



35th Session of the Human Rights Council
Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender Identity, Item 3

Mr. President,

ADF International stands in solidarity with all victims of violence, kidnapping, torture, arbitrary detention, extrajudicial or summary execution, and other forms of gross and oppressive mistreatment, regardless of who the victims of these crimes might be. With regard to the report of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, however, we must once again register our concerns.

The first is that the report assumes a particular conception of sexual identity and inclination, which is by its very nature nebulous and undefined. This is foreign and unacceptable to a large portion of the world, and robs it of any claim to being based on consensus. The notion that a person's personal attractions or subjective self-identification constitute a discrete class of human rights runs contrary to agreed international human rights law, which guarantees protections for all without distinction.

It is also unclear what the precise extent of anti-discrimination measures, legal recognition of gender identity, sociocultural inclusion, and promotion of education and empathy will be. The concern is that these recommendations go beyond urging governments to adhere to existing human rights obligations, and have the potential to violate State sovereignty. As already stated, ADF International is committed to the principle that all individuals without exception should be able to live out their convictions and consciences in peace and security. If this is to be understood, however, as forcing society and the State to accept norms that run contrary to culture and religion or to redefine marriage, as well as to limit the rights of individuals to the fundamental freedoms of religion, expression, conscience, and association and the rights of parents to educate their children in conformity with their own religious or moral convictions, this will become a very grave issue.

Elucidation and clarification on these important issues would be greatly appreciated. The right of everyone to live out their faith and their convictions goes to the heart of the work of ADF International, and it is imperative that this fundamental right be respected on the international stage.

Thank you, Mr. President.