Press Release: Trans Advocacy Week 2019



26 July 2019, Geneva

The third Trans Advocacy Week (TAW) at the United Nations in Geneva, a collective initiative co-organised by the Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN), GATE, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA World), the Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights (RFSL), and Transgender Europe (TGEU), has come to an end.

The UN Trans Advocacy Week was created in 2017 to support trans and gender-diverse activists' engagement with international human rights mechanisms, and to increase leadership, visibility, and meaningful participation in decision-making processes at the UN. This year we had an additional goal: to support the renewal of the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), which was adopted on Friday 12 July by the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva by a vote of 27 in favor, with 12 voting against, and 7 abstentions.

> "The independent expert is crucial for the ones who are invisible and cannot raise awareness of the different kinds of discrimination and violence that trans and gender-diverse people live across the globe," said Carter Honorée, TGEU TvT Regional Coordinator for Africa. "The mandate reaffirms our presence in spaces where our voices are not heard."

In an unprecedented effort, 16 defenders from 15 countries participated over the three weeks of the 41st Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva from 24 June to 12 July – a historic landmark in trans and gender-diverse participation at UN level advocacy.

During the three weeks, two oral statements were delivered at the Plenary: the first reacting to the report presented by the Special Rapporteur on Health (watch video) and the second responding to the report presented by the IE on SOGI (watch video). A third statement on climate change and women's rights was also submitted. TAW participants attended meetings with the OHCHR, UNAIDS, special procedures, and country missions, and were actively involved in advocating for the renewal of the SOGI mandate.

One of the highlights of TAW 2019 was the side event focused on gender identity issues in the context of the SOGI Mandate, which was co-sponsored by Argentina and the United Kingdom. You can view the full video on GATE's Facebook Page.

Over the past three years, Trans Advocacy Week has radically changed the landscape of trans and gender-

diverse activism at the UN, contributing to introduce key issues affecting our communities worldwide, such as pathologisation, poverty, social exclusion, legal gender recognition, violence, among others, while also articulating within wider human rights movements.

Trans Advocacy Week organisers and participants appreciate the continuous support of donors and allies whose commitment make this project possible, and our contribution bigger every year.

Read about Trans Advocacy Week in previous years: 2018 and 2017.