

CSO Pre-Conference Statement.

The civil society organizations participating in the Pre-Conference of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), gathered on 16 December at the Mexican Embassy in Berlin, consider that we are facing a global social, political, cultural and economic context with great challenges.

The global geopolitical situation shows a significant advancement of fundamentalisms and extremist populism, which weakens and puts at risk democracies, multilateralism and, consequently, the protection of human rights, especially those of people who have been discriminated because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual characteristics.

In recent years we have seen governments of several countries, including members of this Coalition, openly express positions against the rights of LGBTI people and threats to the institutions that protect them in their own countries and in the regional and international arena.

It is also with concern that we see how conservative and fundamentalist forces have formed alliances between governments, corporations and international organizations to create an anti-rights force, investing large sums of resources to fund their activities in different regions of the world. Putting at risk not only the achievements made, but also the dignity and lives of LGBTI people.

In this regard, we consider it important to strengthen the commitment and actions of ERC member states with the following initiatives:

- Promote the broadened of Ambassadors or senior civil servants for LGBTI rights in each of the member states.
- Include in their voluntary reports to the High Level Political Forum a section on the situation of LGBTI people in their country.
- Make recommendations for the protection of LGBTI rights to governments in their Universal Periodic Reviews.
- Increase funding for the development of LGBTI rights projects and to secure and sustain the complex ERC mechanism in the long term as a counterweight to anti-rights developments.
- We request that all ERC donor governments dedicate at least .3% of their annual development aid or foreign assistance budgets to support LGBTI freedoms and development priorities globally.
- Commit to considering the LGBTI population in each country's national statistics.
- Promote local initiatives to strengthen the rights of LGBTI communities in the respective member states.

We also consider it necessary to define the strategy to increase the participation of government and OSC members.

The voice and protection of LGBTI rights needs to be increased and broadened in all multilateral spaces in which we participate, and ERC member governments need to commit to leading by example in the initiatives they develop in each of their countries, as well as in intergovernmental actions and negotiations.

Berlin, 16 December 2024