



9 April 2014

Dear Mr. Takasu,

Thank you for your letter to UN-GLOBE dated 31 March 2014. It is indeed encouraging to hear that a Group has been convened to discuss issues we have raised. We fully agree with you that everyone should enjoy the same basic rights, and be able to live a life of worth and dignity without discrimination, including staff.

As the staff group representing LGBTI staff members across the UN system, and its peacekeeping operations, we know fully well the issues they face.

Just in the past week, we have been contacted by a transsexual staff member at UNDP in Kuwait who was stopped by police officers at a street market, and questioned. Someone had alerted them that she was a cross-dresser. She produced her UN ID, and it is perhaps this action, and the subsequent phone call one of these police officers made, that allowed her to leave the market.

We have been contacted by a staff member at WHO who, despite having been shortlisted for a Director position, had to withdraw his candidacy because the post was in Egypt, and he would not have been able to secure a visa for his same-sex spouse.

A staff member in UNICEF Nigeria has contacted us for assistance securing a visa for the same-sex partner of a newly hired staff member. The Nigerian embassy seems to be asking all sorts of questions, prompting concern.

And the UNJSPF has released "Guidelines to determine eligibility for spousal benefits under articles 34 and 35 of the UNJSPF regulations" which will do nothing to guarantee survivor's benefits for the same-sex spouses of staff members whose nationality is not in the list they attach. (The situation of staff members in same-sex marriages whose marriages are not recognized by the UN Secretariat is, of course, a pending matter as well.)

In short, we have a wealth of knowledge about the issues our staff face, especially now in the rapidly degrading human rights situations in several countries where we serve.

Therefore, we would like to request being part of this Group.

At the very least, we would like to request meeting with this Group so that we can share the concerns we have heard over quite a number of years.

Looking forward to your response,

Yours sincerely,

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

Hyung Hak Nam (Alfonso)
President, UN-GLOBE