



**Statement of the Sexual Rights Initiative, the Center for Reproductive Rights, Abosex
and ILGA**

Geneva, March 9, 2018

Good afternoon Madam Chair and members of the Committee.

Andrea Parra speaking on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative, the Center for Reproductive Rights and AboSex.

We would like to congratulate the Committee on approving a General Comment on Equality and Non-Discrimination as enshrined in article 5 of the CRPD.

We would like to highlight the importance of recognizing the impact of intersectional discrimination and the violation of sexual and reproductive rights of people with disabilities, in particular of women and girls, as a direct violation of the State's obligations under art. 5 of the Convention, such as in the case of forced sterilization and forced abortion, and the denial of accessible health care services. For that, we commend the Committee on its work in issuing this General Comment.

Additionally, we strongly encourage the Committee to recognize and address the way in which persistent violations of the CRPD continue to occur on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. In several countries, so called "conversion therapies" applied to persons identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual, constitute a form of forced psychiatry that violates the rights of person to whom a disability is imputed on the sole basis of their sexual orientation. Members have also documented cases in which forced psychiatric interventions, pathologization and institutionalizations are used as a way to punish a person because of their sexual orientation.

In the case of transgender persons, forced psychiatry and pathologization by psychiatric professionals is used prior to allowing a person to receive health care services related to their transition. Harmful gender stereotypes are imposed through forced and coerced psychiatric interventions, preventing trans persons from accessing essential gender affirming services. This practice constitutes a clear violation of the mandates of the

CRPD and this Committee has the unique opportunity to intervene in favor of groups that face structural exclusion in their society.

In the case of intersex persons, mutilation of the body as a “normalization” practice, as well as forced psychiatry and pathologization, also constitute a clear violation of the CRPD that affects children and infants in particular.

Today, all other treaty monitoring bodies, the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly have made explicit reference to the need to fully guarantee the rights of LGBTI persons, and the CRPD Committee should be no exception. The Yogyakarta Principles plus 10, issued recently, contain an important update on how these existing human rights standards are to be implemented. We stress the need for making visible the lives and rights of LGBTI people with disabilities around the globe. It would be a grave oversight to continue to perpetuate this invisibility yet in 2018.

We urge the Committee to encourage the participation of groups of persons with disabilities who identify as LGBTI so they can participate in this space and share with the Committee the experiences and particular forms of discrimination they face. In addition, we urge the Committee to continue advancing gender parity in its composition as per the UN System-wide Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The submitting organizations offer their resources to continue to support the important work of the Committee.

Thank you.

