGBTQI groups, the IDAHO Committee has kept working throughout the year with the French government on the international LGBT support fund, that will be launched during the second semester of 2010 with an estimated budget of 200 000 € annually.

In October 2009, the president of the IDAHO Committee was invited to Belarus, the last dictatorship in Europe, to support the first international LGBT conference ever in this country, organized by IDAHO Committee correspondent GayBelarus. The IDAHO committee helped local activists to plan actions for the future with the French Embassy and the European Union representation. Gay Belarus has now received funds to run a LGBT newspaper to raise awareness in the country.

As a co-organizer of Moscow Pride, the IDAHO committee was very active in the event when it first happened in 2006. This year, the president of the IDAHO Committee went again to Moscow, to provide help and support for the march. The Pride was once again banned, in spite of the Russian constitution which guarantees freedom of peaceful demonstration. However it eventually did take place, and for the first time it was not attacked by either the police or neo-Nazi protesters (see Russia country page).

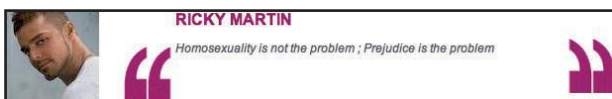
Developing an online resource center dedicated to campaigning activities has been one major objective of the IDAHO Committee. Funds were secured in the spring of 2010 and the center should gradually be developed over the year to be operational to support organizations' campaigning actions for IDAHO 2011. The center will feature



activists' guidelines for actions, facts-and-figure sheets to prepare campaign materials and arguments. It will feature a library of powerful testimonies and quotes against Homophobia and Transphobia, as well as images, videos and other material to be used in either online campaigning or street actions. It also aims at gradually building a resource center of links to other organizations' documents and reports, constituting a library of fundamental research pieces to help activists in building their scientific arguments for campaigning on various issues such as Gender politics, HIV-AIDS, Lesbophobia, Transphobia etc...



For example Ricky Martin tweeted the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia 2010 with "Homosexuality is not the problem; Prejudice is the problem"? The resource center will gradually become a global library of such-quotes.



## DEVELOP AND FACILITATE INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION ACTIVITIES AND CAMPAIGNS ON SPECIFIC LGBT ISSUES USING THE DAY AS CAMPAIGNING FOCUS.

### Follow up on past international Campaigns

In 2009, the IDAHO Committee spearheaded a worldwide campaign focusing at international level on the "depathologization" of trans-identity, targeting the World Health Organization to take trans-identity out of the list of mental disorders, as it had done with homosexuality 20 years ago.

With ongoing pressure from the IDAHO Committee and partner organizations, France confirmed In March its commitment to take Transgenderism out of the category of psychological affections and to consider it as an unclassified "pathology", hence allowing Trans people to retain the benefits of social coverage for hormone treatments and surgery. France also announced its commitment to officially take this objective to the WHO and to spearhead advocacy on this issue with other States, opening up the ground for future advocacy strategies, which the IDAHO Committee commits to help developing.

Follow-up activities on past campaigns include the lobby work to get more international resources to grassroots level in countries where same-sex relationships are still criminalized and work with UNESCO to mainstream issues of Homophobia and Transphobia in the school curricula and to get UNESCO's political support for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

### International Campaign on « Religions, Homophobia, Transphobia »

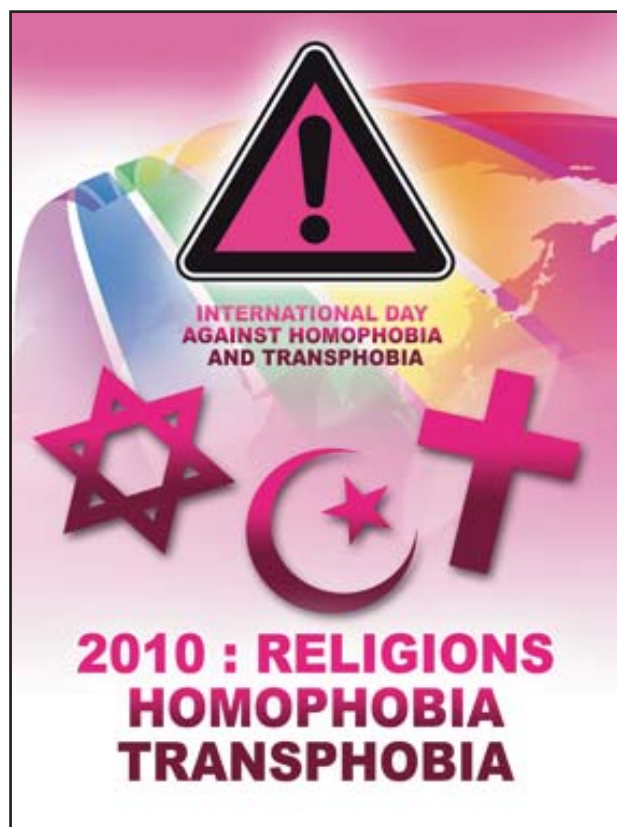
The IDAHO campaign for 2010 and 2011 is about "Religions, Homophobia, and Transphobia". As a matter of fact, across the world, in many different social and cultural contexts, homophobic and transphobic violence is being propagated by people who use religious arguments to justify their positions. Although they are not the expression of the vast majority of believers within the denominations, these positions are being aired openly with growing confidence, and examples of attitudes inviting or condoning homophobic and transphobic violence are unfortunately only too easy to find amongst religions or belief systems.

But other voices do exist everywhere also within these same religions to object to the use of religions to justify hatred and rejection and sometimes even violence, crimes and bloodshed.

The aim of this IDAHO campaign is not to ask theologians to approve of homosexuality or transgenderism, but to disapprove of Homophobia and Transphobia, which is slightly different. This strategy was diffused among the IDAHO networks and, as a result, many events were organized worldwide, the details of which can be found in the country pages of this report.

Centrally, the IDAHO Committee worked with major LGBT organizations from all faiths to develop an international Appeal to Religions, which was translated in 7 UN languages and proposed for sign off, endorsement, and use in the national-level activities.

The campaign, stretching over two years, will be pursued up to May 2011 when it should culminate in an international initiative bringing together major leaders from all faiths and denominations.



### **The Great Global Kiss-in**

Last year, the LGBT social network gays.com had already teamed up with the IDAHO Committee to create a moving collage of testimonies of people from all over the world which attracted 350 000 viewers and constituted a powerful advocacy tool against Homophobia and Transphobia. It was screened in several LGBT film festivals around the world and was posted on many websites and blogs.

In 2010 gays.com and the IDAHO Committee partnered again to create the more ambitious initiative of having kiss-in events staged in as many cities as possible prior to or on the Day, and to collage videos or photos of the events in a film. Although the initiative was launched as late as April, the result was that 60 cities in 23 countries, from Israel to Cameroon and from Australia to France participated in the event. The global official videos can be watched on our site [www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org)



### **Other activities**

Support to LGBT community in Uganda

The situation of LGBT people in Uganda is known for being particularly dangerous. A new bill is being discussed in Parliament. Should it be voted, gays and lesbians could face death penalty, sadly making Uganda one of the hotspots of international Homophobia. The IDAHO Committee worked alongside other Human rights organizations at all levels to support the strategy led by Ugandan organizations to lobby internal and external stakeholders to put pressure on Ugandan authorities to withdraw the bill. As a result of this strategy, several governments, including the UK, the USA, most Nordic countries, France, the European Union, clearly condemned the Ugandan government. For the moment, this international pressure has stopped the process in Parliament.

As part of the national strategies to oppose the

bill, LGBT leaders in Uganda organized a venue on February 14th under the title “Re-imagining Saint Valentine's day”. Confronted with the organizers’ determination to organize the event despite the risks, the IDAHO committee decided to give it full support, helping to secure the venue, to contact western embassies and international media. The event turned out to be a great success. In spite of the hard conditions, in spite of the threats, more than one hundred LGBT Ugandan activists attended the meeting. Among the panelists were a Ugandan gay friendly bishop, pastors of the Universalist church, the president of the IDAHO Committee, and many local organizations. CNN and BBC provided very good coverage of the event.

The IDAHO Committee also provided direct assistance to LGBT Human Rights defenders, including helping one specifically exposed and targeted gay activist to escape and settle in Europe where he is now staying in safety and applying for political refugee status.



# Some examples of actions for the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia around the world



**It is impossible to have a comprehensive picture of all activities that were organized around the Day. As there is not one unified “management” for this Day, there is no central reporting system and this actually allows for greater ownership of the Day and unleashes the creativity of activists. Yet, through intensive networking and many international contacts, we have collected a lot of information on activities that are very often organized in heavily hostile contexts by activists who had the courage to stand up and speak out and who, whatever their differences in strategies, tactics or political affiliation, share a common ideal of a world free of Homophobia and Transphobia, where respect and individual responsibility will take over from hatred and social control.**

**This section of the report aims at highlighting the richness and diversity that the idea of an International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia triggers. It also aims at paying a sincere tribute to all activists who work all year round, mostly on a voluntary basis, to build a more tolerant and diverse future.**

**The following information is just a short excerpt of more comprehensive reports that can be accessed on our website [www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org), where many photos and videos of local events can be viewed.**

## 1 ▲ INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

### **European Institutions**

On the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, leaders at the highest levels in the European Union, including from the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, all issued strong messages condemning Homophobia and Transphobia. It was the first time all three European Union institutions addressed Homophobia jointly.

Herman van Rompuy, President of the European Council, the EU institution representing the 27 Member States' governments, issued a written statement on IDAHO affirming the EU's commitment to refusing discrimination on any ground. Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, issued a video message reaffirming the commitment of the European Parliament to combat any form of discrimination, including Homophobia. Viviane Reding, Vice-president of the European Commission and Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, also issued a video statement condemning Homophobia as a blatant violation of human dignity, incompatible with the principles on which the EU is founded. Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a declaration in which she reaffirmed the importance of non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender

identity in the EU and in the world. Herman van Rompuy, Jerzy Buzek and Viviane Reding are all originally from the European People's Party, the majority European conservative party.

All declarations and videos are featured on the IDAHO Committee resource centre and organisations, especially in Council of Europe member States, are encouraged to use them in their campaigning work.

Finally, still at the European Parliament, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) expressed once more its support to the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia by continuing the "ALDE 4 Equality" project aimed at promoting equality, non-discrimination and LGBT rights in Europe and the participation of ALDE MEPs in pride events. More information can be found on [www.alde.eu](http://www.alde.eu).





### A Day in Hand

A Day in Hand is an initiative founded by UK citizen and activist David Watkins. It's about people from the same sex, whatever their sexual orientation, holding hand in public to send a clear message out against Homophobia. This year, A Day In Hand initiative marked the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia with a Same-Sex Hand Holding Week starting on May 17th.



### ENAR

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR) decided to mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia with a specific campaign on the multiple discrimination faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people from ethnic and religious minorities across Europe, who face discrimination not only on the basis of their race and/or religious beliefs, but also of their sexual orientation, and in some cases of their gender, age or disability.

### ETUC

On IDAHO 2010, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) expressed its solidarity with all workers facing discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in Europe and beyond with a special message that was disseminated to their 82 member organizations from a total of 36 countries in Europe, and 12 industry federations.

### Slavic Pride

The First Slavic Pride, uniting LGBT activists from Russian and Belarus, was organised to take place during the Eurovision Song Contest in Moscow last year and was banned by the Mayor. 32 Russian

and Belarusian LGBT activists were detained overnight by the Moscow Police and later fined by a Court.

This year activists scheduled the event in Minsk, again to coincide with IDAHO. Despite a new ban, the organisers managed to unfold a giant 12 meters long rainbow flag through the streets of the Belarusian capital. 12 participants were arrested when the police brutally broke up the rally. They were detained for 48 hours and later fined by a Court.

Several events were also organized around the Slavic Pride including parties, exhibitions, a press conference and seminars as well as the first screening in a post Soviet country of the movie "Beyond Gay: The Politics of Pride" by Bob Christie.

Slavic Gay Pride is a union of Russian and Belarusian LGBT activists. The members of the Slavic Gay Pride movements are Pride organizers of Moscow, St-Petersburg and Minsk. All three organizations are members of Interpride and regular organizers of IDAHO events.

The third Slavic Pride is scheduled in St-Petersburg for 2011 and will be put under the patronage of the IDAHO Committee.



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### ILGA Europe

This year ILGA-Europe marked the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia by organising a public event right in the heart of the EU quarter in Brussels, next to the buildings of the European Commission and the European Council. The aim of the 'Rainbow Buzz' action was to raise awareness on the rights of LGBT people and promote objectives to advance the rights of LGBT people in Europe. The 'Rainbow Buzz' action culminated with a release of 300 rainbow balloons.

ILGA Europe also published for this year's IDAHO an updated and amended edition of the "Rainbow Europe" maps, including a new 'European Rainbow County Index' ranking European countries according to the well being of LGBT people.



### UN agencies

Speaking on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé urged "all governments to take



Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS  
**UNAIDS**  
 UNICEF • UNDP • UNFPA • UNDG  
 ILO • UNESCO • WHO • WORLD BANK

steps to eliminate stigma and discrimination faced by men who have sex with men, lesbians and transgender populations. They must also create social and legal environments

that ensure respect for human rights and enable universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support."

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (ACPOH) and the Centre for Comparative and Public Law (CCPL) at the Faculty of Law at the University of Hong Kong released the key findings and recommendations of the UNDP-APCOM study entitled:



"Laws affecting HIV responses among men who have sex with men and transgender people in Asia and the Pacific: an agenda for action" during a High Level Dialogue on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

This High Level Dialogue brought together key members of the Judiciary, Parliament, Community advocacy groups and the UN system. The discussion explored how effective HIV prevention can only be achieved in a conducive legal environment that allows unimpeded dissemination of evidence-based prevention messages, appropriate service provision, and creates confidence among the most marginalized and vulnerable to seek information and access health related services.

### RainbowFlash 2010

Organisations that launched last year the Rainbow Flashmob initiative in Russia have this year expanded their initiative to the Czech Republic, Finland, Ukraine, Armenia and various cities across Germany. On May 17th, 2010 gays and lesbians, bisexual and transgender people, their parents and children, friends and peers have again let the colourful balloons fly in the sky as a symbol of the fight against Homophobia and Transphobia.



### ILGA World

As is now becoming tradition, the International Association of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex people published on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia its update of its global report on State-sponsored Homophobia. The report updates information on the state of legislations affecting LGBT people across the world.

### ALBANIA

The Albanian Alliance Against Discrimination of LGBT (ALEANCA) teamed with the Dutch embassy, the Human Rights Group organization, The Children's Human Rights Centre and the organisation LGBT Pro to organise a series of events around the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, including a joint press conference on Homophobia.

Several public campaigning events marked the Day. On one night, activists went out to paint the benches of a park in rainbow flag colours and to write anti-Homophobia messages on them; leaflets and posters about the Day Against Homophobia were distributed around the city of Tirana and in the largest shopping centre. The Human Rights Group organisation screened its documentary "Behind the Doors" which shows the reality of the LGBT community in Albania. And on IDAHO night Aleanca organized the country's first "Rock against Homophobia" live concert.

A relay race with a rainbow flag made for a very moving video, to watch on our Albania page or on Aleanca's site.

### ARGENTINA

This year, the Day was marked by a very specific context in Argentina, where the Bill on same-sex marriage had just been passed in the Parliament but is still to be presented in the Senate. If passed, Argentina will become the first country in Latin America to open marriage to same-sex couples.

In this context of dramatic political importance, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was marked by numerous events.

The Argentinean LGBT Federation FALGBT and the Parliament organised the First Parliamentary Seminar focusing on "LGBT Rights, pending Equality Agenda".

The Homosexual Community of Argentina (CHA) also conducted several activities, including specifically a Senate hearing to discuss the approval of the Marriage Act for same-sex couples, and participated in the debate on discrimination for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity that was held for IDAHO in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires' Legislature. The organization also filed a claim with Buenos

Aires' City Government, to request it to abide by a Court of Appeals' decision ordering the City Government to report on its plans to commemorate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

With a special focus on the Trans issue, the Argentinean Transgender Association ATTTA and the Argentinean LGBT Federation FALGBT organised several debates on a draft bill on Gender Identity and the legal status of Transgender people. Also Trans groups from all over the country organised several cultural events including film screenings and theatre presentations.

In the State of Santiago del Estero, the local parliament issued a declaration in support of the Day and encouraging organisations to take up initiatives. In Tucuman, the Day was once again marked with local LGBT groups holding the now traditional local LGBT theatre festival.

In other States all through the country, several other movements organised various political and social events, ranging from "mass photos against Homophobia" to picnics and film screenings or debates in the regional chambers on the anti-discrimination law.



### ARMENIA

This year PINK Armenia joined the international Rainbow Flash event.

On May 17, the organization staged a flashmob with balloons with the support of friends and partner organizations. Colourful balloons flew in the sky as a symbolic move to combat hate, ignorance and intolerance, Homophobia and Transphobia.

Videos of the event can be watched on our site's Armenia page and on Pink Armenia's site at <http://pinkarmenia.blogspot.com>

### AUSTRALIA

"Speaking About Silence - Homophobia in Sports and Community" became the state-wide focus within the Australian state of Victoria. Using this framework a range of activities directly addressed Homophobia in sport which was then linked with broader anti-Homophobia initiatives through a revamped <http://StopHomophobiaToday.com> website. Parliamentarians including the acting-Premier



and senior ministers created personal video messages and the government launched a "Community Code of Sporting Conduct" which became compulsory for all sport in the state, while the Legislative Assembly held an Adjournment Debate in Melbourne addressing IDAHO. Activities for IDAHO took place in all major regional centres including a "mall sporting taker-over" in Ballarat and a major community photo event with hundreds of participants in Bendigo. Under-18 youth activities included the publication of anti-Homophobia posters. The gay men's health 'bowling over Homophobia' event and a large flash-mob "die-in" in Melbourne's Federation Square were both very successful. Major GLBT research on Homophobia and sport entitled "Come Out To Play" was launched amid a media frenzy created by a discussion led by a professional footballer about the lack of safety for players if they were to come-out in Australian Rules football. Australia's only gay and lesbian radio station, JOY 94.9 presented an IDAHO broadcast and developed a range of programming in conjunction with the Anti-Violence Project of Victoria (<http://antiviolence.info>) which continues into the month's post-IDAHO. Additional activities addressing Homophobia in sport took place in the states of South Australia and Western Australia.

In non-sport activities, thousands of people had previously protested in several States in Australia for same sex marriage rights, including in Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Then on May 15th, IDAHO provided the opportunity for the national same-sex marriage campaign Equal Love's next actions. Actions were organised in various cities and in various forms, including a mass "illegal" wedding, (full details on [www.equallove.info](http://www.equallove.info)). All over the country, dozens of other initiatives included the launch of a new university think tank in Sydney to work on LGBT issues, a Rainbow Afternoon Tea in Adelaide, Rainbow Flag raising ceremonies, film nights in Sydney universities, and many more such as the 'Love combating Fear' exhibition in Sydney. The NSW-led Australian anti-Homophobia campaign 'This Is Oz' produced and distributed 34 000 postcards. Part art project, part human rights campaign, This Is Oz invites people to upload an image of themselves with a personal message addressing Homophobia or celebrating diversity. The images then become part of a powerful gallery that can be accessed at <http://www.thisisoz.com.au>. Specifically, ACON's Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project produced postcards which target young people and have been distributed throughout New South Wales in the lead up to IDAHO. Bridging the two large "This is Oz"

and "Stop Homophobia Today" initiatives, the Australian Sports Commission hosted workshops for athletes, administrators and coaches to develop messages for inclusion in both the NSW and Victoria initiatives. More details on IDAHO actions in Australia can also be found at <http://www.lgbthealth.org.au/IDAHO>



#### **AUSTRIA**

For IDAHO, the Austrian LGBT federation HOSI joined in the International project "Media against Homophobia" and published the joint Editorial.

And on the 17th of May, the local branch of HOSI in the city of Linz organised an event called "Kicken gegen Homophobie" in order to make people aware of Homophobia in soccer.

#### **BANGLADESH**

For the third year in a row, the Bangladeshi organisation Boys of Bangladesh, the largest network of self-identified Bangladeshi gay men, marked the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. The organisation organized a day long event at Dhaka's Goethe Institute. The event consisted of cultural performances, a poster competition and an open forum.

#### **BELARUS**

This year the Slavic Pride, an initiative uniting LGBT activists from Russian, was organised in Minsk, again to coincide with IDAHO. Despite a new ban, the organisers managed to unfold a giant 12 meters long rainbow flag through the streets of the Belarusian capital. 12 participants were arrested when the police brutally broke up the rally. They were detained for 48 hours and later fined by a Court.

Several events were also organized around the Slavic Pride including parties, exhibitions, a press conference and seminars as well as the first screening in a post Soviet country of the movie "Beyond Gay: The Politics of Pride" by Bob Christie.

## BELGIUM

Arc-en-Ciel Wallonie, the GLBT federation of the French speaking region Wallonie, marked IDAHO again by largely distributing the badge they had created for last year's



Day. 20 000 badges were distributed for people to wear on both the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and the regional Pride march. Badges and information leaflets on the International Day

against Homophobia and Transphobia were distributed in 500 secondary schools throughout the Region, with the support of the national education authorities.

## BOLIVIA

In Bolivia, the days around IDAHO were vibrant with the third edition of the International Diversity Film Festival. During the week long festival hosted by the French-German cultural centre and organised by the organization 'Igualdad Igbt Bolivia', the 50 films strong program attracted an audience of more than a thousand.

The Bolivian Ministry of Health presented on May 17th a study on male sexualities in the capital of La Paz and launched a Committee for Universal Access to Health dedicated to ensuring a comprehensive access to health and HIV-related services, with specific attention to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. During the study presentation, the Minister herself read a Declaration on behalf of the Government emphasizing that Bolivia's new Constitution includes Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in its prohibited grounds for discrimination.

The organisation Equidad collected testimonies against Homophobia and Transphobia and edited them in a giant poster that was displayed on IDAHO.

## BRAZIL

Brazil made headline news this year as President Lula Da Silva announced that the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia would now

be officially recognized by the country, thus becoming the third country in the Latin America region (and the largest!) to write the Day into its official calendar. This recognition paid off years of active lobbying by the national coalition ABGLT and the national anti-Homophobia campaign.

IDAHO events in Brazil were specifically marked by the first Brazilian National March Against Homophobia. Over 2000 delegates from all Brazilian states gathered to march in the political centre of the capital, starting at the cathedral, going past the ministries and finishing in front of the National Congress.



© ABGLT

During this period ABGLT met with 14 of the 18 ministries who share responsibility for the implementation of the National Plan for LGBT Citizenship and Human Rights, and with the president of the House of Representatives.

During a full week, Banco do Brasil and Caixa Econômica Federal had the slogan « May 17th, Day against homophobia » printed on their bank statements, ATM receipts, etc...., providing a wonderful example on how the Day can be used to do creative campaigning.

Like in previous years, in many cities across the country organisations marked the Day with a large variety of local events. Full program on [www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org)





## BURUNDI

For the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, one of the main LGBT associations in Burundi, HUMURE, organized a series of events, including a ceremony for people living with HIV/AIDS. On May 17th, a debate took place within the homosexual community to discuss and exchange opinions about the weight of Homophobia in the life of homosexual people from Burundi. The day was dedicated to George Kanuma, Burundi's recently deceased pioneer in the fight against Homophobia, with a celebration to honour his memory.

## CAMBODIA

This year Cambodia pride marked the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia for the second time with a vast programme of activities between the 10th and the 17th of May, including an art exhibition, a film festival, workshops and social events. Highlights included an LGBT Community Day which celebrated love, friends and family and an IDAHO solidarity evening on May 17th that reached out to families and friends of the LGBT community across Cambodia.



© Nicksellphotography.com

## CAMEROON

The LGBT organisation ADEFHO joined in the Great Global Kiss-in project in Douala and despite the strong homophobic context, some LGBT activists met under the statute of the "New Liberty" to exchange hugs and kisses. The organisation also organised a football match against a team of heterosexual players, using sport as a vehicle for dialogue and understanding.

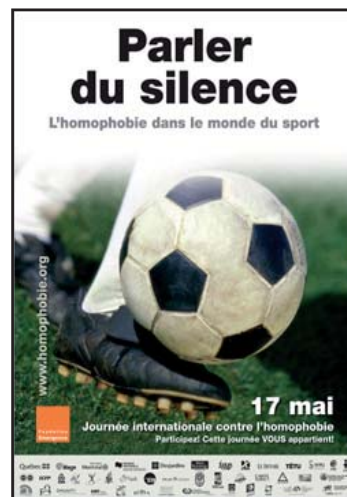
The LGBT organisation Alternatives Cameroon organized a survey among homosexual men and women on their relationship to their faith. A surprising 90 % of homosexuals felt, despite a systematic rejection from their congregations, that it was possible to conciliate their sexuality and their faith.

## CANADA

Following the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, the annual campaign of the Canadian LGBT foundation 'Emergence' chose this year to focus on Homophobia in the world of sports. Like every year, numerous events marked this campaign throughout Quebec, including the presentation of the results of a large survey undertaken across the whole country on Homophobia in the sporting world. Disappointingly though, almost none of the Canadian Sports federations accepted to sign the anti-Homophobia declaration that Emergence and the Ministry for Sports had elaborated. In addition, Fondation Emergence awarded its annual prize to gay Quebec novelist and play writer Michel Tremblay. All details of the events on [www.fondationemergence.org](http://www.fondationemergence.org)

Still in Quebec, the parishes of the United Canadian Church joined the international campaign on Religions, Homophobia and Transphobia in a special church service against Homophobia and Transphobia on May 16th.

In Ottawa, the Canadian political group New Democrats manifested their commitment towards a fairer society for LGBT people by introducing, on IDAHO, a Private Members bill to add gender identity and expression to the Canadian Human Rights Act, and to



the hate crime and sentencing provisions of the Criminal Code.

A similar initiative took place at regional level in Ontario, aiming at amending the Ontario Human Rights Code to recognize gender identity as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Many Trade Unions across the country issued strong declarations on their commitment to fight Homophobia, including the Public Service Alliance of Canada who once again reaffirmed that 'PSAC remains staunchly committed to fighting all forms of discrimination, because we truly understand that an injury to one is an injury to all.' The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), released on IDAHO "The Gay-Straight Student Alliance Handbook", the latest in a series of publications aiming to help teachers, school administrators and counsellors in understanding the educational, health and safety needs of LGBT students.

## CHILE

Activities in Chile ranged from a demonstration in front of the Supreme Court to protest its Presidents homophobic declarations, to a campaign destined to name and shame notorious homophobes. Other actions included letters and petitions to politicians on issues ranging from the vulnerability of female trans persons and the need to declassify trans identity as a mental disorder, to the fight against right wing proposals opposing progress on rights of LGBT people.

## CHINA

Once more, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was marked in China by a series of innovative and compelling events.



This year, more than 10 cities organized various events (up from 3 last year), including a free-hugs event in Beijing and Xiamen featuring couples disguised as 'homosexual tigers', in a playful allusion to the fact that this year is China's year of the Tiger, orchestrated by the lesbian organisation

'Tongyu' (Common Language).

LGBT groups in many of the major universities held information stalls to address their fellow students. Students from Gender Education Forum at Sun Yat-Sen University raised a giant rainbow flag in a park, and volunteers from Friends Public Welfare, a youth group in Guangzhou, used graffiti to raise the awareness of the public on LGBT issues.

China Queer Independent Films kick-started the third China Queer Film Festival Tour, screening a collection of films on LGBT issues, defying official censorship that still assimilates any allusion to homosexuality with 'pornography'.

And the British and French Embassies both hosted various events to signal their support to the Day, including meetings with the LGBT community, screening of films and documentaries, and public debates. The events were facilitated by China's independent LGBT webcast Queer Comrades and Tongyu.

A young college student in Changchun initiated an on-line campaign to collect 1000 smiles from straight people to show their support to LGBT friends. The campaign was joined later by many LGBT groups

and individuals, and events were held in various cities to collect smiles in the street. 3000 smiles have been collected by the end of June and an exhibit is under planning in Beijing



## COLOMBIA

In Bogota IDAHO was celebrated on Sunday the 16th. Each Sunday, 15 km of the city roads are closed to traffic and transformed into cycling and walking paths. Along these roads, the city's LGBT centre held 5 information points and in one of them, a Kiss-in was organised to join in the Great Global Kiss-in project.

LGBT organization Colombia Diversa also edited several radio clips for the Day



© Jeanette Tineo

## COSTA RICA

In Costa Rica, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia was marked by a series of consecutive events organised in collaboration between the LGBT organisation CIPAC and the three main State Universities.

A press conference was given by the Directors of the three institutions or their representatives and the country's Minister for Public Health.



## CROATIA

On May 17th, activists of Lesbian organization Kontra handed out a "Prescription for treating Homophobia" to Government officials and to Members of Parliament. The action was targeted to have all homophobic references withdrawn from schoolbooks, after it was shown that manuals for religion classes had discriminatory and derogatory contents. After that activists handed out informative leaflets on the International day Against Homophobia and Transphobia in one of Zagreb's main squares.



The Croatian LGBT organisation Iskorak launched on the Day a survey among political parties on their responsibilities in fighting Homophobia.

This action complemented the launch of a new campaign titled "Coming out against Homophobia" ("Iskorak protiv homofobije"), to be mainstreamed in the general media, and the launch of the website

homofobija.com containing articles about Homophobia, reporting on the situation in Croatia, and promoting the brochure "Legal options against Homophobia" on the recent Law against discrimination in Croatia.



Zagreb Pride, another LGBT organisation in Croatia, celebrated the day with a local version of the lip-synch singing on Lily Allen's 2009 chart hit song against Homophobia, which can be viewed on their website.

## CUBA

In a regular celebration of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the National Centre for Sexual Education CENESEX lead by Mariela Castro organized a week long festival around

sexual diversity, including film shows, arts exhibitions and a conference on 'family and society'.

CENESEX also inaugurated on May 11th an arts exhibition celebrating IDAHO with a display of works on sexual diversity.

The city of Santa Clara was this year's hotspot for Cuba's IDAHO program, with a full week of activities to celebrate sexual diversity, culminating with a closing gala associating intellectual, artists and politicians.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech AIDS Help Society in cooperation with Gaysport.cz marked both IDAHO and AIDS Candlelight Memorial Day (May 16th) by organising for the third time a 6km long challenging Run against Homophobia.

## ECUADOR

In Ecuador's city of Guayaquil, a week-long series of events orchestrated by LGBT organization "Amigos por la Vida" marked this year's International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, ranging from exhibitions, theatre plays, films screenings and public debates.

## FRANCE

In France, the 2010 IDAHO was marked by more than 150 events across the country. Activists celebrated the Day in 40 different cities. Many of these events were about religion, as it was the theme suggested for 2010. In particular, in the French national Assembly, a meeting took place with high profile and official representatives from Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Buddhist denominations. In the name of their respective religions, all of them condemned homophobia and transphobia, and committed to fight against homophobic and transphobic violence -it was the first time ever in France. This event was organised by the IDAHO committee, the French League of Human Rights and several LGBT religious NGOs.

On the political side, as a result of the 2009 IDAHO campaign against transphobia, the French Ministry of Health, who had removed "transsexualism" from the French list of mental disorders on may 16th 2009, made a statement in Geneva on may 17th to ask the World Health Organisation to follow suit, thus kick-starting a long political journey towards more respect and equality for Trans people.

On May 17th, the ministry of foreign affairs officially launched a new international fund designed to help

NGOs in countries where LGBT people are at risk. 200 000 euros were collected by France, the Netherlands and Norway, and will be used to provide support for LGBT people. The minister of sports also took an important decision: on May 17th, during a press conference with the IDAHO Committee, several LGBT and national sports organisations, the Minister of Sports launched a national plan against homophobia. According to this program, every trainer, every sports teacher in France, will receive and provide LGBT education, which should provoke a significant change in minds and attitudes. Also, on May 17th, the 'Family Ministry' announced a new plan to provide help and assistance to families confronted by homophobia.



### FINLAND

LGBT groups in the Finnish capital Helsinki joined the international Flashmob initiative

### GERMANY

Once again the Berlin based anti-Homophobia project MANEO marked the Day with the traditional "kiss-kiss Berlin" festival. In reaction to the anti-Homophobia bill tabled in Uganda and in support of the Ugandan LGBT community, the kiss-in on May 17th



was organized in front of the Ugandan Embassy in Berlin

The Kiss-Kiss Berlin festival was supported by all major Berlin Clubs with a series of fundraising parties stretching throughout April and May. Still in Berlin, churches held ecumenical vigils against Homophobia on Sunday 16th.

### GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, LGBTI organisations once again marked IDAHO with several public actions : on May 16th and 17th, Lambda y Proyectos Unidos ASI displayed posters and banners throughout the historical centre of the city outside of several buildings, including the Ministry for Health, Education and Labour, the Local Government office, the National Congress, the Pre-

sidential Palace and the Metropolitan Cathedral. In front of this same Cathedral, LGBTI people of Guatemala joined in the Great Global Kiss-in, in a special message to the national clergy's outspoken Homophobia. And on May 14th a national seminar was organized to reflect on "Homophobia, a limitation to the right to health".

### HONG KONG

A large alliance of Hong Kong based LGBT groups, with special leadership by 'Rainbow of Hong Kong', Human Rights organisations, lgbt-friendly media and progressive religious groups got together this year to commemorate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia with a candlelight vigil.

In Chater Gardens in the heart of the city candles were lit to commemorate the victims of Transphobia and Homophobia throughout the world, as part of a ceremony that featured speeches and testimonies on Homophobia and a symbolic die-in action.

In the framework of this year's international campaign on "Religions, homophobia, transphobia", the LGBT community of Hong Kong organized an inter-faith seminar where representatives from various religious groups in Hong Kong came together to urge putting aside differences among religions in order to create hope and space for reconciliation between religion and sexual minorities.

### HUNGARY

Never before had the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia been marked by such a diverse program of events in Hungary. The NGO "Háttér Support Society for LGBT People" organized a workshop entitled "Rainbow families: the question of same sex couples and their children in light of political debates and international requirements" with the participation of activists and scholars working on the issue. As part of the workshop, the organization also launched the Hungarian translation of the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. The Budapest Pride team organized a flashmob in the middle of Budapest: more than 60 participants were dressed in the colours of the rainbow and blew soap bubbles to "Blow Homophobia Away". The LGBT group of Amnesty International Hungary reported on their participation in the Baltic Pride a week earlier, and an information table on Homophobia and gay rights was set up at the Central European University by the university's Human Rights Initiative. On the same week the

First Hungarian LGBT Business Leaders Forum took place in Budapest, which focused on the issue of diversity at the workplace.

## INDIA

As part of a series of events hosted by French Embassies in several countries, the Embassy in New Delhi invited officials, NGOs, lawyers and activists to discuss LGBT related strategies. Similar consultations took place in French Embassies in Australia, China, Mexico and Panama.

## INDONESIA

The context of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia in Indonesia was marked by a strong mobilisation of religious extremist groups against the LGBT community all through the past year. Several events in 2010 had to be cancelled due to pressure and intimidation. Despite these circumstances, and galvanised into action by the attempts to silence them, the newly formed LGBTIQ Forum made the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia a priority focus for their work.

LGBTs of Bandar Lampung (in the southern tip of Sumatra) held a Miss Transgender Ambassador contest while in Jakarta, the National Commission on Human Rights hosted a series of event including a photo exhibition, a public debate focusing on "Freedom of Assembly and Expression" and a cultural show where various cultural groups presented performances.

To celebrate IDAHO, the LGBT community in Makassar (South Sulawesi) decided to make the Day coincide with their annual "Miss Uniperes" Contest, an event aiming at electing the best trans person to become the spokesperson for LGBT communities. While in Malang (East Java), the LGBT community chose to hold outdoor activities in several tourist spots around the city, in Medan, the largest city in Sumatra, the first-ever IDAHO event was celebrated by public activities such as speeches, poem reading, candle lighting and distribution of leaflets to passers-by. In Surabaya, where religious fundamentalists broke up several LGBT events, it is remarkable that the LGBT groups there still found the courage to hold an IDAHO commemoration in a university campus, with discussions, a photo exhibition and poetry reading.

Similarly standing under the threat of Islamic attacks, an IDAHO concert had to be cancelled in Yogyakarta. Yet, close to 50 people protested the police's inaction by cycling near the park where the schedu-



led event was to be held. On 17 May the Yogyakarta LGBT community launched a charity by giving out food packages to day laborers in the city's biggest market, engaged into

street performances to attract the attention of the public and collected signatures in support of the LGBT agenda. A public conference on "Sexual orientation and gender identity as part of the cultural diversity of Indonesia", including religious leaders as panelists, could be carried out without incidents.

## IRELAND

Changing Attitude Ireland (CAI) organised several church services to mark IDAHO in Belfast, Dublin and Cork.

Besides, CAI and the Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at Dublin's Trinity College launched "Share your story: Gay and Lesbian experiences of Church", a resource booklet with seven real life stories of how people were treated by clergy and those in leadership in their churches.

The Galway youth LGBT group 'Shout' displayed posters around the city and held a ceremony with speeches and a balloon release.

## ISRAEL

On may 17 2010, the IDAHO community had the pleasure to welcome HAVANA, ("understanding"), the brand new website providing information about IDAHO activities in Israel and offering round-the-year news and resources to combat Homophobia, bi-phobia and Transphobia : [www.havana.org.il](http://www.havana.org.il)





Since it first went online, Havana gave information about several IDAHO initiatives around Israel: in Rishon Lezion, a major city near Tel Aviv, a first ever Pride march took place as a reaction to homophobic positions and statements from the mayor. In Haifa, activists constructed a huge canvas made of pieces of cloth featuring homophobic and Transphobic statements until it formed the words "Homophobia kills". In the main IDAHO event, which was produced by LGBT parents' organization, community activists, youths and teachers met with the Minister of Education (Gideon Sa'ar) to discuss Homophobia in schools, its influence on the children, and ways to raise awareness among youth. The LGBT parents' organization is chaired by Ayala Katz, mother of Nir Katz, the youth guide who was murdered in the LGBT youth club in August 2009, along with Liz Trobishi, one of the young girls that were in the place at the time. Ayala dedicates her time and energy to the purpose that was so important to her son. Ten more cities around Israel organized initiatives for IDAHO. Some of them took place under the title of "Pride in the Neighborhood", a spontaneous Facebook initiative that urges people to act locally.



## ITALY

To celebrate IDAHO this year, the Italian LGBT federation Arcigay launched a national campaign called "L'amore vince sempre sull'odio" (Love always wins against hate). Campaign materials include posters and postcards that supported mobilisation actions organised by local branches of Arcigay, ArciLesbica, Agedo, Famiglie Arcobaleno, Certi Diritti, gay-Lib, Digayproject, 3D, Rete-Lenford, Studenti medi, Arci.



The citizen's organization MiCO-Milano Contro l'Omofobia organised 3 different events for that day, starting with a conference on Homophobia hosted by the City Hall of Milan. In the afternoon MiCO, organized in the center of the city a sit-in of gagged citizens (of the LGBT community but also common citizens with their families) to protest against the silence that is imposed on LGBT people. The organization also developed for the Day a series of posters that was designed by a communications agency with such talent that it was awarded gold at the European Design Awards 2010 and is currently published in several graphic design magazines. The evolving poster series project of MiCO began with portraits of past or present notorious homophobic tyrants drawn with the letters of the word "omofobia" and will continue expanding in the future.



Local branches of Arcigay and Arcilesbica developed many initiatives. Among those, Udine presented a campaign called "Civiltà: prodotto tipico friulano" (Civilization: typical product of Friuli region) showing gay and lesbian couples kissing. Right wing parties reacted very harshly against this campaign, tearing posters down and fighting through local media; in Milan, activists organized a conference with local non-religious networks promoting awareness of new forms of Homophobia that are less direct and obvious but no less destructive.

And Bologna's Arcigay center called "Il Cassero" joined the Great Global Kiss-in and brought Italy onto the initiative's map with the action of the group of street activists called "CasseroFUORI!" The organization also participated in a common event for the Emilia Romagna region that took place in the main square of Rimini on Sunday 16th under the name "Emilia Romagna delle differenze". The event included speeches by local organizations, arts performances, a concert and a theater play...

## IVORY COAST

The Ivorian organisation ARC-EN-CIEL PLUS (AEC+), whose mission is to care for HIV prevention for men who have sex with men (MSM) in the

country, celebrated IDAHO by gathering LGBTs, HIV/AIDS prevention activists, Human Rights defenders and religious leaders, including much respected abbot ABEKAN, in a conference focused on the links between homosexuality and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. The conference highlighted the links between stigmatisation of LGBTs and their lack of access to prevention and treatment but also drew on the wider analysis of the importance of respect for Human Rights for a society's wellbeing in general.

### JAMAICA

On IDAHO, activists in Jamaica stood proudly in mid-town Kingston in a call to repeal the laws that criminalise same sex intimate relationships in the country. Some masked for fear of retaliation but most standing out and proud, the Jamaican activists challenged the very open and violent homophobic attitudes in the country. The "Stand Against Silence" event was organised by the Jamaica Forum of Lesbians All-sexuals and Gays (J-FLAG) and co-sponsored by



AIDS Free World and UNAIDS. It received support from the representative of the European Union Missions who, on behalf of Belgium, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Spain, reiterated that the fight against Homophobia is "one of the priorities that inspire the policies and relations of the European Union."

A video of the event is featured on the Jamaica page of the IDAHO Committee website. LGBT activists in Montego Bay had also recently organised a "Walk for Tolerance", a public protest uniting LGBT people and people living with HIV/AIDS, and a memorial for Victor Jarrett, a gay Jamaican killed by a police instigated mob attack.

### KENYA

For the first time in the country, more than 100 lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals and human rights activists converged in Kenya's capital city, Nairobi, to celebrate the International Day Against Homophobia with a social event marked by arts performances and festivities, in a move to ward off stigma and victimization.

The group received major support from human rights organizations, specifically the Kenya Human Rights Commission, the international federation for Human Rights and the Kenya National Commission for Human Rights who renewed their commitment to fight for their rights. In a strong signal on how perceptions of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity issues are perceived, most of the invited officials attended the event or were represented by high level delegates. The Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Nairobi gave a most inspiring speech.

This is the first time in Kenya that organizations did a public event without any major public and violent backlash.

### LEBANON

On Sunday May 16th, the LGBT organisation HELEM organised several activities in the framework of their annual IDAHO program, such as the screening of a documentary on the 10 years of Activism around LGBTQ rights in Lebanon, a Theatre play on Homophobia, Transphobia, Sexuality, Solidarity, Sex Work etc..., a Panel on Discrimination and solidarity. The events were followed by a public sit-in in Hamra Street calling for solidarity and freedoms including LGBTQ rights in Lebanon. Last but not least, activities included celebrations, parties and social events.



The campaign theme for this year's IDAHO was 'Ana Shaz' (I'm Queer), a controversial denomination expressly chosen to support all those who are "officially" considered queer/deviant.



## LUXEMBOURG

One year after the official recognition of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia by Luxembourg, the Government of Luxembourg held a series of official events, including an awareness raising campaign about discrimination and Homophobia led by the Luxembourg Office for Integration, and a public conference held by the Minister for family and integration from Luxembourg, followed by a theatre play on the 20th of May.

The country's LGBT organisation, Rosa Letzebuerg, addressed the Catholic Church in Luxembourg, urging it to take official stands against Homophobia and Transphobia.

## MALTA

The Malta Gay Rights Movement and the LGBT Christian organisation Drachma joined in the celebrations of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) campaign on Religions, with an event called 'Flowers of Friendship'. Volunteers from both organisations gathered in Valletta to distribute flowers to passers-by as a sign of friendship and respect, challenging the often negative attitude of the Christian church, whose influence is still very strong in Malta. Attached to the flowers were positive quotes about LGBT issues and spirituality.



© MGRM

## MEXICO

In 2008, president Calderón had entrusted the national anti-discrimination authority to work on the official recognition of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia by the Mexican State. The decree that was published for IDAHO 2010 strangely officialises May 17th as the Mexican Day 'for tolerance and the respect of preferences', much to the dismay of activists who denounce an invisibilization

of the specific issue of homophobia and transphobia. To underline 13 States in Mexico have seen activities being organized for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. In 2010 the number and duration of activities have even increased from previous years, with activities stretching from one week before (in states such as Chiapas and Tabasco) to two weeks later (as in Puebla). Activities ranged from film screenings, to dance performances, arts exhibitions, seminars, forums, conferences and marches, investing all public spaces from city main squares to universities, museums, etc...

In Mexico City, the week long celebration around the Day opened with an International Seminar on Diversity Sexual, which brought together specialists from five countries, activists and academics, addressing a daily audience of more than 100 people. The week closed and culminated with the LGBT Pride march in Mexico City.

## MOROCCO

Despite homosexual acts still being illegal in Morocco, 2010 marks the second year of local celebrations for IDAHO. This year the programme of events was organised by KifKif, a Moroccan gay rights organisation established in 2004. The day-long celebration included a conference, a theatre play provocatively entitled "my mother loves women!" addressing lesbianism in Morocco and a film dealing with homosexuality and how it is experienced in conflict zones.

## NEPAL

Blue Diamond Society marked the International Day Against Homophobia by premiering the Documentary 'Beauty and Brain in Action' made by the British Film Maker Catherine Donaldson. The documentary shows the stigma and discrimination towards LGBTI in Nepal and how they empowered themselves enough to come out. The event was supported by The British Embassy to Nepal. On this very day, 15 partner organizations of Blue Diamond Society all over Nepal marked the event by hosting different programs like media interactions, discussions, cultural programs, and street drama performances, reflecting the importance of IDAHO celebrations in the country.

## NETHERLANDS

The Rotterdam branch of the national LGBT federation COC announced nominees for the Rotterdam "IDAHO awards" intended for people or organizations that supported the gay movement. The centre was

decorated with balloons, and people were asked to participate in a photo project. As for Amsterdam, COC organised a debate about homophobic violence.

People from Amsterdam also joined the Great global Kiss In at the city's Homo-monument on May 17th. Furthermore, in line with the international IDAHO campaign on "Religions, Homophobia, Transphobia", COC Netherlands and LKP (a Dutch foundation that supports several groups working on Church and homosexuality) decided to invite representatives of all Dutch churches to work on a declaration that speaks out against any kind of violence targeting lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people. The intended result of the process is an ecumenical declaration to be signed by as many churches as possible, and to be presented on May 17 next year.

### NICARAGUA

For the first time in Nicaragua, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia had a programme stretching across the months of May and June.

The series of events came together under the name "Diversity and Pride without Discrimination" and aimed at "strengthening and giving visibility to the unity of sexual diversity for the construction of a more inclusive society".

Many national groups organised events, included various Pride marches, film festivals, stands in Universities, the presentation of a study on sexual diversity in Nicaragua and the launching of a national Campaign against Homophobia.

### NIGERIA

The human rights group Initiative for Equal Rights (TIER) marked the IDAHO in Lagos by holding a press briefing on Tuesday 18th May to join the global community in solidarity to speak against human rights violation perpetuated on the grounds of sexual-orientation and gender identity.

In Lagos again, the House of Rainbow Metropolitan Community Church members held a vigil on the 17th May, joining prayers around the world as part of the international Campaign to fight religious hatred against people on the grounds of their Sexual Orientation and Sexual Identity.

### PANAMA

The organisation 'Hombres y Mujeres Nuevos de Panamá' seized the opportunity of the International

Day against Homophobia and Transphobia for a renewed attempt to present a draft proposal of the country's first anti-discrimination bill at the Human Rights Commission of the National Assembly.

The Bill aims at forbidding all discriminations on ground of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity so as to bring Panama in line both with the international commitments the State has undertaken and with the standards of most neighbouring countries.

### PARAGUAY

The LGBT organization Somos Gay in Asuncion, capital of Paraguay, joined the Great Global Kiss-in. Activists met on the steps of the Parliament



and handed a declaration over to the President of the Congress, emphasizing that 20 years ago, the World Health Organisation has removed homosexuality from the list of mental disorders.

### PERU

The anti-homophobia and transphobia mobilization in Peru traditionally stretches from May 17th through to 31st, the day chosen to commemorate hate crimes against LGBT people.

In many cities across the country, LGBT movements organized marches and candle light vigils in the central squares to commemorate victims of violence and to advocate for an anti-hate crime law.

In the northern city of Chiclayo, a giant pink ribbon was displayed in the city center.



Under an initiative led by the LGBT media "Diariodeimagay", dozens of gays and lesbians came together in Lima's central park to participate in the Great



Global Kiss-in under the slogan “Kisses against Homophobia – Kisses for peace”

Still in Lima, the health-focused organization In-mensa organized a conference on access to health.

### PHILIPPINES

Outrage Magazine, the only LGBT media in the Philippines launched the “Dare to care Campaign”, consisting of people posing for photographs holding a pink heart cut-out. In a country still driven by personalities, the campaign believes that support from opinion leaders will be very powerful in getting LGBT-friendly messages across to the wider public.



### PORTUGAL

After an initial call from the queer feminist youth organization não te prives [don't deprive yourself – Group in Defence of Sexual Rights], 17 groups and associations organised the first Pride Against Homophobia and Transphobia in the historical university city of Coimbra. This was the first event of its kind outside the major cities of Lisbon (since 2000) and Porto (since 2006). Several hundreds of people marched in downtown Coimbra, carrying banners, waving rainbow flags, participating in performances and shouting slogans, in a surprisingly successful outcome, considering that it all happened on a Monday – May 17 – and that the event had been announced with only two weeks notice. The Pride gathered many people who had never joined a LGBT event before, including student organisations, human rights advocates, health professionals, artists, political parties and researchers. The event concluded with a public reading of the Manifesto “More citizenship, less Homophobia and Transphobia”, followed by a kiss-in, to join the Great Global kiss-in initiative.



© Tiago Dias

In Lisbon on that day, a Conference themed “Homophobia out of the closet: identifying

and fighting discrimination of LGBT persons in Portugal” was organized by national organisation ILGA Portugal, rede ex aequo (Portugal’s LGBT Youth organization) and AMPLOS (Portugal’s organization of parents of LGBT people), with the support of CIG - the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (the Portuguese Equality Body that deals primarily with gender and sexual orientation).

Moreover, rede ex aequo organized a “Free hugs against discrimination” event in Lisbon.

To crown this year’s celebrations for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the Portuguese president, Anibal Cavaco Silva, made History by signing the bill for same sex marriage on May 17th, thus Portugal joined the very select club of the happy few countries allowing same-sex marriage (Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Canada, South Africa, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Argentina).

### ROMANIA

The 2010 Romanian GayFest started this year on May 17th, underlining the importance to place the event under the sign of the global fight for Human Rights and against Homophobia. The festival consisted of a series of events, including debates, exhibitions, theater plays, workshops, a piano concert and much more! The launch press conference featured Robin Barnett, the British Ambassador in Romania, Diane Fisher from the Metropolitan Community Churches and Iustina Ionescu, Vice president of main organizer ACCEPT Association and got extensive media coverage in various newspapers and online media.

In support of the event, 11 embassies signed a joint statement for the 2010 Romanian GayFest.

The statement expressed solidarity with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in Romania, underlining the “right of these communities to use this traditional opportunity to march together peacefully and lawfully, in order to raise awareness of the specific issues that affect them.”



© ACCEPT

## RUSSIA

2010 marked the 5th IDAHO celebrations in Russia where local activists have been strong followers of the IDAHO movement since its beginning. While in May 2005, the Day was not mentioned at all in the media, the media coverage in 2010 was a powerful indicator of mentality changes in Russia. Even the national TV channel NTV dedicated its weekly political program "Honest Monday" to the issue of Homophobia, inviting our coordinator to address an audience of several million people on the significance of the Day and to confront an Orthodox priest on the issue of Religions and Homophobia.

Moscow Pride 2010 was again put under the patronage of the IDAHO Committee. After luring hundreds of riot police and undercover officers to a different location, a group of about 25 gay and lesbian activists unfurled a 20 meters long rainbow flag on Moscow's main Leningradsky Avenue, chanting "Homophobia is Russia's disgrace." The subterfuge was put up to avoid a repetition of the violence seen in the last five years when Moscow police, nationalists and ultra-Orthodox believers broke up similar attempts to march. The action was considered an unprecedented success not only by participants but also by the Russian media who acknowledged that for the first time a Pride March had happened in Moscow.



© Charles Meacham

In another initiative marking the Day in Russia, people in over 20 cities across the country participated in the Rainbow Flashmob, despite the numerous threats received by organizers from ultra right groups who have been planning to disrupt the events and attack its participants. In St. Petersburg, where the initiative started last year, over 150 people gathered to let colorful balloons fly in the sky, symbolizing their dream of a world free of hate and Homophobia. Participants of the flashmob also distributed flyers to the passerby, informing people that homosexuality is not a disease.

## RWANDA

Despite the cancellation of a public radio debate in Kigali, national organisations working for the promotion of Human Rights for LGBT people arranged a private debate between members of the community and religious Anglican leaders, in a positive move to engage the Churches towards a more progressive attitude

## SERBIA

The Serbian lesbian organisation Labrys launched on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia an initiative called "So that your voice be heard as well" aiming at collecting LGBT individuals' personal stories of Human Rights abuses. The objective is to draw the attention of the wider public to the situation of oppression and violence that the LGBT community in the country faces daily, and to call on to the government to take legal action to protect LGBT people and ensure their access to their basic Human Rights.

## SLOVAKIA

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia was marked by the Duhovy PRIDE Bratislava first Pride March ever to be organised in Slovakia!



Despite threats and the need to change the route at the last minute, hundreds of LGBTs and their friends marched peacefully through Bratislava on May 22nd. Reports and pictures can be seen at [www.duhovy-pride.sk](http://www.duhovy-pride.sk)

The celebrations were also accompanied by film screenings and public discussion on May 21st, organised by Filmovy festival inakosti ([www.FFi.sk](http://www.FFi.sk)), a production of Slovak LGBT movement Iniciativa Inakost ([www.inakost.sk](http://www.inakost.sk)).

## SPAIN

This year for IDAHO, upon invitation of the Spanish federation FELGBT, 5 cities across Spain celebrated IDAHO by holding church vigils to commemorate victims of Homophobia and Transphobia. The Spanish cities joined this initiative for the first time, whose inspiration dates back to 2007, when the Italian group Kairos decided to hold a vigil in memory of a



young boy who committed suicide because of bullying in school. Since then, many groups have joined this initiative, which resonates specifically with this year's IDAHO Campaign on 'Religions, Homophobia, Transphobia'.



Also, the Spanish LGBT organisation COLEGAS launched a national campaign to reverse the conception so that it is Homophobia and Transphobia that are declared illnesses. Ironically referring to a



'virus' of intolerance and discrimination, the collective proposed that the international community creates a list of "social illnesses" and sets up plans to tackle them. Activities around this campaign happened in 15 cities across the country.

In several Spanish cities, Kiss-ins were organised as part of the Great Global IDAHO Kiss-in, with student organisation Arcòpoli joining in from Madrid or the LGBT Gamà collective coming in from the Canary Islands. Gamà also organised a series of other actions on the Islands, including an exhibition promoting the end of the stigmatisation of Trans people as suffering from a psychological condition, in a resonance with the IDAHO Committee piloted international campaign last year.

Activities also included a political event hosted by the regional government, and of course...parties.

### SOUTH AFRICA

Joining in with the 2010 IDAHO Campaign on "Religion, Homophobia and Transphobia", religious leaders from South Africa issued a statement against Homophobia and a call on all South Africans to reaffirm their commitment to the hard-won freedoms and values of the South African Constitution so ad-

mired around the world : "All citizens, whatever their gender, orientation, or cultural roots share a common responsibility to continue to engage in the struggle for human dignity, freedom and equality for all."

The Trans people organisation Gender Dynamix edited a special video that was issued on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, calling for equal rights and respect from Trans people all over Africa.

### SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka, upon invitation by the national LGBT organisation Equal Ground, the diplomatic missions of the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, the EU and the Netherlands raised the Rainbow Flag for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. In solidarity, OXFAM Australia and the Centre for Policy Alternatives and Women Defining Peace also joined in.

Furthermore, EQUAL GROUND's advertising campaign for the Day was featured in the 3 leading Daily newspapers of Sri Lanka – the Daily Mirror, Lanka-deepa (Sinhala) and Metro News (Tamil), reaching hundreds of thousands of readers.

### SWEDEN

On Sunday the 16th of May 2010, more than 2500 participants celebrated Gothenburg's Rainbow Walk across the city.

The walk ended the LGBT Festival of Gothenburg, a yearly event in Sweden's second largest city with a strong cultural focus that offers music, dance, theatre, conversation, debates, film, exhibitions and much more.



© hbt-festivalen.se

### SWITZERLAND

In Geneva, Lausanne and Sion, joyful crowds joined the Great Global IDAHO Kiss-in.

## THAILAND (+ BURMA)

It is now the second year that the Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB) marked the Day in the framework of its LGBT Rights program. The organisation addresses Burmese LGBT people inside Burma and Burmese migrant LGBT people in Thailand.

This year's agenda included the screening of a documentary film about Burmese LGBT experience of Homophobia in Burmese society, a speech by Atta Kyaw - a well known Burmese writer - and the launch of the very first Burmese LGBT song album and an arts performance to celebrate the Day under the motto "Homosexuality is not an illness but homophobia is".

The events were organised in partnership with Thai organisation M-plus, which distributed IDAHO information leaflets and edited a special IDAHO issue of their quarterly Rainbow Colours magazine.



## TURKEY

For the 5th consecutive year, IDAHO in Turkey was marked with an impressive series of events orchestrated by the national LGBT organisation Kaos GL and organised by many LGBT, Women's and Human Rights movements across the country.

This year, festivities spanned across 14 cities and stretched from Women's Day on March 8th to the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia on the 17th with the International Meeting Against Homophobia on the 16th as its highlight.

The International Meeting was supported by many diplomatic missions in Ankara and included interventions from EU Parliamentarians from the LGBT Intergroup. Renowned US queer activist and writer Judith Butler's conference titled "The fellowship of Queer Alliance and Anti-War Politics" was attended by almost a thousand people including feminists, lesbians,

gays, bisexuals, trans people, journalists, diplomats, academics and activists from many different movements.



The meeting was followed by a Pride march across Ankara, uniting hundreds of participants under the slogan "Neither a sin nor an illness, Long live gay/lesbian love".



© KAOS GL

In other cities, student organisation and Human Rights groups teamed to hold a series of conferences. In cities like Trabzon, where recently nationalism has been a devastating problem, 2010 was the historic year of first ever LGBT events being organized. It also saw the birth of the first LGBT Kurdish organization, Diyarbakir Hevjin LGBT Initiative. In İstanbul, Eskişehir and Ankara, specific events were organized targeting the role of the media. In a sad reminder of why such a strong national mobilization against Homophobia and Transphobia is needed, a brutal police attack on 5 trans women happened on the very night of May 17th with the subsequent inaction by authorities triggering international outrage.



## UKRAINE

The Kyiv LGBT organization Insight Ukraine organized for the third time the country's 'Queer Week'.

This year's program included the first ever LGBT film festival in Ukraine. Titled "Different Love: Gay/Lesbi Films from Berlin to Kyiv", the festival received support from several foreign embassies.

Other activities included a 'coming out of closet' performance at the opening of the festival, where every person could literally be photographed stepping out of a set-up closet.

Queer Week also included a photo exhibition program,



on Christianity and Homosexuality in presence of MCC Rev Diane Fisher, and other cultural and festive activities.

In the Ukrainian city of Kherson, a group of LGBT activists joined the international balloon-flying Rainbow Flash-mob event.

## UK

2010 was the most active year yet for IDAHO in the UK. There were well over 100 initiatives and events throughout the country. Rainbow flags flew everywhere, especially in Greater Manchester and in Cardiff the flag was flown from City Hall, County Hall and Cardiff Castle.

Various reports released on the Day, including one by the National Union of Teachers, highlighted homophobic bullying and hate crime, while community and local authorities across the country gathered together for a minute's "shout" against hate. There were festivals to celebrate diversity and strong statements of support were issued by numerous local, health and police authorities and local and national politicians. There were special film screenings, the launch of a new theatre group and concerts for IDAHO. The day was also marked with several initiatives relating to the "Religions, Homophobia and Transphobia" campaign, and seven cities took part in the International IDAHO Kiss-In. There was the launch of a major anti Homo-

phobia campaign in Manchester supported by Ian McKellen, and Anthony Cotton from Coronation Street-covered widely in the local and national media.



Record attendances of 200 were recorded for IDAHO-UK events in London for GALHA's screening of the film "Suddenly Last Winter" and a major community event in Sheffield. While it has almost become "traditional" to mark IDAHO in some parts of the country, we also welcomed initiatives in places where there had never been an IDAHO event before.

From a political perspective, IDAHO-UK received messages of support from several personalities, including the newly appointed Home Secretary, Teresa May and Foreign Office Minister, David Liddington. The Foreign Office supported/arranged IDAHO events in China, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

## USA

In Chicago, LGBT activists of the Gay Liberation Network (GLN) chose to link the national Harvey Milk Day celebrations and the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia to organise the Chicago Harvey Milk Week of Action, starting May 17th, consisting in a week of activities to help raise awareness, fight for legislative action and bring groups of activists and community members together.

Activities included a rally opposing anti-LGBT hate in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi, a flash mob in Federal Plaza, an open mic and a rally calling for Full Federal Equality for LGBT People, followed by a march. A featured component of Chicago's IDAHO celebrations was an address by John Adewoye of Courage-Nigeria, an LGBT rights group composed of African immigrants. Adewoye detailed the recent history of anti-LGBT repression in several countries on the continent.

Several US cities joined in the Great Global IDAHO kiss-in initiative, including San Francisco, New York and Austin. In San Francisco, the event also aimed

at raising awareness of the continued repression of LGBT people in Iraq and homophobic hate crimes in the US.



### URUGUAY

In Uruguay, the organisation of people living with HIV A.MI.SE.U inaugurated its new premises on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. The premises include a shelter for people living with HIV/AIDS who come from other cities in the countries to the capital Montevideo for treatment and who previously often had to spend the nights on the streets. This shelter is the first one of its type in Uruguay.

### VENEZUELA

This year in Venezuela, the national LGBT alliance has placed the IDAHO celebration under the sign of legislative changes: the organisations have initiated a series of activities to remind parliamentarians of their mandate to combat discrimination of sexual minorities, featuring a press conference in support of the initiative of the city council to legislate for a "Caracas without discrimination".

Moreover, on May 22 the first "March Against Homo-Lesbo-Transphobia" was organized across the centre of the capital Caracas by a network of LGTB organizations including Venezuela Diversa, Alianza Lambda de Venezuela, Unión Afirmativa de Venezuela, Diversidad USB, Contranatura, Diverlex and others.

Over 2000 marchers paraded through the city and gathered in one of the capital's main squares where several Members of Parliaments committed to work in favour of more inclusive policies.



© Network of LGTB associations



## **IDAHO COMMITTEE**

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