



## **High Level Political Forum**

### **General Debate**

#### **Statement by the UN LGBTI Core Group**

**To be delivered by H.E. Mr Adam Kuymizakis, Deputy**

**Permanent Representative of Malta to the UN**

17 July 2023

Chairperson,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the LGBTI Core Group.

Chairperson,

One year ago, we highlighted the importance of recognizing and protecting the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Today, we meet once again to call for action and advocate for their full and equal inclusion. Without the

recognition and vindication of people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, or sex characteristics that have been made invisible, subordinated and violated, the future we want will not exist.

Despite the many positive advances in the achievement of the SDGs, we are at a critical juncture: the COVID-19 pandemic has made even more visible and exacerbated existing inequalities and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, leaving LGBTI persons even further behind. Not to mention the proliferation of discriminatory, stigmatizing and punitive laws and policies that have been adopted this year that threaten their human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular their dignity and even their own lives. In this sense, we echo the global report on sustainable development on the need to focus on, and prioritize the perspectives of, marginalized groups, including LGBTI persons, with a goal to reaching the most excluded first. This is essential to ensuring full and meaningful implementation of the Agenda 2030.

In this regard, and on the occasion of the review of SDG 11, we must address the particular discriminatory barriers and social exclusion faced by LGBTI persons in relation to access to basic services, such as the right to sexual and reproductive health services, economic

opportunities and the full, equal and meaningful participation in the life of their communities. There will be no sustainable cities and human settlements if we do not embrace diversity and the universality of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Chairperson,

We are approaching the midpoint of the 2030 Agenda since its adoption, and we have failed to live up to the proposed goals. The time for change is now. We cannot wait any longer. Sustainable development can only be achieved if inequalities and human rights violations are addressed from an intersectional and human rights-based approach that acknowledges and addresses the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and the deep roots of persisting global inequalities. This is becoming increasingly evident with global anti-gender forces constituting a real threat to gender equality and human rights of LGBTI persons.

It is time for Member States, international organizations, the UN system and all other stakeholders to take responsibility and take concrete actions. Accordingly, we call for the fight to eliminate discriminatory attitudes, gender stereotypes and negative social norms that discriminate against and violate the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons, and we call for the

promotion and implementation of inclusive policies that foster their full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making processes at all levels of government. Diversity and inclusion are fundamental pillars to achieve sustainable development that truly leaves no one behind.

Chairperson,

The UN LGBTI Core Group reaffirms its commitment to contribute constructively to the HLPF debate, highlighting the importance of implementing national policies that effectively respect, promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by LGBTI persons. In this way, we hope that this Forum and this year's SDG Summit will effectively serve as spaces for building a more inclusive, just, sustainable and diverse world for all, where no one is left behind, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions or sex characteristics. Our future and future generations depend on it.

Thank you very much.