

*“El derecho humano de respeto a la orientación sexual e identidad de género en el Caribe y América Latina.
Situación actual en la región y perspectivas”*

*“The human right to respect sexual orientation and gender identity in the Caribbean and Latin America.
Current situation in the region and prospects”*

**Inter-American Institute of Human Rights
United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
International Bar Association**

5 April 2019

**Meeting with the Secretary of State of the Holy See
His Eminence, Cardinal Pietro Parolin**

Press Release

We should like to take this opportunity to extend to His Eminence, the Secretary of State, our gratitude for this audience.

1. The preliminary results of our research evidence the likelihood of serious violations of international human rights law and failures to secure basic protections to vulnerable minorities in the 10 researched jurisdictions in the Caribbean.
2. In light of the gravity of the findings shared publicly with the Secretary of State, we humbly request the Vatican to consider issuing a public statement in which **the official policy of the Holy See is clarified**, noting the active steps taken by Pope Francis to resolve the matter in Belize and the opinion of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI sent to us for the purpose of this meeting: *“I am convinced that a pronouncement of His Holiness would have been of fundamental importance in the work of fighting violence and discrimination that affects hundreds of millions of people every day”*.

3. We therefore humbly request the Church to declare that:

Human dignity implies the respect of every person as created by God, hence criminalisation of LGBT people is today, as in the darkest times in the history of humanity, a manifestation of irrational hatred for that which is different from the norm and that homophobia is, in effect, a feeling of hatred and rejection which the Church condemns, wherever it takes place.

4. And further that:

- i. the Church calls upon the international community to recognise that criminalisation of homosexuality and any form of consented intimate acts, sexual or not, between adults is an intolerable affront to human dignity;
- ii. the Church calls upon all states to commit to the promotion and protection of human rights for all people, independently of their sexual orientation or gender identity by introducing legislative and administrative measures that assure that no person may suffer penal sanctions, executions, arrest or detention, as well as no form of discrimination, on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity;
- iii. the Church calls upon all Christians and also instructs all national and regional episcopal conferences, without exception, to work for the decriminalisation of homosexuality and for the abolition of all forms of punishment for consented intimate sexual acts between adults, wherever they are still being criminally persecuted, without “buts” or conditions; and
- iiii. the Church calls upon all states to declare illegal the application of the so-called conversion ‘cure’ therapies as degrading or cruel treatment and requests health professionals to refrain from taking part in any way in such therapies.