



INTERNATIONAL DAY  
AGAINST  
HOMOPHOBIA  
AND TRANSPHOBIA  
**IDAHO**

THE INTERNATIONAL  
**DAY** AGAINST  
**HOMOPHOBIA**  
AND **TRANSPHOBIA**  
"IDAHO" - MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>

ANNUAL REPORT **2011**

# Editorial

For its 7<sup>th</sup> edition, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was celebrated on May 17, 2011 **with hundreds of events around the world and on every continent.**

From **important statements by international artists, organisations and institutions to mass street protests and publications of groundbreaking reports**, the events around the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia have once again displayed the strength, the creativity, the boldness and the diversity of the global fight to end violence, discrimination and stigmatization of people on the grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression.

**Organisations from over 90 countries participated this year, confirming that the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia constitutes a unique entry point for action, across many different contexts.** This year, several countries saw their first public 'IDAHO' celebrations, including Burkina Faso, Fiji, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Mobilization at a national level in many countries increased dramatically this year. It is also interesting to note the increase in **trans-national joint initiatives**, which represent a major trend and provide interesting perspectives for the future. Among these joint initiatives, the IDAHO Committee sponsored and facilitated **regional campaign initiatives**, the idea for which developed during workshops held in 2010 in **Latin America and Asia**. These initiatives are detailed further in this report, with a special focus on the Latin America-wide campaign, **"Cures that Kill"**, focusing on so-called "reparative" therapies which propose to 'cure' sexual orientations or gender identities that do not correspond to 'official' standards. The **"Cures that Kill"** campaign generated marches, protests, conferences, artistic events and many other initiatives across 12 countries in the region.

This year's 'IDAHO' was also marked by **an increasing number of statements of support at the highest levels**, with the **European Institutions** and **many United Nations agencies** confirming their commitment to making the Day an important annual event.

This year, the Day has also been characterized by a **strong presence of social networks**, with nearly a hundred pages, groups and events set up specifically for 'IDAHO' initiatives. Last but not least, **celebrities** started engaging more visibly to celebrate the Day, with a special mention for Lady Gaga, who acted as editor-in-chief on May 17 for the 19 national editions of the free daily paper METRO, reaching out to 17 million readers.

With activity reports, including on media coverage, coming in from many countries, the IDAHO Committee estimates that the Day has provided the opportunity to **reach out to close to 200 million people worldwide**, making the Day a central global moment in the fight for respect, non discrimination and equality for all, irrespective of their actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression.

This report offers a glimpse of how the Day has been celebrated around the world. It aims to be a tribute to all those who fight on the ground, and an inspiration for even more actions to be developed next year.

Warm wishes,  
The IDAHO Committee team

# 1. Context : the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA ("IDAHO") WAS LAUNCHED IN 2004 BY AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF ACTIVISTS.

The date of May 17 was chosen to commemorate the World Health Organization's decision in 1990 to remove homosexuality from 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 'IDAHO' 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, both within and beyond the LGBTI movement, can take advantage of to take action.

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia is now celebrated in more than 90 countries across the world, in the most varied ways and expressions. LGBTI organisations, governments, cities, human rights organisations, and others have engaged in activities around May 17 in all world regions, from Australia to Iran, Cameroon to 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. Context : 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, the visibility and the recognition that will maximize its potential as a political force at all levels, and specifically:
  - Develop the scope** and the diversity of mobilization on the Day around the world;
  - Develop** the visibility of the Day;
  - Promote the recognition** of the Day by official stakeholders (States, local authorities, Institutions, and others)
- ▲ **Support organizations**, especially those working in very difficult contexts, to develop actions around the Day and make best local use of the Day in their lobbying and campaigning strategies.
- ▲ **Develop and facilitate international mobilization initiatives** 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"

# HIGHLIGHTS OF INITIATIVES AROUND THE WORLD

It is impossible to have a comprehensive picture of all activities that are organized each year around the Day.

Yet, through intensive networking and international contacts, the IDAHO Committee has collected information on some of these activities, 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.

This report aims to highlight the diversity and the creativity of the fight for sexual and gender diversity around the world. It also aims to pay a sincere tribute to all activists who work year round, most on a voluntary basis, to build a more open and diverse future.

The following information is just a short excerpt of more comprehensive reports, which include information about the main participating organisations\*, and photos and videos of local events. These reports can be accessed on our website, [www.dayagainsthomophobia.org](http://www.dayagainsthomophobia.org). Each article of this report also has hyperlinks embedded for easy access to further info if you read this report on a computer

*\*Given that hundreds of organisations were involved, it was not possible to cite them all in this report. We therefore made the choice not to specifically name any in these pages, and report in more detail on the website.*

# 1. INTERNATIONAL initiatives

## “CURES THAT KILL” REGIONAL CAMPAIGN



With technical help from the IDAHO Committee and financial support from Dutch Philanthropy HIVOS, organisations in 12 Latin American countries united in a powerful campaign using the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia as a focus point for action around the region.

The campaign, entitled “*Cures that Kill*,”<sup>36</sup> aims to combat the growing influence of organisations, most of which hold dogmatic religious positions, which promote the idea that sexual and gender diversity can be ‘cured’ through what are labeled “reparative therapies.”

As the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia celebrates the anniversary of the World Health Organization’s declassification of homosexuality as a mental illness and thus to proscribe any attempts to ‘cure’ it, May 17 was identified as a very relevant priority focus moment to conduct mobilization, outreach, communication and lobbying activities.

By raising awareness of the wrongness of “reparative” theories, of the harm they provoke, and of the violation of human rights they represent, the campaign aimed to deconstruct the popular support they draw from and to discredit the “scientific” varnish that dogmatic discourses often try to cover up with.

The organisations developed a joint public appeal calling on governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to enforce the principle of secularism of the State and to take concrete measures to combat “reparative” practices targeting homosexuality and transgenderism, including the disruption of public funding for institutions or individuals that have not clearly distanced themselves from such practices. The appeal also called on national and local public health systems to exclude all practitioners who practice or promote “reparative” approaches. Private donors were urged to make the explicit opposition to “reparative” therapy a criterion for approval of grants.

Activities taken at local level included street marches, vigils, public debates in universities and on TV panels, “die-ins” to remember victims of abuses by religious authorities, concerts, and more. In all, several dozens of events marked the Day across the region.

Organisations often benefited from support from a large range of allies within civil society organizations and other institutions. The city of Buenos Aires even declared the campaign of public interest.

Further details of the actions can be found in the respective country chapters of this report, and online at [www.dayagainsthomophobia.org](http://www.dayagainsthomophobia.org).

At a regional level, the IDAHO Committee helped to gather high-level support for the appeal, in order to reinforce the lobbying capacity of national groups and influence regional decision-making forums. Amongst many noteworthy supporters are the Latin American Psychiatric Association, psychiatrists associations in Brazil and Paraguay, and numerous other scientific bodies. The daughter of Cuban President Raúl Castro, Mariela Castro Espín, who actively promotes LGBT human rights in Cuba, and the mayors of major cities like Lima also count among the prominent supporters.

The collective achievements of the mobilization that took place are now being harnessed by national organizations in order to support their national lobbying strategies. Activities should also continue to be developed on a regional level in order to scale up the campaign outcomes and achieve stronger integration of the campaign into other similar initiatives around the world. Interestingly, the ‘Cures that Kill’ campaign has generated spontaneous interest on other regions. In China, an LGBT group launched a related initiative under the same name.

Brazil



©Alexandra Martins for AllOut.orgA

*\*in Spanish the word ‘Curas’ stands for both ‘cures’ and ‘priests’. ‘Curas que Matan’ means both ‘cures that kill’ and ‘priests that kill’, making a powerful allusion to the deadly harm, which the ‘cures’ can cause in extreme cases and the specific responsibilities of Churches in the spread of the ‘reparative’ approach.*

## 'AS I AM' PARTICIPATORY ONLINE ACTION

The objective laid out by some conservative movements to 'cure' people of their sexual difference inspired the IDAHO Committee to launch a participatory online campaign to celebrate people in their uniqueness. People were asked to send testimonials, artworks, photos or videos celebrating the joy of being who they are, and the refusal to be 'cured', 'repaired' or otherwise 'normalized'. The campaign received contributions from various continents, which can be viewed on the [As I Am website](#).

## UNITED NATIONS



Ahead of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the UN Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights issued a pamphlet, entitled [The United Nations Speaks Out: Tackling Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#). The pamphlet is a collaborative effort between OHCHR, UNDP, UNAIDS and WHO.

It carries excerpts from many strong statements on the subject by the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other senior UN officials, as well as by the UN treaty bodies, special rapporteurs and other UN agencies.

The pamphlet was published in English, Spanish and French by the UN, and [many versions in local languages](#) were produced in time for IDAHO activities by civil society groups, with the logistical and financial support of the IDAHO Committee.

Specifically, UNAIDS has marked the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia with a [message from Executive Director Mr. Michel Sidibé](#). In his statement, M Sidibé reminded us that *"The AIDS response has shown that when people are stigmatized because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, they are less likely to access the HIV services they need."* He called on *"governments to create social and legal environments that ensure respect for human rights and universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support."*

For the first time in history, the Day was also marked by an [official address from UNESCO](#). After years of lobbying the institution, the IDAHO Committee was particularly happy to hear Director General Irina Bokova express the commitment of the institution to the fight against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The speech was delivered at an event co-organised by the organization of LGBT UN staff GLOBE.

UNDP also issued a [specific address](#) on the Day, emphasizing that *"stigma, prejudice, and repression pervasively undermine human rights and inflict grave harm not only on individuals but on development as well."*

While the increased engagement of UN Agencies in the celebrations of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia has been applauded by activists, a specific request toward the World Health Organization has been voiced by the IDAHO Committee and a large alliance of Asian organizations. The alliance urged the WHO to renew its commitment to ensuring that the 1990 decision to declassify homosexuality from the list of mental disorders translates into legislative changes, including decriminalization of same-sex relationships, anti-discrimination laws, and protective measures for sexual and gender minorities.



United Nations



## EU INSTITUTIONS

Almost all major EU institutions marked **the International Day against Homophobia**. The **European Parliament**, the **European Commission**, the **European External Action Service**, the **Joint parliamentary ACP assembly** as well as the **Fundamental Rights Agency** all issued statements on this occasion. The only main EU institution not to do so was the **Council of the European Union**, currently chaired by Hungary, whose government is also displaying aggressively homophobic policies at home. The European Parliament also hosted the **Walk with Pride** exhibition, (for further details, see article below).

The Fundamental Rights Agency announced a new initiative to measure homophobia and transphobia in Europe. The EU-wide online survey will capture the actual experiences of discrimination and hate crimes felt by LGBT people.



## WALK WITH PRIDE

'**Walk with Pride (WWP)**' is a project by Charles Meacham and Sarah Baxter to photograph and document gay pride parades around the globe. The images that make up the **Walk with Pride** photo collection were taken by photographer Charles Meacham during the 2009 and 2010 pride season, and showcase 15 different global prides. The **WWP** project partnered with the IDAHO Committee to organize exhibitions of this collection in cities around the world in celebration of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. The exhibition was inaugurated at the European Parliament by its President, Jerzy Buzek, and Ulrike Lunacek and Michael Cashman, Co-Presidents of the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights. It was also displayed in various cities in the **USA, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Australia, Belarus and Taiwan**.

<http://walkwithpridenow.com>.

WWP : Taiwan, Australia, Philippines...



© WWP



## METRO / LADY GAGA

The global free daily paper METRO marked the Day in all its 19 national editions, which were distributed to 17 million people and included a full two-page article on human rights and LGBT people, an initiative that was part of a much noticed special issue edited by pop star Lady Gaga. The diva, who is well-known for her commitment to LGBT rights, expressed her wish *«that Humanity could find Togetherness. We are all different and it is that which makes us the same. Be yourself, love who you are and be proud. You were born this way, baby.»*

## TRANS MURDER MONITORING PROJECT

'**The Trans Murder Monitoring (TMM)**' project launched an interactive map on May 17<sup>th</sup>, a date that the Trans community now increasingly refers to as 'IDAHO' to increase the visibility of transphobic violence.

The project was initiated in April 2009 to systematically monitor, collect and analyse reports of homicides of trans people worldwide. The **new interactive map** for the first time visualises a great portion of the 604 reported murders of trans people that the **TMM** has documented since January 2008.

While the documentation of homicides against trans people is indispensable for demonstrating the shocking extent of human rights violations committed against trans people on a global scale, the need for in-depth research lead the project to evolve towards the current **"Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide (TvT)"** project, with a research team from over 15 partner organizations in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Europe, North America and Oceania.



Rainbow flashmob in Russia

## RAINBOW FLAHSMOB

An impressive list of 50 cities participated in the second edition of the international initiative inviting people to gather in public on May 17 and release balloons in the colors of the rainbow flag.

Originally started in Russia, this year the initiative gained also the participation of activists from Germany, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Singapore, Czech Republic, Belarus and Poland. [The initiative's site](#) provides reports, videos and pictures.

## COURAGE UNFOLDS

This year, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia provided Asian organizations and coalitions with the opportunity to hold public screenings of the documentary *'Courage Unfolds'*.

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) and the organization Lesbian Advocates Philippines (LeAP!) co-produced this video, highlighting the struggles and triumphs of LGBT activists in Asia and promoting the use of international human rights law as a tool for social change. Courage Unfolds is the culmination of two and a half years of gathering stories from sixteen countries across Asia.

Screenings and community discussions took place in Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, China,



Hong Kong and New Zealand to mark IDAHO. The video is currently being translated into Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, Burmese, Chinese, Hindi, Khmer, Mongolian, Nepali, Thai and Vietnamese.

## STATE-SPONSORED HOMOPHOBIA REPORTS

The international LGBTI organization ILGA launched its annual **"State-sponsored Homophobia Report,"** a world survey of laws prohibiting same sex activity between consenting adults at London University's Institute of Commonwealth Studies. In addition to ILGA's world map on Gay and Lesbian rights, ILGA-LAC, Pan Africa ILGA and ILGA-Asia also produced regional maps. **All material** was made available in Spanish, Portuguese and French.

Meanwhile, the European branch of ILGA launched the updated version of the Rainbow European **Map and Index**, which look at progress made by European countries towards respecting human rights and ensuring full legal equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. ILGA Europe also teamed with the European Commission to display on May 17 **the exhibition 'Different families same love,'** at the EC's headquarters in Brussels.

## PROGETTO GIONATA

The *'Gionata Project'* aims to bring Christian believers from all denominations together over **Ecumenical Vigils of prayer for victims of homophobia and transphobia.**

It is organized by GLBT Christian groups with the support of **Gionata**, the Italian project on faith and homosexuality promoted by the **European Forum of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Christian groups.** This fifth edition of the initiative took place in 18 Italian cities, and was also celebrated in Spain, Peru and Kirghizstan.



## 2. Country reports

### 1. ALBANIA

Albanian activists organized a series of activities including film screenings, a public lecture at Tirana University, a poster campaign entitled **"Homophobia has had its day,"** and a stand in central Tirana where anyone could express their views against discrimination and where activists handed out T-shirts with anti-homophobia messages. The celebrations also included the second annual **"Rock against Homophobia"** concert.



### 2. ARGENTINA



In Argentina, May 17 is traditionally marked by events launching the national **'Pride Month'** program, which lasts to the end of June.

This year, the **"Cures that Kill"** campaign provided a strong focus point for actions. In Buenos Aires, organizations promoted a graphic arts exhibition and displayed posters around the city center alerting people about the harm caused by "reparative therapies." Notably, the city legislature declared the **"Cures That Kill"** campaign of public interest. Additionally, the gender group of the Collective Apostasy Campaign in Argentina took part in this year's IDAHO actions, promoting several workshops to inform people of the dangers of "reparative therapies" and organizing a series of screenings. Independent activists on sexual diversity also painted walls and streets of Buenos Aires, put up posters and distributed pamphlets to inform people about the campaign.

### 3. ARMENIA

Armenian activists commemorated IDAHO in two major cities by participating in the international rainbow-flash event (see international initiatives). Balloons flew high in the skies with messages attached referring to the international **'As I Am'** campaign.

### 4. AUSTRALIA

Throughout Australia many events took place once again this year for the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, such as a candle vigil for famous or anonymous LGBT heroes and a church service to "heal" homophobia.

Campaigning for same-sex marriage was high on groups' policy agendas, with reports of public rallies in Sydney and Canberra, a kiss-in in Perth, a flashmob in Melbourne and a mass wedding in Adelaide, which right-wing Christian protesters tried in vain to disrupt. On the artistic side, a community development campaign called **"IDAHO Sydney"** provided an opportunity for people to articulate their responses to homophobia and violence in a creative way. A call for submissions invited artists and students across the world to submit **artwork** dealing with homophobia and identity.



### 5. BANGLADESH

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was celebrated in Bangladesh by sexual minority organizations with the collaboration of the Department of Clinical Psychology of the University of Dhaka. Several professors of psychology attended the event to discuss the specifics of homophobia and transphobia in Bangladesh and ways to address these issues in Bangladeshi society.

### 6. BELARUS

LGBT activists organized a **"Festival for Equality"** during the mid-May week. The program included the screening of the documentary **East Bloc Love** and the display of the Walk with Pride exhibition. It also included plans for a "March for Equality," which was prohibited by authorities, leading activists to organize a flashmob in Minsk city centre. Other LGBT activists organized a protest in front of the Presidential administration building, which resulted in the arrest of the participants by police forces. Activists from Belarus also participated in the international Rainbow Flashmob initiative (see international events)

## 7. BELGIUM



On May 17, the Parliamentary Commission for Health, Social Action and Equal Opportunities of the francophone Belgian region, Wallonia, consulted the regional LGBT Federation on the situation of homophobia in the region in view of making the Full Equality Plan that is being developed more inclusive of the concerns of LGBT people.

And, for the third year in a row, the Federation produced 35,000 badges and 25,000 brochures which were distributed to secondary schools, cultural centers, family planning offices, and other structures of the Belgian francophone community. Some city councils also flew the rainbow flag on May 17 to support the visibility of the fight against homophobia and transphobia.

## 8. BOLIVIA

Santa Cruz de la Sierra's LGBT organization hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> International Affective-Sexual Diversity Movies Festival during the mid-May IDAHO week. This year's theme was "religion and guilt," which fell directly in line with the objectives of the "Cures That Kill" campaign.

Other activities by LGBT groups included a candlelight vigil in the capital, La Paz, the launch of a public awareness raising campaign in Cochabamba, and a "sexual diversity and gender diversity fair" in Oruro. LGBT groups transmitted a request to the government asking them to officially recognize the Day as part of the official public annual agenda.



papapuni.org

## 9. BRAZIL

Brazilian organizations have historically been very active in celebrating the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. Since the official recognition of the Day by presidential decree last year, activity levels have soared even higher. Across the country, approximately 120 events were reported within the 27 states, generating the need to set up a national coordination taskforce to handle the information flow.

At the federal level, the Brazilian LGBT federation, which unites 237 groups, organized on May 18 its second National March against Homophobia and Transphobia, in which several thousand participants marched on the Congress in Brasilia, where the 8th National LGBT Seminar was taking place. The day's program also included an ecumenical vigil, which was held as part of the "Cures That Kill" campaign. The event was conducted in partnership with social networks Avaaz.org and AllOut.org who projected onto the wall of the National Library photographs of supporters of the international "Stop homophobia in Brazil" campaign.

The achievements of the mobilization were nevertheless marred by President Rousseff's suspension, a week after the Day, of an anti-homophobia campaign which was about to be conducted in 6000 schools across the country.



©ABIGT

## 10. BULGARIA

Sofia's LGBT youth group marked the Day with a screening at Sofia University of a series of short films created by students on their personal experience of stigma and discrimination. A cycle rally called "Together against Homophobia" followed the video performance.

With the support of the Ministry of Justice, the *Walk with Pride* exhibition was displayed in front of the National Theater for an entire week.

### 11. BURKINA FASO

This year marked the first celebration of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia in Burkina Faso. Activists gathered to discuss the challenges which sexual minority groups face in Burkina Faso. The event constituted a landmark in the emergence of the LGBTI movement of the Sahel country and the discussions laid the foundations for future public events in Bobo Dioulasso and Ouagadougou, the country's two biggest cities.

### 12. BURMA/THAILAND :

Burmese LGBT activists living across the border in Thailand gathered to speak out against abuses committed by police and government forces in Burma. Music, theater, dance, speeches and film screenings marked the event, which attracted people from Rangoon, Mandalay, Moulmein, Meiktila and other parts of Burma, as well as from Thailand, the Philippines, the US and Europe.

### 13. BURUNDI

LGBT organizations in Burundi united with human rights groups for a day-long event celebrating the inauguration of the country's first LGBT community centre. The community centre will provide a safe space to conduct community-based activities and to deliver urgently needed services to LGBT individuals, including health services, psychosocial support, and social reintegration services.

The event was a strong unifying moment for the LGBT community and received active support from the Belgian, Norwegian, Dutch, French and American embassies as well as the delegation of the European Union.

With the financial support of the IDAHO Committee, a young LGBT organization working in the rural province of Gitega organized a community building-assembly which aimed to reinforce the active involvement of a group of 'gay-friendly' mothers, whose aim it is to create bridges between the gay and lesbian community and the wider public.

### 14. CAMBODIA

Once again, Cambodian activists chose to celebrate their annual pride festival in connection with the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia dates. This year, celebrations reached beyond the capital, Phnom Penh, and included **27 events** at 16 different venues over a nine-day period. Events included three art exhibitions, a week-long film festival, blessing ceremonies, family/community days, workshops, the annual drag show and competition, a pool tournament, karaoke nights, parties and more.



### 15. CAMEROON

An alliance of human rights groups and LGBT activists organized a training workshop for legal professionals, human rights defenders and advocates on how to address legal issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity. The workshop aimed to increase stakeholder capacity to avoid arrests, face procedural matters and free suspects held in jail. A day of celebrations was also organized by and for the LGBT community of Douala, including a debate on 'Homosexuality and Faith' and a community celebration.



Bulgaria © Devstvie

## 16. CANADA

Every year, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is celebrated with specific intensity in the province of Quebec. This year's campaign celebrated gay and lesbian partnerships under the slogan **"Same-sex couples: A Story of Love"**. The campaign also inspired events in other Canadian provinces and abroad.

©Fondation Emergence



The National Union of Public and General Employees, with over 340,000 members, also stood in solidarity with the LGBT community. Teachers around the country were encouraged to support the day through an educational piece in the classroom. In Ottawa, activists organized a flashmob, where over 50 people broke out into choreography in the middle of the city's main train station. At the British Columbia Institute for Technology, students raised a rainbow flag in solidarity with those around the world.

The Day was also marked by numerous other public events in Ottawa, Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary.

## 17. CHILE



On May 17 in Santiago de Chile, more than 5,000 people followed the appeal of a large coalition of LGBT, human rights and feminist organizations. The crowd colored the streets of the city demanding rights, equality and respect for sexual and gender minorities and delivered a petition to Parliament.

In an act of provocation, right wing members of the Senate introduced on the very same day, a bill aiming at restricting the notion of marriage to the sole union of a man and a woman. After a blitz mobilization by LGBT groups on Facebook and Twitter, the bill was withdrawn.

## 18. CHINA

The Day was celebrated in 20 cities this year, up from 3 for IDAHO 2009. For the first time, top Chinese media ran special features on LGBT issues to commemorate the Day.

LGBT activists once again 'marched' against homophobia on their bikes, riding even through Tiananmen Square in Beijing, but also in various other cities in the country. At selected landmarks, volunteers handed out brochures and stickers with anti-homophobia slogans.

In the wake of the **"Cures that Kill"** campaign, activists in China also joined in the IDAHO celebrations by producing a documentary on the situation of "reparative" therapies in China. The film brings together powerful testimonies from individuals who were promised a "cure" for homosexuality, and from sexual health therapists who testify against this approach. The documentary was screened publicly at an event hosted by the British and French Embassies The Courage Unfold Video (see international events) was screened in 8 cities.



©Queer Comrades

Other IDAHO events included a moving bookstand to educate people on LGBT issues; an on-line initiative to ask people to send their blessings to LGBT people and a call for lesbians to donate blood to challenge the official ban.



©Tongyu

## 19. COLOMBIA



Colombia's region of Bogotá has for the past few years extended IDAHO celebrations to a **"Week for Sexual and Gender Diversity."** Past actions investigated the issue of bullying in schools, and this year, launched an ambitious program to train all teachers from the region to fight against homophobia in the classroom.

A first batch of 100 teachers started their teachings during the IDAHO week. LGBT groups also promoted the "Cures that Kill" campaign with the media.

In Medellin too, the Day was again celebrated with strong visibility. City authorities presented to the media their recently approved public policy strategy to address discrimination against LGBT citizens. At this occasion, the authorities read and endorsed the appeal of the "**Cures that Kill**" campaign.

The Day was marked by numerous mainstream TV programs covering LGBT issues, reaching out to tens of thousands of Colombians. A pride march was held in the city of Cartagena, with a specific focus on solidarity with Ugandan LGBT people. Another Pride march was also reported in the city of Cucuta.

## 20. COSTA RICA



On May 15, the Pride Festival 2011 was held in the capital city, San José, with a wide range of artistic performances. The 3rd Inter-university national seminar on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity was held in three different institutions: the Technology Institute on May 16, the National University on May 17, and the University of Costa Rica on May 18.

© CR CIPAC



## 21. CROATIA

On May 17th, a round-table discussion «Together against Discrimination of LGBT Persons» was organized in the presence of government representatives to discuss the integration of LGBT concerns in the upcoming new National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Among the proposals submitted by activists, and still under consideration by the government, is the formal recognition of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia by all public authorities, including city councils. If accepted, this proposal would make IDAHO celebrations an official obligation. LGBT Activists held a public IDAHO performance in Zagreb in which, dressed in judges' robes they presented the Ministry of the Judiciary with their

«sentence» which found the Croatian judiciary guilty of homophobia and ignorance regarding anti-discrimination law. They demanded that the "homophobic Croatian courts" immediately start implementing existing anti-discrimination obligations and eliminate homophobia from the national judicial system.

## 22. CUBA

From May 3 to May 19, Cuba celebrated its fourth annual International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia with a two-weeks long "**Jornada contra la homofobia**". Mariela Castro Espín, the daughter of Cuban President Raúl Castro, led the country's celebrations in Havana and Santiago de Cuba (Cuba's second largest city). Under the slogan "**Humanity is Diverse**", the events included Pride marches, symposiums, lectures, film screenings, art exhibits and a theatre festival, headlined by Cuban superstar, singer Haila Mompie.

© Genesex



## 23. CZECH REPUBLIC

Activists from lesbian, bisexual and transgender women's groups organized the annual LGBT cultural festival during the IDAHO week in mid May. The festival included film screenings, art exhibitions, a run against homophobia, concerts, ping-pong competitions, drag contests, a day-long multi-sports tournament, parties, and much more.



A highlight of the festival was the launch of hundreds of water lily lanterns down the Vltava River in Prague on the night of May 17.

Czech HIV-AIDS advocates held, for the 4th year in a row, their 5-km “Run Against Homophobia”, an event symbolizing the strength and endurance of the fight for equal rights, but also signaling the need for healthier attitudes toward social and cultural diversity. The event attracted increased visibility with the participation of the former minister of human rights.

## 24. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

“Armed” with “syringes,” surgeons’ masks marked with the gay flag, and pamphlets, a group of Lesbian activists blitzed the streets of Santo Domingo. The activists held their first **“Vaccination Campaign against Homolebotransphobia,”** to raise public awareness on the pathological nature of homotransphobia and to challenge the false, widespread assumption that it is homosexuality and gender diversity that should be cured.



© 3 gatas

## 25. ECUADOR

Trans activists, prominent academics and state authorities came together at the Psychology School of the University of Guayaquil to hold the second edition of the national symposium on “Phobia of sexual minorities,” placed under the umbrella of the **“Cures that Kill”** campaign.

## 26. FIJI

Fiji celebrated the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia for the first time this year, becoming the first South Pacific Island to celebrate the Day, as the University of the South Pacific hosted a panel discussion, which attracted more people than the venue could accommodate.

The event began with the screening of a video by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights discussing the rights of gender and sexual minorities. The Panel

discussions focused on the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, and class, and the use of the human body by society through identities. Religious leaders discussed common anti-gay arguments and offered alternative viewpoints.



© Diodoriqi Movement

## 27. FINLAND

Following a tradition in place since 2006, the Day was marked by various events in the country’s major cities, including participations in the international Rainbow Flashmob balloon launch in Helsinki, seminars, exhibitions and various community events.



## 28. FRANCE

Over 200 activities took place across the country, including the now hugely popular annual “Kiss-in” and “Giant Madison Dance,” each gathering hundreds of participants in outdoor public celebrations of diversity. This year’s IDAHO in France was marked by strong engagement from the media: all major public and private television channels broadcasted a **video clip** in which celebrities say **“No to Homophobia and Transphobia”** reaching out to an audience of 20 million people. Celebrities also massively supported a call for universal decriminalization of homosexuality



©Comité IDAHO France

launched by a fundraising initiative, scoring support from an impressive range of actors and other artists, including Catherine Deneuve, Gerard Depardieu, Kristin Scott Thomas, Philip Starck and Luc Besson, to name but a few.

Public authorities also celebrated the day, with various cities and regional councils launching local action plans, while some ministries also announced ambitious strategies. An “IDAHO scale,” ranking each Ministry’s performance in the fight against homophobia and transphobia was released, attracting wide media attention.

### 29. GEORGIA

On May 17, as part of the «Gay-Tbilisi Against Homophobia!» community event, candles and flowers were set afloat on the capital city Tbilisi’s main river in remembrance of the victims of homophobia.

### 30. GERMANY

Twenty-one cities in Germany joined in the International Flashmob initiative (see international events section), often in association with local community events like marches, picnics, sports events, etc...

In Berlin, the Senate marked IDAHO with a seminar in memory of the 50,000 men who were arrested, condemned and jailed between 1945 and 1968/69 for being homosexuals, some of them shortly after they had been released from the Nazi camps where they had been imprisoned for the same “crime.”

Also in Berlin, the fundraising initiative “*Kiss-Kiss Berlin*” once again managed to associate all the city’s major bars and clubs to support local and international anti-homophobia projects

### 31. GUATEMALA

Activists in Guatemala, the country with the second most incidences of violence against sexual and gender minorities in Latin America after Honduras, commemorated the Day with more coordinated activities than ever before. The national UNAIDS office in Guatemala, along with the Pan American Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund, joined the celebration to help intensify efforts in the fight against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

### 32. GUYANA

In Guyana, the Day was celebrated with the launch of the quarterly publication “*Spectrum Vibes*”, which highlights the experience of gender and sexual

minorities throughout the country. It also provided the right opportunity for the premiere of a series of several short documentaries entitled “*My Wardrobe, My Right*”, which follows the life of two young people who identify as cross-dressers. The movie is meant to uplift and inspire young activists who struggle with gender normative patterns. The UK British High Commissioner emphasized Britain’s support for the objective of fighting LGBT discrimination in the country.

### 33. HONDURAS

Facing a climate of strong social and political homophobia and transphobia, with 34 LGBT people killed over the last 18 months, several organizations in Honduras organised on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia the “*Journey of the Different Kiss*”, which lead them, despite attempts by police forces to disrupt it, to the Secretariat of Justice and Human Rights, the Presidential Residence, a police station, the Municipal City Hall, the Metropolitan Cathedral and the National Congress. The Day provided an opportunity for numerous allied organizations and movements to voice their support for the LGBT struggle for equality.



### 34. HONG KONG

On May 15, an alliance of LGBT groups organized a demonstration in Hong Kong to mark the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

The demonstration, attended by the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission, was halted and attendees were videoed by uniformed officers, in what has been described as a serious attack on LGBT rights and the right to demonstrate in Hong Kong. A legal case against the police has since been filed.

On May 17 the coalition '4mycolors' screened the video *Courage Unfolds* (see above) and hosted a seminar on *"Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms"*.

### 35. HUNGARY

Activists in Budapest chose a more provocative approach to IDAHO celebrations this year, as they marched through the city center wearing t-shirts with the most common swear-words used by Hungarians for sexual and gender minorities, while shouting out messages like, *"Homophobia is a disease, not homosexuality."* At the end of the march, candles were lit in remembrance of victims of homophobia. A video of the event was immediately posted on websites of local media known for being anti-LGBT rights and on those of violently homophobic groups.

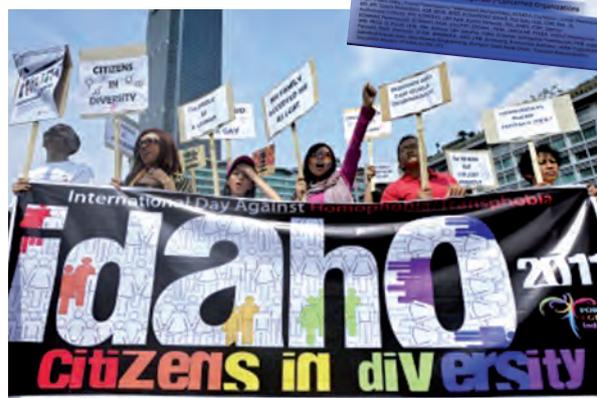
Meanwhile, the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, together with Hungarian LGBT NGOs, organized a conference on *"How to Combat Homophobia and Transphobia in Present-Day Hungary"*.



### 36. INDONESIA

Reacting to years of intimidation by dogmatic religious groups, Indonesian human rights organizations made their voices heard on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. A coalition of over 60 organizations launched a national communication campaign entitled *"Stop Violence and Hatred Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity,"* which

was published in several national newspapers and on social networks. Other events included public lectures in several universities, institutes and the National Commission for Human Rights; radio talk shows; movie and documentary screenings, among others. In Jakarta, activists from LGBT organizations and their allies demonstrated on the streets under the banner *"Citizens in Diversity."*



### 37. IRAN

Iranian bloggers took advantage of IDAHO to launch the "We Are Everywhere" campaign, which allows gender and sexual minorities from Iran to express their feelings and tell their stories. A number of younger Iranians, many born and raised inside the Islamic Republic of Iran, talked openly and boldly about their sexual orientation and gender identity, often through video posts. During the campaign Iranian anti-discrimination and gender equality activists took a stand together against homophobia.

A post on the [Global Network of Iranian Women](#) reports that the Iranian "Rainbow Community" distributed leaflets about homophobia on May 17 in Tehran and other cities in Iran. The publications aim to fight against misconceptions about homosexuality and to advocate against forced sex-reassignment surgery.

### 38. IRELAND

Unfortunately, May 17 in Ireland also coincided with the visit of British Monarch Queen Elizabeth, making public events almost impossible to stage, and deflecting policy and media attention.

Nevertheless, Christian pro-gay groups organized special church services in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Belfast on Sunday May 15, with the former president of the Methodist Church in Ireland leading the service in Belfast.

### 39. ISRAEL

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was once again widely celebrated in Israel this year, as it has been since its launch in 2005. Events were reported on the specific IDAHO-Israel website HAVANA. The main events were held in Tel Aviv at the local LGBT Center, where two members of the Parliament announced the constitution of a formal lobby group to promote the rights of the Israeli LGBTI community. Key political leaders, including opposition party chief Tzipi Livni, delivered or sent support messages, while Randy Harrison, who starred in the US TV series *Queer as Folk*, also attended the festivities. The IDAHO events also included a **commemoration ceremony for the victims of the 2009 shooting at the Tel Aviv LGBT centre.**



### 40. ITALY

Over the past few years, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia provided the launching date for the country's major annual national campaign against homophobia. This year, the national LGBT federation unfolded its biggest campaign ever, in collaboration with 15 other national organizations. 23,000 posters and 45,000 leaflets were disseminated and displayed across 50 cities in all of the country's provinces.

Countless local events were held to raise awareness of issues faced by the LGBT community, including the total absence of any legal recognition of same-sex unions, which ranged from theater plays by Milan's student unions to a march against homophobia in Cagliari.



As part of the Gionata Project (see international events), vigils and services were held in over 20 major cities throughout the country, from Milan in the north to western Sicily's Catania.

### 41. JAPAN

This year on IDAHO, LGBT activists in Japan held activities in 17 cities throughout the country ranging from workshops to public readings of messages and distribution of flyers calling for social understanding and acceptance of sexual diversity. In Tokyo, a symposium was co-organised by 38 LGBT organizations on **"Creating Japanese LGBT Communities"**, with sponsorship from the Ministry of Justice, the Prime Minister's Office and major corporations. The symposium, which attracted national media attention, addressed issues of same-sex marriage and corporate LGBT policies.

A toll free LGBT hotline was once again set up for a whole week around mid-May.

In Iwate, the province most affected by the earthquakes and the tsunami, activists displayed messages of solidarity and sympathy for those whose lives have been affected by the disaster and held a candle vigil in remembrance of the victims. Messages came from different parts of the country but also from Chile, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Israel.



### 42. KENYA

Members of the gay and lesbian community, male and female sex workers, representatives of the police force, health care providers and legal professionals came together to mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia in the city of Kisumu.

In Nairobi, LGBT activists teamed up with the Kenyan Human Rights Commission for a public discussion on homophobia and faith. The Kenyan Human Rights Commission also revealed its landmark study, **"The Outlawed Amongst Us"**, highlighting police abuse, including sexual assault, blackmail, and harassment, against LGBT people in Kenya.

### 43. KYRGYZSTAN

Activists from Bishkek joined in the Rainbow Flashmob event (see international events). For security reasons, organizers split the participants up in 6 groups, each dressed in one of the rainbow flag colors. Each group started from a different part of town and converged to the meeting point in a city centre park, where the balloons were collectively released.

Activists in Bishkek also joined in the Gionata Project (see international events) with prayers against homophobia.

#### 44. LEBANON

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was marked in Lebanon for the sixth time, with increased participation and visibility.

The celebrations uniting LGBT groups, women's rights groups and sexual health initiatives, included a seminar with panel discussions, film screenings and theater performances. This year, discussions focused once again on repealing the criminalization of same-sex relationships.

Meanwhile, the blogger community launched an online initiative to collect testimonies of victims of homophobia and transphobia, both as means to empower the community and to support and strengthen the advocacy agenda. Quotes from the testimonies were printed on posters and displayed on the walls of Beirut.



#### 45. LITHUANIA

To mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, activists organized a public screening of the movie *"She is a Boy I Knew"*, followed by a panel discussion on homophobia and transphobia.

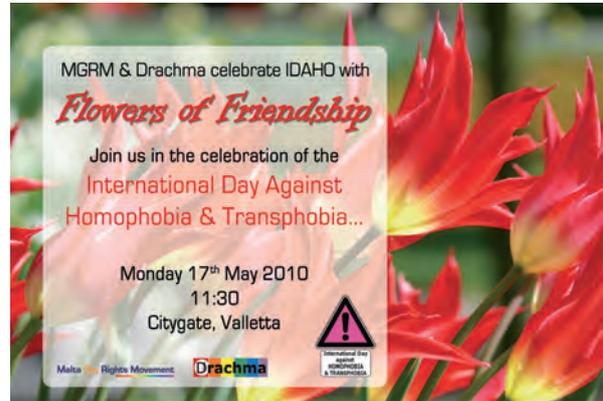
#### 46. MACEDONIA

A group of organizations for sexual and health rights staged an IDAHO ceremony in Skopje's main square, awarding "distinctions" to the most prominently homophobic individuals in the country. This year, the "awards" consisted of photos of the *Walk with Pride* exhibition, which was displayed to the public at a festival against homophobia, which also programmed screenings, panel discussions and concerts.

#### 47. MALTA

For the second year in a row, activists in Malta distributed flowers in the Capital city of Valletta's main square, to send out positive messages about diversity and acceptance. Organizers also set up chalkboards inviting participants to write affirming

messages of support against homophobia and transphobia, while publicizing Malta's extremely bad record on LGBT rights according to ILGA Europe's index (see international events). Activists also held a rally outside of a local church that preached that gays could be cured. Other events in the county included a panel discussion at a local university.



#### 48. MEXICO



All over Mexico events were held to highlight the prejudice and discrimination faced by members of the LGBT community. In almost all States, events were organized ranging from candle vigils to cultural festivals, marches against homophobia, conferences, exhibitions, music and dance performances, film festivals, etc... All together, 9 marches against homophobia were reported.

In Mexico City, 2000 people participated in a march placed under the sign of the 'Cures that Kill' campaign, while 600 others joined a giant IDAHO dance competition. Various conferences and discussions were held during the IDAHO week in the capital, where a concert against Homophobia attracted a crowd of 10 000.



©Gabriel Cuñerrez Garcia



#### 49. MONTENEGRO

In Podgorica, LGBT human rights advocates had planned a set of stage concerts to commemorate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia for the first time in Montenegro. Unfortunately the event was suspended after a tear gas attack on the concert. The incidents lead the organizers of the first Montenegro Pride March, scheduled to take place in June, to cancel the event due to the insufficient guarantee of effective police protection.

#### 50. NEPAL

The Day was marked this year again in Nepal with a large series of events including a seminar with the Nepal Medical Council, fashion shows, radio and TV talk shows and much more. The Nepali government has been urged to make Nepal the first Asian country to give the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia official recognition.

#### 51. THE NETHERLANDS

Reiterating last year's initiative, the Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science handed out its annual **"Award for Homo-Emancipation"**, which celebrates individual contributions to the fight against homophobia and transphobia. At the initiative of Dutch gay Christian groups, Dutch churches marked the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia by signing a statement condemning violence against homosexuals. The Churches denounced the often negative influence that some religious movements have in the South and the East over social attitudes against homosexuals and trans people

#### 52. NEW ZEALAND

Otago University students celebrated what seems to be the first IDAHO event in the country: a "Diversity

Week," that included film screenings, dance courses, a queer poetry workshop, panel discussions, an "Arts Day" and several other political and social events.

#### 53. NICARAGUA

LGBT rights organizations and the Special Attorney for Sexual Diversity in Nicaragua united to conduct a series of activities as part of the **"Cures that Kill"** campaign, which included various media events and a march across Managua to submit a national petition for full rights for LGBT people to government authorities.

#### 54. PANAMA

On May 17, activists took to the streets of Panama to hand out leaflets and pamphlets. The action was part of a long term anti-homophobia campaign titled "I have a gay friend", which collects and disseminates testimonies from gay-friendly people with the objective of fighting stigma and discrimination.

#### 55. PARAGUAY

In Paraguay, May 17 coincided with the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the country's independence. About 100 activists seized the opportunity to join in the celebrations by staging a Kiss-in in front of the parliament, in a reminder that one of the founding principle of the country's independence, Equality, was still not a reality for LGBT people.

During the IDAHO week, organizations hosted a national dialogue on 'reparative' therapy practices in the country, set within the **"Cures that Kill"** campaign. On this occasion, the Paraguayan Society of Psychiatry issued a strong statement of support. The media also expressed strong interest, with radio spots produced and transmitted by the most important radio stations in Asunción during IDAHO week.



## 56. PERU



Traditionally, celebrations against homophobia and transphobia in Peru range from May 17 to May 30, the National Day against Violence and Hate Crimes against Lesbians, Trans, Gays and Bisexual People.

This year, events were particularly marked by the **"Cures that Kill"** campaign, as dogmatic religious beliefs still hold a strong influence in Peruvian society. Events included a national scientific seminar on sexual orientation and mental health, at which all mental health practitioners' associations reaffirmed the irrelevance of "reparative" approaches, in tune with similar declarations from various attending foreign ambassadors and the representative of the EU Delegation. During the event, a group of foreign diplomats read a joint statement against homophobia. The campaign appeal was endorsed in Peru by the Mayor of Lima, who pledged to promote a local anti-discrimination ordinance. Peruvian President, Ollanta Humala, also issued a statement condemning homophobia in Peru.

The **"Cures that Kill"** campaign theme also was the focus of the 3rd Cycle of Conferences on Gender and Masculinities, which brought together activists and academics to debate issues related to homophobia and the role of masculinity and heteronormativity. In Lima, organizations screened a series of films related to the issue, including the award-winning *Prayers for Bobby*. Other events in the capital included a public **"Holding Hands against Homophobia"** ceremony, an awards ceremony for a national photo contest against homophobia, and a vigil held by gay and lesbian Christian groups.

Smaller cities in the country, like Arequipa, Lambayeque or Iquitos also joined in celebrations, confirming the specific relevance of the Day in contexts where LGBT communities are very isolated.



## 57. PHILIPPINES

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender activists marched to the House of Representatives on the eve of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia dressed in colorful rainbow costumes and holding picket signs, seeking the passage of

a long-delayed measure protecting human rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity. A bill **"Defining Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Providing Penalties Therefore"** which has been blocked in the Parliament for the past ten years.

Gay rights activists also supported another bill aiming to declare May 17 the "National Day against Homophobia and Transphobia" or NADAHO. The bill encourages government and private institutions to develop simple observances promoting the defense of LGBT rights.

In addition, Christian groups supportive of LGBT rights held a public celebration under the theme **"Stand against Homophobia. Unite for Equality."**

## 58. POLAND

Activists from Poland joined in the International Rainbow Flashmob event (see international events) and released rainbow-colored balloons in Warsaw's city center on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

## 59. PORTUGAL

In Portugal's third largest city Coimbra, a large Platform of organizations working in the field of LGBT rights, youth, anti-racism, and students' rights, organized the city's second Pride March. The coalition underlined that marching on May 17 constituted in itself a strong statement about the situation faced by LGBT people in the city. The organizers also unfolded a political and cultural program around the Day, with a series of thematic debates, a film festival and parties, and edited a political manifesto that drew large support from several public figures, including politicians.



## 60. ROMANIA

Activists joined in the **Walk with Pride** project, and the photographs were displayed at a public event in Bucharest celebrated with live DJ music and speeches from the LGBT community members.

## 61. RUSSIA

The Russian Rainbow Flashmob initiative (see international section) lead to initiatives in some 30 locations around the country, through formal and informal events. In St Petersburg, some 150 people united for a colorful balloon launch.

Slogans for the events included: **“Different people – same values,” “Born to be ourselves,” “Parental love does not depend on the orientation of their children,” and “Homosexuality is not a disease,”**

In Moscow in what was mocked as “impeccable timing,” city authorities chose the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia to announce yet another banning of the Moscow Pride March, which was scheduled for the following week and was once again disrupted brutally by police forces, leading to the arrest of the organisers.

## 62. SERBIA

Event organizers in Belgrade worked with the city council for the first institutionally-sponsored commemoration of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. After a successful first Belgrade Pride last year and following government interest in this matter, IDAHO was marked with the three-day-long **“Loud & Queer”** arts festival, featuring national and guest artists and including drama shows, concerts, photography exhibitions, film screenings and several panels discussing how artists can engage to address and overcome problems faced by the LGBT community in Serbian society.

The Day also provided the moment for the presentation of the 2010 report on LGBT rights in Serbia. Government officials, the Mayor of Belgrade and a representative from the EU Delegation spoke at the presentation, signaling once again the intentions of the Serbian authorities to counterbalance the homophobic image it acquired through its management of past LGBT events, such as Belgrade Pride.

© Kowu Sadjkor + Millo Perisic



## 63. SLOVAKIA

LGBT activists invited community members and supporters to participate in a giant rainbow flag collage initiative by either sending photos of themselves in a rainbow-colored T-shirt or coming in person to be photographed at a community event staged in a Bratislava park on the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.



## 64. SLOVENIA

In Ljubljana activists and artists marked the day with a “wedding fair”, at which activists staged symbolic same-sex weddings, which were also intended to challenge traditional visions of male and female roles in straight marriages.

## 65. SPAIN

Numerous events marked the Day around the country: marches for diversity; vigils and church services against hate and violence; sports tournaments; kiss-ins; stunts and flashmob events; storytelling on diversity for children; film festivals; and countless interventions in schools, universities, police stations, hospitals,... to sensitize against persistent forms of homophobia and transphobia in spite of the progressive Spanish legal environment and social climate (a survey released on the Day reveals that more than 80% of Spanish young people approve of same-sex marriage). In some

conservative areas, the Day was marked with manifestations against threats from the right wing party to back track on legal advances such as same-sex marriage, if elected back to power.

May 17 was also marked by the launch of a campaign entitled **“Homophobia**





**Kills.”** The campaign paralleled the 21 years that have passed since the WHO decision that the Day commemorates, with the remembrance of 21 notorious murders of LGBT people around the world.

### 66. SOUTH AFRICA

François Nel, the newly elected South African Mr. Gay World 2011, paid tribute to activists throughout Africa and stood up against “corrective” rapes in South Africa by editing a special IDAHO video and holding a public community event in Pretoria on May 17.

### 67. SRI LANKA

LGBT groups once again commemorated IDAHO this year with a “Raise the Rainbow Flag in Solidarity” campaign, which called on foreign missions, NGOs, grassroots organizations and individuals to raise the rainbow flag on May 17. In addition, the same campaign urged Facebook users to change their profile pictures to a rainbow flag. IDAHO Posters were distributed and exhibited in foreign missions, shops, NGO offices and many other venues in Colombo and Kandy. IDAHO Advertisements were published by newspapers in English, Sinhalese and Tamil languages, reaching out to all Sri Lankan ethnic communities, despite the homophobic refusal by some of the largest national papers. Sri Lankan activists also translated, published

© Equal Ground



and distributed the UN brochure on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in both Tamil and Sinhalese. Other noteworthy IDAHO events included the country's first-ever public panel discussion on religion, homosexuality and homophobia.

### 68. SWITZERLAND

National LGBT organisations teamed to produce a **video against homophobia and transphobia**, which focuses on the connection between all forms of discrimination. The video encouraged all people to join in the fight for respect and diversity.

### 69. TAIWAN

At a press conference on the eve of International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia several civil society groups called for legislative progress and early education on gender equality in Taiwan. The groups presented a status report on Homophobia and Transphobia in Taiwan, that included landmark homo/transphobic events, such as the Taipei District Court's 1986 dismissal of an application to legalize the marriage of a gay couple, or the recent opposition to a Ministry of Education plan to include gender equality in its curriculum for elementary and junior high school students.



©CNA

### 70. TAJIKISTAN

Tajik activists organized the **"Equal rights and equal opportunities"** festival, which was attended by representatives of various governmental institutions, international organizations and NGOs. The festival included arts performances, lectures on resending stigma and discriminations and a fashion show. A “Tolerance march” was also on the program, with activists dressed in rainbow colors handing out campaign messages to the public. A series of trainings for journalists resulted in a range of supportive articles in major newspapers, the best of which was awarded a prize from the LGBT organizations, thereby inaugurating what should become an annual highlight in Tajik IDAHO celebrations.

### 71. THAILAND

(See Burma/Thailand chapter)

### 72. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

In Trinidad and Tobago the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was celebrated for the first time. Activists held a series of consultations with various ministries to discuss ways to improve the lives of LGBT people in their community. In a key stepping stone for future advocacy in a country where same-sex relationships are illegal, the Coalition managed to meet with Ministries for Labour, Justice, Science, Energy, Planning, Finance, People and Social Development, Trade, Legal Affairs, Public Administration, National Security and Tourism, as well as with the Attorney General.

### 73. TURKEY

For the 6th year, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia in Turkey was marked by an International Meeting against Homophobia, which gathered activists from **Bosnia Herzegovina, Lebanon, Serbia, Croatia, Palestine, Israel, Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia, Greece, Montenegro, Egypt** and **Iran** (and with participation from **Sweden**).

The International Meeting concluded with a Pride March across the Capital Ankara, where supporters rallied to ask for the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity to be enshrined in the country's constitution.

The march provided Iranian LGBT refugees in Turkey with the space to conduct their first-ever public demonstration.

LGBT organisations and campus groups from Diyarbakir, Kayseri, Adana, Eskişehir, Izmir and Istanbul also joined the march



### 74. UGANDA

With a sense of temporary relief created by the shelving of the infamous Ugandan 'Kill the Gays' bill, human rights groups hosted a training seminar for human rights defenders from throughout Uganda. The training, focusing specifically on Transphobia, aimed at helping participants understand their role as part of a global network of human rights defenders and to develop advocacy strategies at local level. The training session ended with a candlelight vigil in honor of LGBTI human rights defenders around the world, with a special dedication to Ugandan LGBT activist David Kato who was brutally murdered in Kampala only a few months ago.

### 75. UKRAINE

Odessa's LGBT community joined in the international Rainbow Flashmob event (see international initiatives) as members united on the banks of river Dnieper to release score of balloons to which they had attached notes with their wishes and thoughts.

### 76. UNITED KINGDOM

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia was celebrated with more events than ever before in the United Kingdom, including in areas of the country that had never marked IDAHO before, confirming the interest of the Day for local groups. Typically the celebrations involved the raising of the rainbow flag (specifically in the North West), declarations by local authorities, performances, exhibitions, seminars at universities, and creative campaigning initiatives such as making as much noise as possible against homophobia and transphobia.

In London the IDAHO agenda was dominated by events highlighting issues concerning homophobia and religion, but LGBT organisations also focused heavily on the problem of school bullying.

Across the country, police authorities raised the rainbow flag to signal their vigilance against homophobia, while the Trade Union Congress published new guidelines on **"LGBT Equality at Work."**

The UK government also participated with videos of support from the Equalities Minister and the Foreign Office Minister. British embassies also provided support to actions around the world by local LGBT groups.



## 77. URUGUAY

In Montevideo, a roundtable was organized by LGBT organisations and UN agencies on the theme **“Social Inclusion, Human Rights and the Fight against Homophobia”** to draw attention to the persistent homophobia in the country in spite of legal advances, and advocated for educational programs and teacher trainings.

Members of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence held an evening vigil in front of the Parliament to remind of the specific stigma and discrimination faced by HIV+ people.

## 78. USA

A number of events were held throughout the United States to mark the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia. Notably, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued **a powerful statement of support** for the day on behalf of the Obama Administration and called on all nations to decriminalize homosexuality.

Several US embassies around the world also organized meetings, discussions and public events with local community members where ambassadors underlined the United States’ commitment to equality for members of the LGBT community.

Meanwhile in Washington, USAID hosted a panel discussion on “Health and Human Rights for Men who have Sex with Men in Africa and the Caribbean”, while the World Bank hosted a discussion on the impact of homophobia in developing countries, discussing specifically the relevance of economical sanctions against homophobic countries

In Chicago, activists organized the city’s fifth annual observation of the Day, supported by the recent decision by the city’s Commission on Human Relations’ Advisory Council on LGBT Issues to give the Day official recognition.

IDAHO celebrations in the USA traditionally focus on international issues, but domestic concerns over homophobia and transphobia are being increasingly discussed, with events in Minnesota, Texas, New York,

California, Washington and, as could be expected, Idaho. The Day also stirred increased interest and spurred declarations and calls to action from major national organisations, networks, and online anti-homophobia campaigns.

## 79. VENEZUELA

Celebrating the International Day against Homophobia, Lesbophobia and Transphobia, a group of organisations for LGBTI rights in Venezuela held a series of activities and advocacy actions throughout the country around May 17.

A highlight of the event was a discussion within the National Parliament on strategies to promote the rights of LGBT people, with a special emphasis on the implementation of the police forces’ policies.

The City Councils of Caracas and El Hatillo both declared May 17 as an official municipal day against homophobia and transphobia.

## 80. VIETNAM

In Hanoi, researchers marked the Day by hosting a forum on homophobia and its effects on the Vietnamese society at large, and releasing a joint report on violence and discrimination.

According to the report, entitled “How Stigma and Discrimination Drive HIV: A Review of the Regional and Global Evidence,” discrimination against men who have sex with men (MSM) is still prevalent among medical workers, hindering prevention and treatment strategies. The forum issued recommendations to Vietnamese leaders to develop and implement comprehensive communications programs that target police, education practitioners and the families of homosexuals, to help them better understand the consequences of violence and discrimination. They also called for the creation of psychological, health, employment, education and legal counseling services for MSM.

*US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton with Cameroonian Activists Alice Nkom*



© CLF

## 81. ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwean activists commemorated the Day by releasing an official statement regarding the treatment of LGBTI people throughout the country. The group specifically highlighted the institutionalization of homophobia and transphobia and called upon authorities to protect individuals who are being targeted because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression, rather than contributing to their harassment.

### OTHER COUNTRIES :

With 76 countries still criminalizing same-sex relationships and due to ferocious homophobia and transphobia in many more, many organisations were unable to carry out public action. They nevertheless seized the opportunity that the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia provides in order to claim their rights. Organisations sent editorials to newspapers, wrote to decision makers, engaged with the medical profession, created Facebook community events while being careful to avoid traceability of individual people.

We received information about such initiatives from activists from

We received information about such initiatives from activists from **Nigeria, Jamaica, Egypt, Sudan, Mauritania, Palestine, Bosnia Herzegovina, Belize, Ivory Cost** and **Algeria**.

*Note : Norway, May 17 coincides with the National Celebrations, which understandingly limits Norwegian LGBT organisations' capacity to celebrate IDAHO. The national LGBT organization nevertheless acknowledged the global importance of the event and sent a message of solidarity to the hundreds of groups worldwide who are engaging in action.*



© WWP

Brazil



© WWP

Serbia



Mexico



### 3. Looking ahead

With **organisations in over 80 countries** engaging in public action for the Day, and activists **from a dozen more countries** participating either only online or as Diaspora groups, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is reaching the 100 mark.

There are certainly reasons to celebrate the successes and impacts of the global LGBT movement. From recent Marriage rights in New York to the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, the world is moving slowly towards acceptance of diversity. Yet, and the map on the IDAHO Committee's website shows it clearly, **distribution of progress is still very uneven**. In Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia LGBT groups and progressive Human Rights allies still struggle to find the political and social spaces to even start a public debate on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Yet, civil society groups are sprouting everywhere, with a rightful ambition to participate in the massive changes that the world is facing in the near future.

Since the last IDAHO, we were lucky enough to be able to meet face to face with dozens of activists from Eastern Africa, South and South East Asia, the Balkans, Latin America and the USA. The discussions clearly confirmed the appetite of activists to better harness the potential that the Day brings to engage in advocacy and campaigning.

In Latin America and Asia, strategic discussions around the Day have provided valuable insights, which have been edited in **two reports** allowing for wide dissemination within the regions, and beyond.

From these discussions and from the growing corpus of **international and regional events** that are being organised around the Day, it clearly appears that one of the IDAHO's most strategic advantages lies in the opportunity it provides for common action and joint campaigning. One of the most compelling example comes to us from Latin American, where organisations jointly developed the **'Cures That Kill'** campaign, uniting dozens of groups across 12 countries.

The Arcus Foundation and HIVOS have both provided invaluable support without which the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia would not have neither the impact nor the visibility it now enjoys, reaching out to an estimated **200 million people**.

We hope their engagement with the Day will continue, and that more allies and supporters will come in to help us meet the exciting challenges that a global campaigning movement holds.







INTERNATIONAL DAY  
AGAINST  
HOMOPHOBIA  
AND TRANSPHOBIA  
**IDAHO**

**IDAHO COMMITTEE**  
[contact@idahomophobia.org](mailto:contact@idahomophobia.org)  
[www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org)

