

Bringing LGBT Concerns to the Forefront: Issues, Challenges, and Gains



ISIS International-Manila and the Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) Campaign

Summarised by Anna Kristina M. Dinglasan

Isis International-Manila (Isis-Manila), together with the Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) Campaign, convened a three-hour electronic forum (e-forum) on February 20, 2006. With the theme "Sexual Rights Advocacy and the Women's and Human Rights Movements," six women from the WHRD network came together with a moderator from Isis-Manila to attempt to locate the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) agenda in the women's and human rights movements; to point out challenges and barriers that have prevented the building of alliances among women's, human rights, and LGBT movements; and to identify directions for inter-movements work on the issue of sexual diversity.

The WHRD Campaign is a global initiative that intends to identify and expose gender-based violations and abuses against women human rights defenders as well as to strategise for more appropriate and gender-sensitive responses for the protection of these women. Started in 2005, the WHRD Campaign also focuses on the situation of LGBT activists targeted because of their identity and sexuality, and the rights they are fighting to uphold. The Campaign operates in solidarity with other international efforts to integrate sexual rights issues into the human rights agenda.

The e-forum was moderated by WIA guest editor Malu Marin, who is an Executive Committee Member of the Asia Pacific Rainbow, a regional network working to advance LGBT

rights, and Executive Director of Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE). The e-forum participants were: Inmaculada Barcia, Manager of the Human Rights Defenders Office of the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) in Geneva; Mariana Duarte, Programme Manager for the Violence Against Women Programme of the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT); Susana Fried, expert on sexuality and human rights advocacy, and former Programme Director at the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC); Lisa Pusey, Programme Officer for Violence Against Women and Women Human Rights Programmes of the Asia Pacific Forum on Law and Development (APWLD); Cynthia Rothschild, Senior Policy Adviser of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) and expert on sexual rights; and Mary Jane Real, coordinator of the WHRD Campaign and Isis-Manila Board Member.

Locating the LGBT agenda: Challenges and resistance

Malu Marin: Hi all, Malu here, your moderator for this e-forum. Let's start the discussion about locating lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) women's agenda in the women's and human rights movements. Susana, you shared initial thoughts/experiences on this.

Susana Fried: To launch this conversation then, I can say that I continue to struggle with where and how these are the same, and where and how these are distinct. At

IGLHRC, we are regularly in discussion about the differences between working with self-defined LGBT communities and the pros and cons of identity-based work (the empowering possibilities of claiming an identity and becoming part of a movement) versus its exclusionary aspects and its fixing sexuality problems. And then, in terms of working from a broader sexuality framework, often LGBT folks are met with distrust and nervousness from non-LGBT-sensitive (wrong word, but it is 7 a.m. here in New York!) women's and human rights organisations (and many of these groups ARE LGBT-sensitive) because they are afraid of being "baited" if they take up LGBT issues in the serious and urgent way they might need to be.

Malu: Do others feel similarly in terms of the difficulty in straddling these lines?

Mary Jane Real: I am provoked with Susana's reflection on identity-based frameworks, of which LGBT is one, so are the women's movement, and the indigenous peoples, peasants, labour, and others groups. In the context of human rights work, this has resulted in issues of conflict of rights.

Mariana Duarte: From OMCT's perspective, the challenge is pretty much the same as the one on women's rights. Most of our member organisations deal with human rights in general and often resist including a gender analysis into certain types of violations against women. For LGBT concerns, we have no particular programme, making the work even more challenging. Integrating this



Malu S. Marin

issue depends on the personal commitment from certain people in different sections within the organisation; it is not an institutional commitment.

Malu: Mariana, where is the resistance coming from?

Mariana: I guess it is a bit like what Jane said, the perception of particularity—as for indigenous peoples and others. Many people hesitate to take up issues that do not concern them directly and that which could not be justified because it deals with one group in particular. One could claim that they couldn't deal with all particularities.

Macu Barcia: I would also like to add that these perceived conflict of rights play differently at the national/local levels, and I think that it has been easier for the different movements to work in coalition at the international level than to do so at the national level, where movements tend to focus more on their own specific issues. For example, we have had some successes working together in the context of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) where many specialised organisations dealing with sexual orientation and gender identity are unable to obtain accreditation to participate in the UN

system, including the UNCHR. They are dependent on generalist human rights organisations for access to the UN system. In this context, both movements have worked together to raise LGBT issues in this forum.

Lisa Pusey: I agree with Macu. APWLD has not really taken up LGBT issues in a strong way until now. The sentiment among some members in APWLD is that many women and women's groups in Asia are still grappling with the whole discourse on sexuality. They are framing their hesitancy to engage in these issues in terms of their understanding of how women are subjugated through control of their bodies and sexualities under a system of patriarchy, and are thus not yet ready to take up LGBT issues, although recognising it as oppression under the same system.

Cynthia Rothschild: I've worked with Amnesty International (AI) for a long time (almost 20 years!) on their LGBT campaigning, and it has struck me that the need to make visible the experiences of certain people has necessitated identity claims and has led to a use of identity politics. The representation of undeniable violations is what gives legitimacy to the rights claims, and to the visibility or existence of the identity. Also, as Mariana noted, for a long time, AI's work on LGBT issues wasn't institutionalised. It rested on specific staff and volunteer interest.

Malu: It is one thing to not deal with "other issues" because "they don't concern" us directly, but there is also the problem of people resisting or refusing to deal with LGBT issues because of homophobia.



Lisa Pusey

...many women and women's groups in Asia are still grappling with the whole discourse on sexuality.

– Lisa Pusey

Jane: I think there is resistance or nervousness because women's rights or LGBT rights or identity-based claims are perceived as too particular and only the concern of a few. Moreover, I think most of these movements are conceived within a framework of heteronormativity.¹

Susana: Jane, I agree entirely. The experience Mariana describes, that is, depending on one or two people in an organisation to "deal with" the hard stuff, is all too common. It allows organisations to act as though they are "covering" the range of human rights issues, when they haven't necessarily done the work of thinking through what "indivisibility of rights" means when this is really taken seriously.

Malu: The challenge then is how to "universalise" the issues of LGBT people. Is the resistance also because of the notion that anything that deals with sex or sexuality is just downright threatening?

Cynthia: But it's also a question of what violations and what issues are on the table, so to speak. Discrimination in the family is the sort of thing a lot of groups might not take on, as in "that's not our issue." But torture of LGBT people, for instance, has a different resonance. It's harder to deny its importance.

Mariana: Conceptually, local non-government organisations (NGOs) (members of our network) need to understand why an organisation fighting against torture should also focus on LGBT concerns. We have been doing that on economic, social and cultural rights, showing how the denial of such rights often engenders

violations of civil and political rights, including torture, arbitrary detention, etc.

Susana: On the one hand, I think we are talking about the challenge of moving between the "indivisibility" and "universality" ideals of human rights but, on the other hand, always acknowledging that violations happen to particular and specific people because of racism, homophobia, sexism, etc. But for me, "indivisibility" and "universality" are meant to direct our attention to the specific experience of human rights violations of individuals. I agree with Malu, while integrating LGBT issues is critical, I also think we need to create more space to talk about sex and sexuality, so that we get a better understanding of the similar and different ways that sexuality is controlled—sometimes violently and obviously, and other times more insidiously.

Jane: I agree, Susana. I think integrating LGBT issues into women's rights and human rights agenda is a strategy that needs to be complemented by discussing what is "uncomfortable," "particular," or "not an urgent issue." The conceptual links between women's rights and LGBT movements on deconstructing sexuality should be an entry point to create and fortify bridges between these two movements. As with the other movements, I agree with your earlier suggestion of finding thematic linkages, much like what Macu indicated.

Gains, successes, lessons

Malu: The discussion has centred on how LGBT rights are framed within the contexts of the various

...we need to tackle such issues based on the violations (torture and so) that occur in order to go back to their roots.

– Mariana Duarte



Mariana Duarte

movements. We've been discussing the challenges and resistances. Have there been "success" stories?

Macu: In recent sessions of the UNCHR, LGBT and human rights organisations have collaborated in preparing oral statements and organising events and briefings to advocate that the UN system play a more active role in addressing violations based on sexual orientation and in raising the profile of LGBT issues. Both movements have also worked collaboratively with the UN special procedures² to make sure they include violations based on sexual orientation within their mandates. For example, during the "12th Annual Meeting of the Special Procedures," a coalition of human rights and LGBT organisations issued a joint statement requesting the special procedures to address violations based on sexual orientation in a more systematic and comprehensive way.

Jane: In terms of strategies to "universalise" LGBT issues, the WHRD campaign carried a specific focus on integrating LGBT issues into women's rights and human rights agenda to contribute to a global momentum for the recognition of sexuality rights.

Susana: Yes, the WHRD was a success story in terms of raising the visibility

of "sexuality rights" issues, and working hard to do so in an integrated way. As we know, we were met with some resistance, but the discussions were really generative. Some of the resistance came from folks for whom the open discussion of sexuality and LGBT issues was clearly uncomfortable and threatening. Their perception was that the "LGBT agenda" was too prominent during the "WHRD International Consultation" (Sri Lanka, Dec. 2005), even though we (the organisers) had carefully crafted the agenda to be quite balanced. Some participants were frustrated with this, arguing that these were not issues that they could grapple with in their domestic advocacy. Most of them, however, seemed to welcome the open discussion about how sexuality is a relevant lens of analysis for their work as defenders—including issues related to LGBT defenders and the abuses that they face in their work.

Macu: I agree. Also, the WHRD campaign has pushed many of us to incorporate LGBT issues when working with partner organisations.

Mariana: To be clear, there are different motivations and bases for engaging in the defence of sexual rights. Generally, there needs to be a sexuality rights-based approach to integrate movements, as Susana noted. But as far as an organisation like ours is concerned, we need to tackle such issues based on the violations (torture and so) that occur in order to go back to their roots. This has justified OMCT's violence against women (VAW) engagement in the WHRD campaign. Our VAW programme seeks to shed light on

and analyse the specific forms of torture and ill-treatment of women as well as its specific causes and consequences. Through a comparison between violations perpetrated against male and female human rights activists, we noticed that there were specific reasons and forms (sexual assault, sexuality-baiting) of attacks against WHRD, either because they are women or because they defend women's (including sexual and reproductive) rights, thus challenging social norms. We felt there was a need to highlight these trends in the context of WHRD work.

Lisa: APWLD has engaged in LGBT issues through the WHRD campaign at the international level. We have also worked on LGBT issues at the regional level within the discourse on sexuality more broadly. Within APWLD, there are groups working on LGBT issues, but we have identified the need to more actively engage with organisations in the region that work on these issues. We have also identified the need to actively create a safe space for us to discuss and strategise on this at regional and national levels. Creating and nurturing this space is important since the issues are often so “uncomfortable” and “taboo” for many and can also be dangerous to raise for women in many contexts because it so directly challenges the status quo and male power structures.

Malu: Cynthia, I've noted that in the last few years, AI has been integrating LGBT issues more proactively, especially at the country level. My lesbian organisation has worked closely with AI Philippines

to push for an anti-discrimination bill in congress.

Cynthia: I am actually thrilled by some of the work and potential of WHRD. For me, one of the things I really want to pick up is the issue of “sexuality-baiting” and threats to the reputation of people and organisations. I think that this and other collaborative work will blossom partly as a result of the WHRD event! To Malu, AI has needed to move at both international and national levels. The lesson is that it would not have happened had it not been for very loud voices within the institution (and in many countries) and pressure/collaboration from outside.

Susana: Well, I can't speak for the US in terms of inter-movement collaboration at the moment, but I can think about some of the work of colleagues in Argentina who are working to oppose police abuse in coalitions that have straddled homeless people's movements, women's movements, lesbian and gay movements—and with strong leadership from transgender and sex workers movements.

Sexuality-baiting

Malu: Let's look at the issue of sexuality-baiting. How is it concretely manifested? How have LGBT activists and women's human rights activists responded to this? Has it bred hostility, or has it opened room for more discussion and dialogue?

Jane: Sexuality-baiting has clearly shown how LGBT activists are under attack; how women and human rights activists are also subjected to violence; and how these have affected



Sexuality-baiting

A term that describes the phenomenon of state and non-state actors strategically using pejorative ideas about women's sexuality in order to attack the reputations of individual activists, the organisations they work for, and their political agendas. The verbal attacks are enacted with a political goal and are targeted at women who are defenders of a range of human rights, not just against those who are defenders of sexual rights. Women around the world are called "immoral," "abnormal," "promiscuous," and "frigid"; we are also labeled "too Western," "bad women," or "culturally deviant." Terms used are often those seen to be most damning within a particular culture or political moment.

Source: *Cynthia Rothschild, Written Out: How Sexuality Is Used to Attack Women's Organising*

their organising. In this context, for me, raising the issue of sexuality-baiting has opened more spaces for dialogue across movements. Most activists are uncomfortable with LGBT issues and people, but many already have a grasp of sexuality that can be a common basis for forging solidarities.

Cynthia: Great questions, Malu. The fear of baiting has inhibited collaboration and stronger work; yet it has opened a door as well. But there also has been a lot of silence on the issue, especially with regards to women's groups and the fear of being labeled "lesbians." And sometimes that's a legitimate concern. But baiting is so universal that some groups have been able to engage in new collaborative efforts to challenge the perpetrators of baiting. But many groups don't recognise the phenomenon and therefore don't adequately respond. Human rights groups need to be better at

documenting the phenomenon and naming it in a rights context.

Susana: Part of the importance of talking openly about baiting is that it also brings activists and human rights defenders back into the picture in a more integrated way.

Mariana: The sexuality-baiting issue is definitely one of the common difficulties faced both by women and sexual rights activists. This point was properly explored by the Campaign both in the context paper and by including sexuality issues in the discussions held during the consultation. I guess women's rights activists will be able to identify more with LGBT rights activists in terms of the language used, "sexuality-baiting" and the conceptualisation it carries with it.

Cynthia: This is especially true because "lesbian-baiting" is a particularly common form of sexuality-baiting, and women activists are subjected to both, no matter what their actual sexual orientation is.



Lesbian-baiting

A particularly homophobic form of sexuality-baiting, and is often used because the attribution of lesbian identity is sometimes seen as the most damning "accusation."

Source: *Cynthia Rothschild, Written Out: How Sexuality Is Used to Attack Women's Organising*

Jane: Whether women activists like it or not, they are already being labeled "lesbians" as they defy standards of femininity with their activism. They are compelled to defend themselves. So, eventually, they will have to confront that sexuality-baiting is not about LGBT issues, but, as you said, women's

sexuality is being used to attack women's organising.

Malu: One implication of sexuality-baiting is the denomination of sexuality, in general. Thus, even the women's movement also regards sexuality with fear and caution. Sexual rights are always framed from the perspective of being free from threats, dangers, or sexual violation, and not as a right to pleasure and eroticism.

Susana: But we engage in "baiting" of sorts, too. For example, many in the US lesbian-feminist movement have long been distrustful of transgender and male-to-female transsexuals and have excluded them from "women-only" spaces. The discussion, then, becomes about biology, rather than about the use of gender and sexuality as axes of power and exclusion/oppression.

Macu: I think my difficulty with the subject comes from the fact that I work with a very different audience. For example, for many local NGOs working in some countries in the South, sexuality-baiting is not that high as a priority. They are more concerned in how national security and anti-terrorism legislation and

measures have been increasingly used to persecute human rights defenders who criticise the government, and to criminalise human rights defenders activities, etc. The level of discussion here and the terminology we are using is one that is completely alien to most of the people with whom I interact.

Susana: In response to Macu, I take your point about our terminology, and admit that we are talking in "shorthand" of sorts here. But as for the larger point, I'm not sure I agree that "sexuality-baiting" isn't a concern for human rights activists in Africa. For example, in Nigeria, the proposed legislation to ban "gay" marriage as "un-African" would certainly seem to indicate that it is an urgent and very real issue, and one that human rights organisations are bypassing. Also, accusations of "terrorism" and "sexuality-baiting" aren't necessarily separate. I remember a situation in India where two gay men were facing persecution. The father of one of the men was threatening to use India's anti-terrorism law against them. Sometimes, the connections are hard to trace, but sometimes they are very stark.

Cynthia: On Macu's comment, I think that this question about current political climate and what we get labeled as is really compelling. It's all threat to reputation, and designed to make us less effective at our advocacy.

Jane: I think sexuality-baiting is not far from being urgent as compared to issues about terrorism as Susana pointed out, especially in a context of rising fundamentalisms and when states are taking on more conservative stances that target sexuality. In this sense, it only becomes "alien" because



Inmaculada Barcia

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– Mary Jane Real



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we refuse to change our lens, and we think only that the struggle against terrorism is political and urgent, and the rest are “non-issues.”

Susana: Jane, you said, “It only becomes alien because we refuse to change our lens.” Could you explain?

Jane: Many think that LGBT concerns are not political, that all these issues are a personal dilemma. Since it is perceived as personal, many activists preoccupied with “the political” do not consider it a valid human rights issue to address. And as I’ve said, unless we go beyond a heterosexual framework for our movements, we will not be able to include LGBT peoples, and we will find ourselves excluding them or unwittingly subjecting them to labels and forms of sexuality-baiting.

Working out strategies

Macu: So, how do we change our lens? Help me here. I mean if I’m in a country working with a group of NGOs on issues affecting defenders, and it identifies freedom of association as its pressing issue, how do we start a conversation about sexuality-baiting?

Malu: Thanks, Macu, for raising those points. It is indeed important to consider the local context, but it doesn't mean that we should stop pushing the boundaries. It is a process, and it will involve a lot of dialogue and discussion. We have to start somewhere. I think this is a good segue to discuss strategies if we are confronted with these kinds of situations.

Cynthia: That's a great question, Macu. I think context is everything here. If it's a group of women defenders, for instance, part of the entry point has to do with getting people to talk about the ways their reputations are at risk and how the attacks become personal, and, ultimately, how that closes down space to do political work. I think the links between threats to reputation and closing down of organising space are really compelling and ripe to be explored.

Mariana: To build on what Cynthia had said, if you manage to identify concrete cases of sexuality-baiting of defenders in Country X, you may expose them to your partner NGOs. If your partner NGOs resist to include that in the agenda, you may have other NGOs, which may be more willing to take up the issue, in a joint initiative, perhaps. It may or may not work, but it's worth trying.

Macu: Sorry to insist, but in my experience, bringing up these issues can be counter-productive sometimes because it can turn off local NGOs instead of bringing them in. For example, in a national consultation organised with local partners, a local NGO decided to opt out of the

WHRD campaign when they found out that the campaign also included LGBT issues. I am not saying that we should not raise/work on these issues, but that we need to find better ways to do so. In our work with partner organisations at the local level, we need to find better ways to include an LGBT perspective in our work, possibly through the discussion of cases during our training and consultations.

Jane: To respond to Macu, if freedom of association is about forming groups without trampling on the rights of other groups, then an exercise of that freedom which negates the rights of others (LGBT, women, indigenous peoples) has to be thought out. Indeed, as you indicated, sensitive and strategic timing is needed to raise these issues. I would go with Susana's suggestion that maybe the way forward is to open more spaces where sexuality or its related issues are discussed.

Cynthia: The problems and threats are real. And sometimes groups will not "do the right thing" because of a legitimate fear of being associated with issues of sexuality, or for more

"purely" homophobic reasons. But as organisers, that leaves us with decisions to make, the task to keep talking about the indivisibility of rights, and to stand on human rights principles. That can also mean we may lose people along the way.

Susana: On to Malu's point. What are the strategies we know that have worked? I think of the CLADEM (Comité de América Latina y el Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer, also a member of the International Coordinating Committee for the WHRD campaign) and others' campaign for a Convention on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in the Inter-American human rights system. They have taken the process slowly and worked hard to have small consultations to discuss difficult issues.

Jane: As we have experienced in the WHRD campaign, actual collaborations on various activities among women's rights, human rights, and LGBT groups, can bring some "cross-fertilisation" of ideas, issues, and strategies. At the very least, it sensitised the others about LGBT concerns, and, for some, they have taken the institutional challenge to take on LGBT issues.

Susana: Raising issues of sexuality (and insisting that we understand this broadly)—and to try to do so in ways that folks can connect with while insisting that it's not appropriate nor even smart to exclude those who are already excluded just because we are challenged by the issues they raise, such as heteronormativity, or "normalness—is, as have we experienced during the WHRD



photo by RD Martie

Cynthia Rothschild

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I'm not sure that what I would call for is inter-movement dialogues on LGBT issues. Inclusion of LGBT folks and movements, yes, but we need to talk about sex and sexuality, sexual liberation...

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consultation itself, a challenging but worthwhile effort.

Moving Forward

Malu: Okay, folks, we have 10 minutes left. Perhaps, some last words from each one of you about future challenges and possible directions of inter-movement dialogues, especially on LGBT issues.

Mariana: In terms of next steps, OMCT intends to take up more cases of LGBT defenders within the “Observatory for the Protection of HR Defenders” (a joint programme coordinated by OMCT’s “HR Defenders Programme” and the Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights –[FIDH]), and of people being targeted for their being homosexual or transgender, to fulfil our mandate, and to sensitise members of the network locally through our “Urgent Campaigns Programme” as a mainstreaming effort. We’re also willing to integrate more inter-movement initiatives to further explore ways of collaborating. We’re really open to discussing strategies, on country and global

levels. Institutionally, we integrate these cases in our programmes on urgent appeals and assistance to victims of torture, hoping it will eventually bear its fruits locally, within our network.

Macu: At an institutional level, ISHR has included sexual orientation and gender identity in our advocacy priorities for 2006, within the UN System, in particular, in our work with the Human Rights Council and with Special Procedures and the treaty bodies. We are also planning to organise, in collaboration with partner NGOs, an experts’ seminar on sexual orientation, gender identity, and human rights.

Lisa: APWLD is planning to reach out to expand its work to include LGBT issues, in a much deeper way. We are hoping to work more closely with groups working on LGBT issues in the coming years. This will be a challenge for us as a women’s network that has focused on many identity-based issues really effectively (for example: indigenous women, migrant women, etc.) as well as the HR movement working on these issues (as opposed to women’s movement) but which has not really tackled LGBT groups. Through closer collaboration with groups working on LGBT issues, we will see how we integrate the issues more fully in our work.

Cynthia: CWGL is committed to building on an analysis of sexuality and lesbian-baiting; we want to work in tangible ways with the ideas about sexuality-baiting included in the CWGL/IGLHRC report “*Written Out: How Sexuality Is Used to Attack Women’s Organizing.*”³ Now, the challenge is to lift the analysis to the practical: we

want to work with a few groups to see what we might collaboratively do in terms of building documentation on sexuality-baiting of women defenders.

Jane: As already discussed with Isis, the sequel to this discussion is another online forum on sexuality issues among WHRD participants. It's another concrete way of moving forward and opening spaces.

Susana: I'm not sure that what I would call for is inter-movement dialogues on LGBT issues. Inclusion of LGBT folks and movements, yes, but we need to talk about sex and sexuality, sexual liberation, as Cynthia said. The challenge is how to bring into the conversation folks who are resistant. Many of them are scared for reasons of real fear but others because of their own acceptance of "heteronormativity" as the norm. We do have good examples of building networks that focus on sexuality-related issues, networks of HR organisations (like OMCT and ISHR) incorporating sexuality issues into the mainstream of their programming.

But we need lots more.

Mariana: I agree with Susana that there is still a lot to do. I also agree with the idea that we need to tackle the question by exploring sexuality, the right to choose, on the one hand, and sexuality-baiting, on the other hand, and integrating as many different types of organisations as possible in any debates on these issues.

Malu: It's 11 p.m., our time, so we need to close this e-forum now. Thanks everyone for your active and lively participation. I know that we have barely scratched the surface on the issues surrounding inter-movement dialogue about sex and sexuality (as Susana rightly pointed out). But we did discuss quite substantially some of the problems and issues, including sexuality-baiting, the challenges and opportunities in engaging various movements, and the strategies to move forward.

I hope to meet you all sometime, perhaps for a more substantive face-to-face dialogue and interaction. Have a good day/night everyone! ☺

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Endnotes

1 By "heteronormativity," we mean the normative social construction of gender/sexuality, based on the pairing of male/female, man/women, husband/wife, among the series of oppositions taken to be "normal" and "natural." In this context, only "traditional" heterosexuality is to be considered "normal" and, therefore, socially sanctioned.

2 Special procedures are either an individual, called a special rapporteur or representative, or an independent expert, or a group of individuals, called a working group, that have been set up by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) to examine, monitor, and report on human rights situations in specific countries (country mandates) or on major issues or themes (thematic mandates).

3 The report uses a human rights analysis to explore sexuality-baiting and also lesbian-baiting, and uses 60+ interviews with women from around the world to tell stories of baiting and resistance to it.