



COMMUNICATIONS

GENDER AND DIVERSITY THE PRIDE TO BE VISIBLE

30/21
Geneva
29 June 2021

To: FICSA Members
From: Cosimo Melpignano, General Secretary

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations, thank you for the opportunity to address ITCILO Staff on the topic of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) rights, which is of fundamental importance to FICSA.

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, in his speech addressed to the Human Rights Council on 7th of March 2012, said, "it is our duty under the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to protect the rights of everyone, everywhere."

We know that homophobic and transphobic attitudes can endanger the lives of LGBTI people, of any age and anywhere in the world where, unfortunately, despicable violations of their human rights still occur.

LGBTI people are repudiated by their own families, discriminated at school and then at work; they are abused, tortured, and killed; they are denied legal protection, even mocked by discriminatory laws, treated as criminals, and arrested; and, sometimes exposed to the death penalty.

Unfortunately, the UN is not immune to these negative attitudes. FICSA is part of the global discussion and has consistently advocated for the non-discrimination of LGBTI staff in the UN Workplace.

Our [Memorandum of Understanding with the UN GLOBE](#), the UN staff group that protects and supports the rights of LGBTI staff, testifies to FICSA's determination to encourage diversity across organizations and combat discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in the workplace.

FICSA shares UN GLOBE's values and agreed objectives, and consistently ensures that, when required, the perspective of LGBTI staff is included in all our discussions with relevant high-level bodies. In every high-level meeting in which we participate, we refer to a positive working environment, where LGBTI staff can work without stigma, where there is no discrimination in recruitment and working conditions or no respect for privacy based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and where their specific needs and interests are promoted.



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We still have a long way to go: we have to define legal and policy measures to effectively protect the rights of LGBTI staff; we have to remain vigilant on the conditions of work; we have to ensure that all common system organizations' rules and regulations are adapted to cover any gaps in legislation. In a nutshell, we need to be persistent, watchful and a good example for our members and beyond.

FICSA remains available for further discussions as to how we can work together to achieve these goals.

