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**Statement submitted by Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie Van Homoseksualiteit – COC Nederland, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, Swedish Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights – RFSL, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution [1996/31](#).

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, States, civil society and other stakeholders such as businesses need to work together to ensure that no one is left behind. This is reflected in the 2019 High Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council theme “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”. Structural barriers exist for people to have equal access to education, employment and justice, including based on their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics. While those who face such barriers and exclusion are often those affected most by climate change and its impacts as well as a range of other human rights violations such as violence and discrimination, these barriers also keep them from meaningfully contributing to peaceful societies and sustainable development. In addition to exclusion, those defending the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people may face reprisals and attacks for their work.

To ensure inclusiveness and equality in education, economic growth, climate change, justice and all other aspects of life and society, the diversity of people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people should be celebrated and their contribution to just, safe and equal societies and lives should be recognized and supported. To ensure inclusiveness and equality, we need to remove barriers by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices as is outlined in Goal 10 and empower those who now face discrimination, recognize and urgently address how these discriminatory laws lead to violence, stigma, and the social and economic exclusion of LGBTI people and many others.

In order to realize full compliance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the empowerment of all people and ensure inclusiveness and equality, the barriers faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people must be urgently addressed. The international human rights and sustainable development frameworks agree that the violence, discrimination, stigma, and the social and economic exclusion of LGBTI people must stop. The challenge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must take into account the marginalization process in which LGBTI people become vulnerable because of the discrimination they face in almost all development areas. A better world for everybody is possible if we take into account human diversity.

Therefore, we call on all governments here at the 2019 High Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council to commit to ending all violence and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.

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