



Wednesday, 17 September 2014

Dear Mr. Hossaini,  
Resident Coordinator, Zimbabwe

I am contacting you in my capacity as President of UN-GLOBE, the staff group representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex staff members of the UN system. We are reaching out to you because we believe that in your role as Resident Coordinator you can make a big difference in fighting homophobia and transphobia in the workplace.

Homophobia and transphobia are very real problems in the UN. In duty station after duty station, we have heard from staff who feel isolated where they serve, who fear revealing who they love or their gender identity because they fear they will be targeted and their careers harmed. In countries where there are high levels of homophobia and transphobia, staff fear for their safety. And in countries with anti-gay laws, staff are vulnerable to prosecution since they are technically violating the host country's laws.

It is in this context that lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex staff members have to be understood. Not as staff members seeking special status, but as staff members who are entitled to equal rights like all staff do.

We would therefore like to ask you to send **a clear statement against homophobia and transphobia in the workplace** in the UNCT you lead, making it clear that there is no place for discrimination anywhere in the UN family. We ask also that you make clear that managers have a responsibility in ensuring that homophobic and transphobic incidents are addressed. Your message would be extremely empowering to LGBTI staff.

Staff can also visit our website at [www.unglobe.org](http://www.unglobe.org) for more information, or get in touch with us at [ohrm\\_globe@un.org](mailto:ohrm_globe@un.org). We ask kindly that you help us disseminate this information, as we are the resource that LGBTI staff feel most comfortable reaching out to. Quite a number of LGBTI staff don't want, or are reluctant to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to human resources officers, or managers.

At the same time, we strongly encourage you to **name a focal point in your administration** who can address any issues raised by staff or UN-GLOBE that are related to homophobia and transphobia. This focal point named by you can also address how to ensure your UNCT respects diversity and is an inclusive workplace.

We also ask that you do everything in your power to:

— **Secure household visas** for the legal partners of LGBTI staff even if they are not the type of visas traditionally granted to spouses;

— Do everything you can to ensure the **safety of LGBTI staff and their families** in countries with high levels of homophobia and transphobia;

— Have a plan to secure the **immediate release of any staff member prosecuted by anti-gay laws.**

We believe that non-discrimination and equality must be established for all staff.

We thank you for your attention and ask for your leadership and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Alfonso', written in black ink.

Hyung Hak Nam (Alfonso)  
President, UN-GLOBE

PS – We are attaching a UN-GLOBE poster against homophobia and transphobia that we encourage you to put up in your office.