



INTERNATIONAL DAY
AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA
AND TRANSPHOBIA
IDAHO

THE INTERNATIONAL
DAY AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA
AND **TRANSPHOBIA**
"IDAHO" - MAY 17TH

ANNUAL REPORT **2012**

Editorial

With mobilization stretching across more than 100 countries on all continents, **the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia once again confirmed that it is a unique entry point, across many different contexts, for action!**

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is not a one-size-fits-all campaign. It merely creates a space in which sexual and gender diversity can be celebrated in any form.

Again this year, civil society organizations, local and national authorities, corporations, regional and international institutions, and schools, among others, across the globe have raised alerts on the many human right abuses which people face because of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity or expression.

In most countries in **Latin America, North America, Europe and Oceania**, the Day has become an annual landmark for action. In **Asia**, the Day is also celebrated in a majority of countries. This year, the Day set the stage for **Burma's** first ever LGBT events.

In **Africa, the Caribbean and the Middle-East**, where criminal laws against same-sex relationships are particularly harsh, the Day provided a unique opportunity for action in many countries, including in the most unlikely places such as **Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria and Botswana**.

The Day again also provided the opportunity to mobilize **top political institutions** against homophobia and transphobia, such as the **European Union, OECD, WHO and other United Nation** agencies and offices. **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon** spoke out on May 17, inviting world leaders to “tackle violence against LGBT people, decriminalize consensual same-sex relationships, ban discrimination and educate the public”.

This year, **social networks** were also particularly active in IDAHO celebrations, with outreach totaling several million people. With media coverage on the rise, the total outreach was certainly above last year's 200 million people!

Often too little visible in the mass of events held, the mobilization of the **Transgender community**, which suffers a particularly high degree of discrimination, stigmatization and violence, deserves a special mention.

A special mention also goes to an international IDAHO initiative aiming at “**Fighting homophobia and transphobia in and through education**”, with organizations in more than **30 countries** taking actions which ranged from national conferences to teachers and students taking the ‘**IDAHO lesson against bullying**’, sponsored by **UNESCO**. UNESCO also launched an innovative international resource pack on this issue during an international IDAHO conference in Paris.

All in all, it was once again an exciting IDAHO, filled with moments of pride and joy, but also with moments of anger and sadness as peaceful demonstrations were attacked or events were cancelled after threats from extremist groups. Let these challenges be a reminder of the long journey that still lies ahead.

This report offers a glimpse into how the Day was celebrated around the world. It aims to be a tribute to all those who fight on the ground and an inspiration for even more actions to be developed next year.

Warm wishes,
The IDAHO Committee team

1. Context : the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA ("IDAHO") WAS LAUNCHED IN 2004 BY AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF ACTIVISTS.

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia ("IDAHO") was launched in 2004 by an international group of activists.

The date of May 17 was chosen to commemorate the World Health Organization's decision in 1990 to remove homosexuality from the list of mental disorders.

The sheer diversity of social, religious, cultural and political contexts in which the rights to express gender freedom and to engage in same-sex relationships need to be addressed makes it impossible for the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia to take one specific form or agenda. This is why "IDAHO" is not one centralized campaign, but an opportunity for everyone to fight for sexual diversity and gender freedom according to the context in which they work. It is a moment, a space that everyone, both within and beyond the LGBTI movement, can take advantage of to take action.

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is now celebrated in more than 100 countries across the world in the most varied ways and expressions. LGBTI organisations, governments, cities, human rights organizations and others have engaged in activities around May 17 in all world regions, from Australia to Iran, and from Cameroon to Albania.

It creates an opportunity for all to:

- ▲ **Draw media attention** to the issue of homophobia and transphobia ;
- ▲ **Organize events** which mobilize public opinion ;
- ▲ **Demand attention** from policymakers and engage in lobbying activities ;
- ▲ **Network with like-minded organizations** and develop new partnerships at home or beyond ; and
- ▲ **Mobilize existing** constituencies and address new audiences.

2. Context : the IDAHO Committee

THE IDAHO COMMITTEE WAS SET UP BY THE FOUNDERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA.

Its objective is to make the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia a global awareness and mobilization moment that represents a useful opportunity for everyone to take action at all levels.

Its core strategies are to:

- ▲ **Give the initiative** the necessary scope, visibility and recognition that will maximize its potential as a political force at all levels and, particularly:
 - Develop the scope** and the diversity of mobilization on the Day around the world;
 - Develop the visibility** of the Day; and
 - Promote recognition** of the Day by official stakeholders (states, local authorities, Institutions and others)
- ▲ **Support organizations**, especially those working in very difficult contexts, to develop actions around the Day and make best local use of the Day in their lobbying and campaigning strategies.
- ▲ **Develop and facilitate international mobilization initiatives** on specific LGBT issues using the Day as a campaigning focus.

CAMPAIGNS BY THE IDAHO COMMITTEE

2004/2005 : "For the recognition of an International Day Against Homophobia"

2005/2006 : "For the universal decriminalization of homosexuality at the UN"

2006/2007 : "No to Homophobia, Yes to education"

2007/2008 : "No more Lesbophobia"

2008/2009 : "Against Transphobia and for the Respect of Gender Identity"

2009/2011 : "Religions, Homophobia, Transphobia"

2011/2012 : "Fighting Homophobia and Transphobia *in and through* education"

HIGHLIGHTS AND EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES AROUND THE WORLD

It is impossible to give a comprehensive picture of all activities that are organized each year around the Day.

Yet, through intensive networking and international contacts, the IDAHO Committee has collected information on some of these activities, often organized in extremely hostile contexts by activists who had the courage to stand up and speak out and who, whatever their differences in strategies, tactics or political affiliations, share a common ideal of a world free of homophobia and transphobia.

This report aims to highlight the diversity and the creativity of the fight for sexual and gender diversity around the world. It also aims to pay sincere tribute to all activists who work year round, most on a voluntary basis, to build a more open and diverse future.

The following information is just a short excerpt of more comprehensive reports, which include information about the main participating organisations*, as well as photos and videos of local events. These reports can be accessed on our website, www.dayagainsthomophobia.org. Each article in this report also has hyperlinks embedded for easy access to further information.

**Given that hundreds of organisations were involved, it was not possible to cite them all in this report. We therefore made the decision to not specifically name any in these pages, and instead report in more detail on the website.*

1. INTERNATIONAL initiatives

FIGHTING HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA IN AND THROUGH EDUCATION



For this year's IDAHO, a group of organizations from all continents converged with the intention to use the Day as a key moment for action in tackling homophobia and transphobia within educational systems, and to develop the capacity of these systems to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

The IDAHO Committee supported the group by developing resource documents in **English, Spanish** and **French** which are destined to help teachers address the issue of homophobia and transphobia, referencing available pedagogical resources in the respective languages.

These guidelines were intended to inspire teachers and all educational staff, as well as student themselves, to **hold an "IDAHO Lesson" on May 17**, for which **the IDAHO Committee and UNESCO** have developed **specific guidelines and tools for both primary and secondary school levels**.

The organizations which mobilized around this theme also each developed their own set of IDAHO actions, details of which can be found in the following pages. Countries in which organizations participated in activities on this theme are marked with a 

At the international level, UNESCO joined the activities by hosting an international conference on IDAHO at their Paris Headquarters. The conference marked the launch of their publication on **"Education sector responses to homophobic bullying"**, which is a collection of best-practice stories from all over the world.



"CURES THAT KILL"

Last year, organizations from 12 countries in Latin America joined forces in a powerful **campaign to combat the so-called "reparative therapies"**, which are promoted throughout the region by dogmatic religious groups. The campaign was coordinated by the IDAHO Committee and received financial support from Dutch philanthropic organization HIVOS. With ongoing support, actions continued around IDAHO 2012 on this topic in several countries, with a special emphasis on Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru.

Concerts, exhibitions, expert panels, publications of annual reports on human rights abuses, TV and radio programs and ecumenical vigils raised the awareness of the public and policymakers of the damage that these "therapies" cause, both directly (forceful detention in clinics, physical and psychological torture) and indirectly (reinforcement of social homophobia).

Regionally, the **Pan-American Health Organization** issued **a declaration** which underlines that "so-called therapies to change sexual orientation lack any medical ground and are ethically unacceptable". The declaration was promoted among all medical institutions in the region and will constitute the basis for ongoing lobbying and campaigning work on this issue.

UNITED NATIONS



United Nations

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay released a **video statement** ahead of IDAHO to serve as an advocacy tool for activists in their IDAHO activities. In this powerful message, she called on all individuals and states to “reach out, talk, learn and help make our world a safer and better place for everyone... Punish violence and hatred, not love”.

During a May 17 press conference, **UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon** also spoke out to invite world leaders to “tackle violence against LGBT people, decriminalize consensual same-sex relationships, ban discrimination and educate the public”.

As in previous years, **UNAIDS, UNDP, WHO and other UN agencies** made special addresses for IDAHO reminding their constituencies and partners of the importance in their respective fields to fight homophobia and transphobia.

In Asia, UNDP and the Asia Pacific Transgender Network jointly released the guidelines **“Lost in Transition: Transgender People, Rights and HIV Vulnerability in the Asia-Pacific Region”** as part of a collective effort to reduce the extreme vulnerability of transgender people to HIV/AIDS while protecting their rights in the Asia-Pacific Region.



EUROPEAN UNION

For the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia 2012, more than 50 European politicians

and leaders from all EU institutions joined forces in a **video** telling LGBT teenagers in 10 different EU languages that they were working to put an end to homophobia and transphobia. This video message was inspired by the American project “It Gets Better”, which aims to reduce self-harm and suicide attempts among young LGBT people.

OECD



The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s LGBT-staff networks GLOBE and the IDAHO Committee co-organised **an international seminar focusing on the cost of homophobic policies on national economies.**

The seminar specifically focused on the burden of homophobia in developing countries, whose economies are crippled by the weight of policies which fuel the AIDS pandemic, a brain drain and school dropouts, among many other factors. Discussions involved the World Bank and several major research institutions, and opened up research projects to be presented for next year’s International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

As Secretary General Angel Gurría highlighted in his special IDAHO address: *“Homophobia has a cost, a human, social and economic one. This is a considerable burden not only for the people that are victims of discrimination, but for society at large.”*



RAINBOW FLASHMOB

The **international initiative** by which groups of people gather on May 17 to launch balloons in the colors of the rainbow flag, was celebrated for the third time this year. Forty cities, primarily in Russia and Germany, but also in Greece, Ukraine and Finland, saw activities take place.



ILGA

This year, the international LGBTI umbrella organization ILGA again released its **“State-sponsored Homophobia” report** and “Gay and Lesbian Rights” map. The number of countries reported to criminalize same-sex relationships is up from the previous year, and now stands at 78. The report also noted an increase in laws limiting certain rights of sexual and gender minorities, such as the right to assembly and the right to expression.

Simultaneously, the European branch of ILGA released its **Annual Review of the Human Rights Situation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People in Europe 2011**.

The annual review, and the accompanying Rainbow Map give an overall picture of the current state of LGBTI human rights in Europe. It shows that none of the countries in Europe can claim to provide full legal equality for LGBTI people.



Many international organizations marked the Day with special events and messages, including Amnesty International, the Red Cross-Red Crescent Society, Human Rights Watch, and Human Rights First.

Companies and international corporations also showed increasing interest in using the Day as a focal point to mobilize against homophobia and transphobia.

Last but not least, Social networks also heavily mobilized this year, creating outreach to millions of users worldwide.



2. Country reports

ALBANIA



Activists in Albania had to battle heavy rain and dodge explosives hurled at them on their "Ride against Homophobia" along the main boulevard of Tirana. It was followed by a visit to the city of Vlora, where activists held an open forum with students. A photographic exhibition on LGBT Life in Albania was also held. It was the first exhibition to address the gay community as an integral part of Albanian society. Activists marked the Day itself with a landmark "Festival of Diversity" in Tirana. Other events held include presentations on LGBT rights at universities, a series of public awareness-raising activities, and the broadcasting of a 30-second TV spot in support of LGBT rights.



ALGERIA



Tuning into this year's IDAHO focus on education, activists in Algeria developed a series of four comic strips depicting different situations of young LGBTs at school. The situations represented stories that LGBTs could easily recognize. The use of comic strips was designed to make the messages accessible to all people, including children. None of the comic strips featured any dialogue, reflecting how homophobia and transphobia are lived in silence. The comic strips were posted on the streets of Alger.



ARGENTINA



Education was firmly on the agenda throughout Argentina for IDAHO 2012, with a range of events held around the nation targeting bullying in schools. These included the holding of a forum for students, educators and academics and a round-table discussion on bullying in Buenos Aires and in the city of Salta. Activists also sought to challenge perceptions of gender identity and gender roles with a workshop in the province of Santa Fe and a contest entitled "New Masculinities: Men in skirts well placed" in which people were asked to design skirts for men.

ARMENIA



For the first time in Armenia's history, activists held a nationwide LGBT month from April to May, with a range of events that included the 2012 IDAHO celebrations. Among those activities were trainings for local NGO representatives and the media on sexuality, LGBT rights protection and cooperation. Activists also held a conference entitled "LGBT Rights in Armenia: Silenced Reality" which focused on public opinion towards LGBT people and LGBT rights in Armenia. Activists also distributed brochures about homophobia and pens bearing the message "I am not homophobic" in Yerevan. There was also a "Week of Diversity" which featured an exhibition of artworks celebrating diversity.

AUSTRALIA

Strongly engaged in this year's global IDAHO focus on education, Australian organizations released a special IDAHO resource pack for teachers and held various events across Universities and High schools. Rainbow flags were hoisted in cities across Australia in celebration of IDAHO 2012. In Geelong, the flag was raised as a symbol of tolerance and understanding. Councils in Melbourne's west and the Blue Mountains all raised the flag in a show of support for IDAHO. Marriage equality was once again high on the activism agenda, with rallies held in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth. Other events were held throughout the nation and included art exhibitions, university campus activities, LGBT film screenings, a short film competition, a play launch, family



days, barbecues, a cabaret and the nightly display of pink triangle beacons. In addition, Australian Capital Territory politicians announced the creation of a new program to tackle homophobia in the territory's sporting clubs.

AUSTRIA

On May 17, the makers of the Austrian short film "Homophobia" released the film for free on YouTube.

BANGLADESH

A film program aimed at celebrating unity in spirit and diversity in expressions was held to mark IDAHO 2012, followed by a discussion to reflect on the reasons for the stigmatization of the LGBT community and the culture of collective denial. Under the theme "Raise Voice and Keep Commitment" - aimed at raising voices against stigma and discrimination towards LGBT people - activists also launched a poster addressing the section of the penal code which stigmatized LGBT people.

BELARUS



Authorities in the Belarusian capital of Minsk prevented LGBT activists from holding three separate protests to mark IDAHO 2012. However, other IDAHO events did go ahead. Activists organized a series of educational and social events that included a round-table discussion on "LGBT and education - The changing role of education in shaping LGBT-phobia and its transformation into a part of the solution, not part of the problem", a film screening, and a discussion.

BELGIUM



The regional LGBT organization of French-speaking Belgium has since 2009 been leading a national anti-homophobia campaign on IDAHO. This year, 50 000 pin badges and brochures were distributed to all schools and all youth centers, as well as to local councils, cultural centers and medical facilities with support from various ministries and partners. The distribution of material will stretch over the summer during many music festivals. In the Flemish-speaking region, LGBT student groups organized a conference on LGBT rights in Europe.

BELIZE

In Belize, activists launched online actions on Facebook tackling the issue of homophobia. LGBT groups also organised a media conference and reached out to various ministries to promote legislative change.

BOLIVIA



Activists in Bolivia held a series of events to mark IDAHO as a symbolic date for the Bolivian LGBT movement, including a talk about human rights, sexual diversity, homophobia/transphobia and religion, the broadcasting of radio spots about the "Cures that Kill" campaign, street theater in four cities, a symposium entitled "Approaching Sexual Diversity?" in two cities, and a film screening. In the capital, La Paz, activists held a public conference and a candlelight vigil themed "A light for a Municipality: Without Homophobia, Lesbophobia and Transphobia".

BOTSWANA

A group of about 80 activists in Botswana marched through the streets of Gaborone brandishing placards bearing non-discrimination messages. This was followed by a public forum where drama and debate were used to raise awareness about sexual diversity and the effects of homophobia and transphobia. After the forum, activists visited the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs to promote training for staff from the Labour Department on sexual orientation. A solo dance work entitled "Keledi" [Tear], performed by Calvin K Kol-Kes, was also held to ensure that Botswana had the opportunity to communicate without fear of segregation and discrimination.



BRAZIL



In all, 20 of Brazil's 27 states held IDAHO activities in 2012. These activities included marches against homo/transphobia, rallies, seminars, public hearings at local parliaments, film screenings, and advocacy pushing for the enactment of non-discrimination legislation on local and state-level. The most important demonstration took place in the nation's capital, Brasilia, in front of the government's palace and the National Congress. Brazilian activists also joined the international IDAHO education initiative and largely focused on having reinstating the "Schools Without Homophobia" program that was shelved by President Dilma Rousseff last year. Many artists, politicians and institutions showed their support for IDAHO via social networks. Such was the impact that the hash tags stayed among the Brazilian trending topics on Twitter throughout May 17.



BURMA

Activists in Burma celebrated the country's first ever LGBT events during IDAHO 2012, with events held in seven cities nationally, under the watchful eyes of local and international media. More than 400 people - including members of the LGBT community, UN and NGO workers, local activists and the media - attended the main event in Rangoon. During the event, speeches, music and a drama were presented. One of the highlights of the event was "Paying Respect to Seniors", during which a 106-year-old transgender woman spoke.



BURUNDI

With renewed financial support from the IDAHO Committee, mobilization activities in the rural areas of Burundi happened again for IDAHO 2012, bringing together members of sexual minorities and their friends and families over discussions on how to mobilize allies in the fight against homophobia and transphobia. The Day also provided the opportunity for the organization to conduct field research on human rights abuses on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression in rural Burundi.

CAMBODIA

Cambodia's LGBT community again held their annual Pride celebrations to coincide with IDAHO. Under the slogan "different but the same", the celebrations included a week long LGBT film festival, an international arts festival titled 'Proud out Lout', a workshop on family acceptance of LGBT people and coming out as LGBT, training sessions for the media, a candle light vigil for HIV victims, and social programs including pool parties, dance contests, and a most surprising 'Tuk-Tuk' (local three-wheeled scooter) race. Five teams, including one featuring the British Ambassador, braved monsoon rain to race around Phnom Penh's LGBT-friendly spots and complete various challenges - from getting a team photo in an elevator to getting a hair cut !



CAMEROON

On a continent where the mobilization against homophobia and transphobia is particularly difficult, Cameroonian activists boldly developed a large program of action in the city of Yaoundé, including a workshop for LGBT activists, a public conference with thematic forums, and a cultural evening.

CANADA



Canadian activists were once again active throughout the country for IDAHO 2012 with a range of activities staged, from discussions and photographic events to rallies.

The now traditional annual IDAHO campaign in the province of Quebec was themed this year "Sexual Diversity in the Work Place", with organizers reporting numerous events across the province, but also from other parts of Canada.

More IDAHO activities took place in all parts of Canada, from major cities to small communities, where the Day has now become an annual landmark for action.



CHILE

Thousands of people attended the 12th celebration of "Diverse Chile: Cultural Demonstration for Diversity and Against Discrimination" in Santiago. The event coincided with Chile's 2012 Census, the first to gather data on same-sex households, and paid homage to young gay murder victim Daniel Zamudio. The event provided a platform for activists to seek public support on a range of issues, including having transsexuality removed as a pathological disease. Other events included a forum the pathologization of diverse sexualities and video spots by well-known Chilean identities.

CHINA



Various activities were organized around IDAHO in more than 30 cities, including a rainbow ride, public educational activities, a kiss-in, a flash mob, the staging of a street drama, film screenings and discussion, a micro-blog initiative on anti-discrimination, and an online survey.

A special documentary entitled 'Strong' was shot on this year's IDAHO global theme on homophobic bullying in schools.

Many activities received visible media coverage both in English and in Chinese.

An IDAHO regional consultation meeting was held, in which more than 20 organizations from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan shared their experience of local IDAHO activities in the past few years, discussed bullying on campus and various educational activities to promote gender and sexuality diversity, and cooperation on future IDAHO events.



COLOMBIA

Activists from Barranquilla celebrated IDAHO 2012 with the theme "Towards a Barranquilla without Prejudice". On May 17, they staged a mock "vaccination against homophobia" campaign, aimed at raising awareness about respect and the acknowledgement of the rights of LGBT people. A commitment document was signed by government representatives affirming the rights of the city's LGBT people. At the University of Caldas, a panel discussion was held on ending homophobia.

COSTA RICA

Dozens of Costa Rican activists marched in downtown Guadalupe on May 17 to demand an end to homophobia, confronting President Laura Chinchillan, who had declared that human rights were not a priority of her administration. The Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica passed a motion declaring the Legislature to be an "institution that promoted human rights, free from homophobia, transphobia and lesbophobia and all forms of discrimination, marginalization or exclusion on the ground of sexual orientation". Other events held in Costa Rica include a forum on sexual orientation and gender identity, and a fair.

CUBA



Cuba's President's daughter Mariela Castro led once again this year the country's annual IDAHO celebrations, which mark the highlight of the island's LGBT activism. The main IDAHO activities were held in Havana and Cien Fuegos in partnership with the Ministry of higher Education in an attempt to address sexual education and the promotion of sexual health and rights in all of the country's universities. In addition, an extensive program of events was held with participation from storytellers, artists, painters, film and video makers, researchers, musicians and experts in the arts with the aim of promoting LGBTI equality in Cuba.



CYPRUS

Activists in Cyprus organized a series of activities in Lefkosia, Lemessos and Pafos entitled "Voices Against Homophobia 2012". These include an exhibition focusing on homophobia, and public awareness-raising on discrimination and sexual orientation and gender identity. Cyprus is in the "red zone" as the least-friendly country in the European Union in relation to human rights.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Activists organised a public display of a photo exhibition prepared by Polish LGBT organisations, and staged for the 5th consecutive year the 'Run against homophobia' rally, which takes joggers across Prague to raise awareness.

DENMARK



Contributing to the global IDAHO focus on ending homophobic and transphobic violence in schools, Danish Prime Minister and EU Chairwoman, Helle Thorning-Schmidt issued a special statement for IDAHO 2012: "I believe that everyone has a fundamental right to choose how they live and who they love. We have an obligation to promote equality and respect for diversity in all parts of society... I share a responsibility with other leaders to create a world where everyone feels accepted and a part of society regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity."

ECUADOR



Activists in Quito marked IDAHO with a public kissing event in Gabriela Mistral Square, while in Guayaquil activists held a sit-in front of the Guayas Governor's house. The aim was to raise awareness about sexual orientation and gender identity and promote better LGBT legislation and to keep up the fight against so-called reparative "therapies". Activists also hosted an artistic installation focused on sexual diversity and respecting differences. A free concert by young artists was also held. All the activities were situated in the continuity of last year's IDAHO "Cures That Kill" campaign.

FIJI



Activists in Fiji persisted with events despite police cancelling of a permit to march in commemoration of IDAHO. One-hundred and forty people attended a panel discussion on the 2012 IDAHO theme of "Fighting homo/transphobia IN and THROUGH education", which ended with a 90-minute open forum on LGBTIQ rights, religion, culture, education, media, family, respect and love. Activists also launched Digital and Written Stories aimed at sharing life experiences and knowledge among the marginalized women's community.

FINLAND

IDAHO events were organized this year again by activists in the Finnish capital Helsinki. Speeches were held on such topics as the status of LGBT human rights in Europe. Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja affirmed his ministry's support for the LGBT human rights. Activities culminated in a Rainbow flash mob event in downtown Helsinki, where balloons with messages against homo/transphobia were released as part of the international Rainbow Flashmob initiative.



FRANCE



This year again, the IDAHO was a great success in France. Hundreds of events, in more than 40 cities, were organised, including in new places, like Martinique, in the west Indies, where it was the first public LGBT event ever on the streets.

The IDAHO 2012 was marked by the election of the new President, François Hollande. The new Prime Minister, although appointed only on May 16th, issued a [press release for IDAHO](#), confirming his commitment to vote new laws for equal rights for all couples and families.

GEORGIA

Violence marred the first LGBT IDAHO march to be held in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi. Christian activists blocked the march, attacking participants and smashing their placards. About 20 activists had joined the march, waving rainbow flags and carrying placards. Nevertheless, other events took place successfully, like a round-table discussion that included diplomatic representatives, government officials and civil society leaders. There was also a workshop for media on LGBT rights, a photo exhibition, and an event entitled "Georgian Writers Against Homophobia".



GERMANY

Activists in Berlin once again organized their annual Kiss Marathon and fund raising party under the motto "Protect every kiss!". The fundraiser again mobilized broad support within the community, with many popular clubs and parties taking part in the campaign. In addition, activists organized Rainbow Flash Mobs in Mainz, Berlin, Cologne and Hamburg in solidarity with the global initiative.



GREECE



Activists in Greece staged a street action, by which people were asked to walk down a busy Athens street wearing signs with the words that LGBT people are labeled with i.e. "gay", "lesbian", "trans", "bisexual", "queer", "hiv+". The action was intended to raise awareness of the effect of stigma on people.

Activists also joined the global Rainbow Flashmob initiative, and organized several other IDAHO events, including an art installation, a media conference and the distribution of flyers in schools and universities and the production of posters and videos.

GUATEMALA

Activists in the city of Guatemala marked the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia with the country's first "Walk Against Homophobia", which ended up in the city center with a public Kiss-In event.

GUYANA

Activists in Guyana held a march in the capital city Georgetown to raise awareness about their demands for the repeal of British colonial laws against sodomy and cross-dressing, and for equal rights for LGBTs, including the recognition of same-sex unions.

HAITI

Haiti celebrated its first IDAHO in 2012 with a groundbreaking conference in Port-au-Prince that brought together more than 300 people to discuss discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in Haitian society. Also held were LGBT movie screenings, among which was a documentary about Haitian homosexuals, and a party for the LGBT community.



HONG KONG



This year, the 8th International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia Hong Kong rally was themed "What To Fear?!" with aims to eliminate homophobic and transphobic bullying in Hong Kong, and to commemorate victims of bullying in past years. Also, A coalition of activists in Hong Kong held a street forum titled "Who Stole our LGBT Movement?" , to discuss the latest strategies for the LGBT movement in Hong Kong and a review of the collaborations between LGBT organizations and civil society



HUNGARY

Activists organized a workshop in Budapest on transphobia in the LGB community to highlight the lack of attention facing the transgender community. Nine Hungarian LGBT organizations were invited to discuss the issues, with the goal of finding solutions to the challenges of trans acceptance, visibility and integration, and the provision of a safe and welcoming environment for the trans community.

INDIA

Activists in India used IDAHO 2012 as the platform for a massive protest against the suspension of State medical and social support to 10,000 gay men, transgender people and hijras in West Bengal. The action attracted extensive media coverage.



Activists also developed three posters and one booklet highlighting the inner strength and courage exhibited by MSM, hijras and transgenders. The booklet is a photo essay of photographs from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

INDONESIA



"Love is Love" was the theme of this year's IDAHO celebrations in Indonesia, with a series of events running throughout the month of May. One of the target groups for this year's activities were schools, where homophobia and transphobia are rampant. Activities included a series of lectures and panel discussions in a range of schools and universities, a march for diversity in the center of Jakarta, a 'pride bike ride' also in the capital, a drag king and drag queen show, and many events in the media.

IRAN

Human rights activists in Iran marked the Day by symbolically raising a rainbow flag on a hilltop above the capital Tehran and by releasing colored balloons over the city.



IRELAND



Irish organizations mobilized strongly around this year's global focus on education, generating unprecedented cross-party support for LGBT people on the Day, with Irish politicians responsible for the education sector issuing a strong statement of support. Activists also briefed members of the Parliament on the issues faced by LGBT young people and took part in an Anti-Bullying Forum in the Department of Education and Skills. In addition, a landmark publication entitled "Touching the Surface: Trans Voices in Ireland" was launched. And for the fourth successive year, special church services were organized to mark IDAHO.

ISRAEL

A range of events were held throughout Israel to mark IDAHO 2012, as reported by HAVANA, the country's IDAHO coordination. Seminars, award ceremonies, arts festivals, film screenings, outreach actions through public stall, and many more actions marked the Day. In addition, youth groups mobilized online through videos campaigns.



ITALY

Turin's Red Chamber in the City Palace played host to IDAHO 2012 celebrations for the first time before an assembly of politicians, LGBT associations' representatives and citizens, with a focus on education. Also in Turin, about 100 people also gathered in the main square wearing a white T-shirt with the words "Victim of Homophobia/Transphobia". Activists also held a day-long "Ride the Pride" bus trip which visited three cities. And prayer vigils were once again held throughout Italy for victims of homophobia and transphobia around the world.



JAMAICA



More than 80 representatives from government, civil society, the diplomatic corps and various educational institutions joined Jamaican activists for a public forum in Kingston themed "Right The Wrong: Encouraging Respect for Safer Schools and Better Learning Environments." The forum sought to highlight the urgent need to address issue of bullying in schools.

JAPAN



This year, Japan's IDAHO campaign marked 7th year since its first participation in the international campaign in 2006. More than 10 cities including Tokyo, Nagoya and Kobe held different unique projects and events. LGBT people and their supporters in Iwate and Fukushima, prefectures horribly hit by the last year's earthquake and tsunami also joined in the campaign. Events included community gatherings, public lectures of testimonies from LGBT people and special events in schools and universities on how to tackle bullying. Recent research in Japan had shown that 83% of Japanese gay and bisexual male respondents reported that they had experienced bullying in schools.

KENYA

Activists in Kenya instigated public dialogue among Kenyans on the issues of sexual and gender diversity. It was hoped that the conversations would serve to dispel negative myths and beliefs about the LGBT community in Kenya and reinforce LGBT human rights.

LATVIA

A flash mob was held in the capital Riga in which floating flowers of all colors were set adrift on the Daugava River. The gesture represented the importance of the LGBT community in Riga and all over Latvia.



LEBANON

To mark IDAHO 2012, a group of activists and bloggers put up posters around Beirut featuring slogans decrying the censorship they felt that Lebanon imposed on homosexuality, in tandem with a website that allowed people to share their experiences of homophobia. A fundraiser was also held in Beirut which drew from 300-400 participants and which included a photographic exhibition of Lebanese and Arab LGBT people living abroad.



LITHUANIA

Activists in Lithuania celebrated IDAHO 2012 with the week-long "Rainbow Days" festival, which opened with a press conference held in the Parliament. The ambassadors to Lithuania of France, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Spain and the Czech Republic also hosted a joint reception for LGBT-friendly civil society. A seminar about the changing face of LGBT in the Lithuanian media was also held.

LUXEMBOURG



The national organisation of transgender people organized a conference in Luxembourg city on confronting homophobia and transphobia in schools. The city's authorities joined experts and Youth Parliament delegates in discussions which emphasized the urgent need to take sexuality education beyond biological aspects and to include affective and social dimensions of sexualities in order to address sexual and gender diversities.

MACEDONIA

Activists organized events in three cities: Tetovo, Gostivar and Kicevo. Flyers on LGBT rights and homophobia were widely distributed. This was followed by a visit to one university, which hosted the screening of a film about the history of the LGBT movement followed by a discussion about LGBT issues with students from the Faculty of Justice.

MALTA

Activists in Malta held a "Flowers of Friendship" event at the University of Malta in Msida. Carnations were handed out on campus and activists spoke about homophobia, transphobia and work being done to tackle homophobic and transphobic speech and violence in Malta and elsewhere in Europe. A one-hour session of prayer and reflection was also at the University Chapel.



MEXICO



A National Survey on Homophobic Bullying in Mexico was released in the lead-up to this IDAHO 2012. The survey found that two out of every three LGBT people in the country had been victims of homophobic bullying. In Queretaro, activists organized various events and activities, including a march, cultural events, panels at the university, and declarations. In Tijuana, there were lectures and panels, a bi-national caravan, a contest of short films, art exhibitions, artistic events and other entertainment.

MONGOLIA



Activists in Mongolia held an essay competition for youth and university students in commemoration of IDAHO 2012, on the topic "How could young people participate in making the learning environment of the sexual minorities of Mongolia more enabling?" About 50 people gathered for the award ceremony, including representatives of UN agencies and civil society.



MONTENEGRO

In a strong sign of solidarity, Montenegrin activists marked IDAHO 2012 with a protest in front of the Turkish embassy, to denounce the apathy of Turkish authorities in front of the recent wave of murders of Trans women. The Day was also marked with the launch of a national campaign entitled "Live Your Life" aimed at increasing the level of knowledge and awareness about homo/transphobia in Montenegrin society.



MOROCCO

Moroccan activists launched a national campaign to repeal Article 489, which criminalizes same-sex relationships.

NEPAL

Activists held a Miss IDAHO Nepal beauty contest for Nepali third-genders to mark IDAHO 2012. Twenty-five third-genders from across Nepal participated in the event, which was themed "We all are different, we all are equal", and which featured a fashion show, a talent show, performances, and questions and answers based around IDAHO and the event theme.

As May 17 coincided this year with a nation-wide strike, activists creatively made use of the fact that tens of thousands of Nepali stayed home in front of their TV sets, to ensure a massive presence in talk shows and other programs, and have even succeeded in broadcasting a documentary on the lives of Trans people.

NETHERLANDS

Dutch Embassies around the world have been particularly active in supporting IDAHO events, giving thereby a strong concrete expression to the official recognition of the Day by the Dutch Parliament back in 2005.

Dutch authorities, but also LGBT organisations, gave moral and financial support to activities in Albania, Ukraine, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, China, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, to name but a few.

NEW ZEALAND



The focus was on education in New Zealand for IDAHO 2012 with the launch of a nationwide anti-bullying program. Activities included awareness-raising about IDAHO and New Zealand's Pink Shirt Day - an anti-bullying campaign - through social media; the targeting of schools to let them know about IDAHO, educating them about homophobic and transphobic bullying and how schools can create safer spaces; and distributing "It's OK To Be Who You Are" posters to schools throughout the country.

NICARAGUA

Activists in Nicaragua organized an extensive program to commemorate IDAHO 2012, including press conferences; a march against harassment and hate crimes; meetings with officials from the Department of Chinandega and the municipality of Centro La Paz; a national meeting on an analysis of sexual diversity in Nicaragua; a video forum on LGBT discrimination; the setting up of an information table on human rights; the collection of signatures to present to the National Assembly demanding a declaration of a National Day to Combat Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity; and the holding of the first National Forum on Harassment and Hate Crimes.

NIGERIA

Nigerian activists used IDAHO 2012 as an opportunity to call on the National Human Rights Commission to promote and protect the human rights of all Nigerian citizens and to speak up against the discrimination and violence being suffered on the grounds of people's perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender identity.

PARAGUAY

Activists organized a series of activities in a week-long IDAHO commemoration called "The Week of Fighting against Homophobia in Paraguay 2012", which kicked off with a public kiss-in held in front the National Congress. Other events included conversations on homophobia in schools and the broadcasting of a radio program.

PERU

A majority of Lima councilors signed a motion before the Metropolitan Council to recognize May 17 each year as an official municipal "Day Against Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity". Activists also launched an annual report focused on LGBT human rights cases in 2011, which included a denouncement of the so-called "curative therapies". Other events held included a movie festival, a forum on "LGBT Health and Human Rights", a bike rally, urban interventions, a photo contest, lectures in universities in the northern region, and a seminar for health professionals.

PHILIPPINES



Activists in the Philippines held a range of events to mark IDAHO 2012, including two training seminars on LGBT rights and issues for government agencies and civil society in Manila; a march to the Commission of Human Rights to present an updated list of murdered Filipino LGBTs; an LGBT Grand Rally in Manila for the Passage of the Anti-Discrimination Bill and the National Day Against Homophobia Bill; the third annual Flores De Mayo LGBT Pride, themed "Stop Bullying: Save Our Children"; a photographic campaign entitled "I dare to care about equality"; and the staging of the Rainbow Friendship Games in Cebu.



PUERTO RICO

Activists staged a public demonstration in front of the Education Department in San Juan to highlight the need to include a gender perspective within the country's education system. The Education Department has just put into practice a new framework for sexual education which does not mention sexual orientation or gender identity and does not differentiate between sex and gender.

ROMANIA

Candles were lit and one minute of silence observed as a show of support for people living with HIV/AIDS. Activists also conducted media interviews and brandished rainbow-colored flags and slogans. People were also encouraged to post messages online.



RUSSIA

Activists in St Petersburg commemorated IDAHO 2012 with a mass rally involving more than 300 people. The rally was not without incident, with 100-150 anti-LGBT protestors chanting homophobic slogans and two activists attacked. In 15 cities, activists staged "Rainbow Flashmobs" by releasing balloons into the skies.



SAINT LUCIA



Members of the LGBT community and their allies took part in the first "Walk for Tolerance" from the Ministry of Education to the Prime Minister's office. The theme of the Walk was "Eradicate Hate: Educate!" It was the culmination of three days of training for the LGBT community on documenting human rights abuses and for the police on non-discrimination.

SERBIA



Activists gathered in the center of Belgrade to fly rainbow balloons and distribute publications and booklets. Brochures, publications, balloons and books on LGBT rights and coming out were distributed to the public. Activists also took part in a debate entitled "Let's learn from the rainbow book" aimed at highlighting homophobic and discriminatory content in high school textbooks.



SOUTH AFRICA:



South African students were particularly active for IDAHO 2012. At the University of Witwatersrand, they staged a silent protest, a flash mob, a panel discussion about campaign-building, and printed T-shirts and called on lecturers to wear the shirts to demonstrate their support. At the University of Johannesburg, they launched the "Rights r Rights" Campaign which included silent marches and a seminar discussion on homophobic attacks. There was also "ambush theatre" action in Cape Town. However, the actors proved a little too convincing in portraying a gay man who was abused - a security guard intervened and detained three of the actors.



SOUTH KOREA

A coalition of South Korean activists commemorated IDAHO 2012 with a call for attention to the situation facing LGBT people in the country with the slogan "Equal Love and Equal Human Beings". They also affirmed their commitment to fighting homophobia and violence taking place against LGBT people throughout South Korea and have pledged to advocate for a legal system that would help end homophobia.

SPAIN

Activists in Spain launched the project "Lo soy/I am" to demand respect for Transgender women under the slogan "I Do not look like a woman, I am one". In Valencia, activists held two events: The presentation of a book on immigrant Lesbian women in Spain and a memorial for the victims of homophobic, transphobic and biphobic hate crimes. In Madrid, activists hosted a series of activities, including a vigil in remembrance of LGBT activists who were victims of homophobic/transphobic violence, a cine-forum, a book launch, a conference, a drum performance and marches.

SRI LANKA

Sri Lankan activists held an IDAHO poster competition, giving people the opportunity to win a cash prize for the most innovative and creative submission. The winning poster was named the campaign poster of 2013. In addition, they screened the documentary "Repeal Section 365A", followed by a panel discussion.

SWEDEN

Swedish activists gathered in Stockholm to commemorate IDAHO 2012 as a moment to reflect on international LGBT solidarity. The event included a screening of the UN Secretary General's LGBT speech at the UN Human Rights Council.

SWITZERLAND



A group from Italian-speaking Switzerland launched a Facebook group to mobilize against homophobia in education, to mark its solidarity with this year's global IDAHO mobilization on this theme.

TAIWAN



Taiwanese activists mobilized throughout April and May in an extended IDAHO celebration. An alliance of businesses, clubs and LGBT-friendly stores jointly signed a declaration committing to engage with the public to fight homophobia and transphobia.



THAILAND

UNESCO Bangkok produced a short film in English and Thai highlighting the challenges faced by LGBT students and practical steps that have been taken in schools in Thailand to promote healthy, safe learning environments for all.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

In commemoration of IDAHO 2012, Trinidad and Tobago's LGBT community focused on equal opportunity legislation that has been stalled in Parliament for the past year. Repeating a 2011 "walkabout" to government offices, they went from the Equal Opportunity Commission to the Parliament, at opposite ends of a major avenue in the capital. They asked arriving Parliamentarians to pass a bill outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status and age, and the Commissioners to study SOGI discrimination and make recommendations for action to the Government.

TURKEY

More than 500 people from Turkey, Russia, Hungary, Norway, Germany, Peru, Spain and the US, as well as Iranian refugees and members of the local LGBT community, took part in a march against homophobia and transphobia in central Ankara. The march was the closing event of the 7th annual International Meeting Against Homophobia, organized by Turkish LGBT groups. The meeting brought together activists, academics, politicians and the media to discuss, among other topics, feminism, militarism, asylum, homophobia in education, ...



TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

In marking IDAHO 2012, Governor Ric Todd announced that the laws of the Turks and Caicos Islands would be reviewed to eliminate any form of discrimination against people based on their sexuality, and a diversity policy would be implemented to prevent discrimination in the public service.

UGANDA

Activists in Uganda organized a four-day event with the theme "Don't Punish Love, Punish Violence" in commemoration of IDAHO 2012. There was an event to bring partners from civil society organisations, friends and families, medical workers and LGBTI people in the same space to interact with one another. Activities included counseling, storytelling, a documentary showcase and discussions. Activists also appealed to the government to end the abuse of gays.

UKRAINE

Threats from radical right-wing groups and fears for the safety of participants forced the cancellation of a march in Kiev to mark IDAHO 2012 less than an hour before it was due to start. It was the only public event the LGBT community in Kiev had planned for the Day. However, the cancellation did not stop violence from occurring. A group of masked men attacked an activist, leaving him with multiple contusions and cuts.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Activists in the United Arab Emirates commemorated IDAHO 2012 with a message of hope and an appeal for dialogue and change.

UNITED KINGDOM



An unprecedented level of action took place in the UK to commemorate IDAHO 2012, involving a host of high-profile people and a range of organizations, from city councils and trade unions to schools and universities. British politicians made speeches on the Day, and Prince Harry also joined in the celebrations. Rainbow flags flew across the UK on the Day, adding on to rallies, marches, conferences, panel discussions, lectures, live radio broadcasts, film screenings, the making of one-minute's noise events, sports events, music festivals and photographic exhibitions. Police departments also got in on



the action, holding information sessions, Q&As and open days. The education campaign also elicited a lot of support, with such actions as the making of short videos and posters, photography, discussions, and the launch of two reports into the prevalence of homophobia in schools.

UNITED STATES

Many major LGBT organizations at the national level marked the Day with special communications and coverage of international events. The city of San Francisco lowered the U.N. and U.S. flags for 24 hours at U.N. Plaza, in the city's first official commemoration of the Day. The city of Atlanta also held official events.

Predominantly, the Day gradually builds up in the USA as a very specific moment to focus on LGBT international solidarity. A special guide was released by and for LGBT activists outside the USA on how to engage with US Embassies and secure their support.

At the Federal level, the US government hosted several discussions, speeches and actions throughout various Agencies including the Department of State and USAID. US Embassies as a matter of fact supported several IDAHO activities around the world and Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice delivered a special 'IDAHO' message, calling on all States to ensure that Human Rights are universally respected. Major media such as the Advocate and the Huffington post gave the day additional visibility throughout the country.



URUGUAY

Activists in Montevideo mobilized the local LGBT community to demonstrate love and affection in public spaces under the slogan "Discrimination does not discriminate" to highlight that no love is different and that everyone has the same rights. A collective of DJs also joined forces to conduct various events under the slogan "Have fun" in the name of acceptance and

VENEZUELA

The city of Caracas celebrated the first anniversary of the "Caracas without Homophobia" strategy on IDAHO. A number of other events were held, including public "vaccinations" against homophobia in Caracas, conferences, forums, the broadcasting of radio programs, a parade in Valencia, radio and TV interviews and forums. The British Embassy also hosted a reception.

VIETNAM



Vietnam played host to a comprehensive program of events to mark IDAHO 2012. Among them was the release of the results of an online survey about homo/transphobia in schools, which generated a lot of public and media attention. IDAHO also provided the opportunity for Vietnam's main national TV channel to host for the first time ever a program about homophobia and transphobia. Other events included a joint letter to the Minister of Education signed by more than 3000 people, the staging of plays, a press conference, and the handing out of 3000 balloons and LGBT information leaflets in Hanoi and other major cities. In addition, UNAIDS Vietnam presented a letter in support of IDAHO.

ZIMBABWE

Activists in Zimbabwe issued a statement on May 17 reflecting on the struggles LGBTI people and their families face within the country. They called on the government to ensure that the criminal justice system was not used to target or harass LGBTI organization, their families and others who represented and supported them. They also called on Zimbabweans to shun and condemn all forms of violence and discrimination relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.







INTERNATIONAL DAY
AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA
AND TRANSPHOBIA
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IDAHO COMMITTEE
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