

Dear Friends,

Rosanna Flamer-Caldera
Co-Secretary General – ILGA

Editor

The 23rd ILGA World Conference, which many of you attended, was an enormous success. For the first time in a long, long while, we saw a keen interest in the post of male Co-Secretary General with 3 very strong and credible candidates vying for the position. I must congratulate the new Co-Secretary General Philip Braun for his success in getting elected. I would also like to congratulate Krister and David for their tenacity in contesting the elections and showing us that there are many fine ILGA members in our midst who have the organisation's best interest at heart. I hope they both work hard for ILGA in the future. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome new members to the ILGA Executive Board. Again, for the first time, we see a large transgender presence on the board. Philipp Braun, Joey Matala, Rachel Wallbanks, Juliet Victor Mukasa, Dorothy Aken'ova and Rebecca Cross whose loss we deeply mourn, joined the Board in Geneva. On behalf of the Board I would also like to thank the outgoing Board Members: Kursad Karamanoglu, Carlos Perera, Trinity Ordon, Uma Kali Shakti and the outgoing women's Secretariate, CLIC Philippines (represented by Anna Leah Sarabia) for their support and hard work in the previous years. I wish them every success for their future endeavours.

I am extremely happy and delighted that there is another strong organisation at the helm of the Women's Secretariat for the next two years with RFSL Sweden elected to this position. I am positive that with their assistance and dedication, the Women's Program will be enhanced and much can be achieved in the years to come.

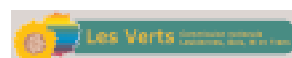
The 23rd World Conference last March in Geneva also saw a record number of amendments to the Constitution and Standing Orders of ILGA. Several suggestions for amendments were put to the floor, importantly among them, the need for a Transgender Secretariat. We are happy to welcome Belissa Andia Perez and Instituto Runa de Desarrollo Y Estudios Sobre Genero as the interim Transgender Secretariat of ILGA. Amidst the flurry of workshops, plenaries and merry making, the participants found time to demonstrate enmasse, in front of the Russian Mission in solidarity for Moscow Pride. A petition signed by many ILGA members and allies was handed over to the Nigerian Mission as well, in protest over the Bill being debated at the Nigerian Parliament which if passed, would have an extremely dangerous and adverse effect for the many LGBT's in that country. Another development from the Conference was the formation of the "Initiative for the Advocacy of Gender, Sexuality and Human Rights in Muslim communities" which had its first gathering – post conference- in June in Cape Town, South Africa. In addition, a LGBT Youth initiative also took root at the conference and presented a resolution to

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ILGA also wishes to thank Swiss International Airlines for their sponsorship of our 23rd World Conference.



Founded in 1978, ILGA is a worldwide network of national and local groups dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) people everywhere. It is to this day the only international non-profit community-based federation focused on presenting discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation as a global issue. The ILGA Executive Board is elected by ILGA members at regional or world conferences. The list of current Board members can be found on www.ilga.org in the section "about ilga".

The International Lesbian and Gay Association is supported by



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the floor for consideration at the next world conference. We congratulate all the initiatives that sprang forth from the Conference and encourage the participants and initiators to keep up the good work!

In speaking of the World Conference we cannot forget the enormous undertaking of the Geneva based crew of Yves de Matteis and his band of volunteers. They not only worked twice as hard as usual but made many sacrifices to make sure the Conference was a success! ILGA thanks you all for doing such a superlative job – we appreciate and applaud you for your efforts! Our support staff at the Brussels office deserves recognition and thanks for their hard work and dedication in getting the job done as well. In spite of the mountain of ‘everyday’ work they had, the World Conference kept them on their toes and running! It has not been easy but they have persevered and done wonderfully well. Thank you Stephen and Patricia and thank you too Andrew, Roberto, Ines and Ryan and all the volunteers for doing a great job.

In the past several years, the topic that has been in the forefront of ILGA’s campaign has been the ongoing saga of accreditation at the UN’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). I was privileged to have been present in New York during the meeting of the NGO committee during their accreditation process, thanks to the generous support of the Open Society Institute. Here I must congratulate Yvan La Pointe (ILGA board member and director of Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Qu_bec) for performing incredibly well under pressure from the Committee. Repeatedly grilled regarding his organisation’s application, Yvan held his composure and answered each and every question admirably. In spite of this and the many answers this committee received from all of the LGBT organisations applying for accreditation, ECOSOC’s NGO Committee once again managed to show their angst and succumbed to the pressure placed on them by some homophobic countries to disallow the organisations’ accreditation. Our thanks once again to the German and Canadian Mission who assisted us while we were in New York and continue to support us throughout this ordeal.

As we move toward a new era of solidarity and diversity at ILGA, I am reminded that none of what we do in the struggle for our rights are possible without the wholehearted support of our members and our funders. I must take this opportunity to thank all of those who have assisted us financially and in many other ways. Our main

sponsors NOVIB and HIVOS have been with us for several years and their unwavering support is extremely appreciated. I must thank both the Swedish and German Governments for continuing to sponsor our projects, notably our presence at the UNCHR (in the past) and the newly formed UN Human Rights Committee. Last but not least, I thank IBM for their support as well.

More importantly, the participation and commitment from our brothers and sisters worldwide enables us to have the kind of presence we enjoy today in most parts of the world. ILGA is all of us and all of us are ILGA. We are one big family. We cannot go on this journey alone. We need voices, plenty of voices to be heard above the cacophony of negative and homophobic tirades. The bigger we get, the louder our voices become. I urge each and every one of you, to lend your voice to the fulfillment of our inherent rights throughout the world. Each victory must be glorified. Each defeat, a reason to work harder. In the end it will be perseverance, solidarity and hard work that will prevail. That and many voices that echo the same sentiment over and over again – “Lesbian, Gay and Transgender Rights ARE Human Rights”.

Enjoy this edition of Campaigning! We welcome your contributions and urge you all to become part of the ILGA family. Remember, your membership contribution goes a long way to support ILGA with the work we do. This is a gentle reminder to everyone who has not renewed their subscription to do so now. ILGA needs you! Together we can make a difference.



Thank you for all the warmth and my wonderful gift of the flag which you all signed in Geneva. This kind of flow of love has truly healing powers. One message in particular pleased me most: One of you wrote (and I am holding the name back not to embarrass the person): "When I met you Toni told me that you are the soul of ILGA...I saw that's really true..". What a compliment, thank you and lots of love to you all."

Kursad Kahramanoglu
Secretary General (1999-2006)