

Human Rights Council – 41st Session

Resolution: Sexual orientation and gender identity – tabled amendment L.34

12 July 2019

Australian Statement: Explanation of Vote

We cannot accept amendment L.34. This amendment seeks to add a preambular paragraph deploring acts of violence and discrimination, on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. We do not dispute the unacceptability of violence and discrimination on the basis of these things, but this long list is far from an accurate reflection of all the various bases for violence and discrimination as it excludes sexual orientation and gender identity – the focus of this resolution – and we cannot accept this omission.

People of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities are often amongst the most marginalised in their societies, and experience high rates of violence and discrimination. This is not confined to any single country; it is a global phenomenon.

This marginalisation is compounded by the fact that people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities are often less visible in society - either hidden from view or driven to mask their orientation and identities for fear of persecution and violence.

This amendment seeks to undermine the universality of human rights by failing to recognise that people are persecuted and discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Australia will therefore vote against this amendment. We urge all members of this Council to vote 'NO'.

221 Words