

Pride Toolkit 2017



Amnesty International Canada

Hello fellow activists!

As another Pride season approaches, we are taking a moment to reflect on the past year. It's been an eventful one for LGBTI rights – one of challenges, but also of victories. Last spring, Bill C-16 was introduced in the House of Commons, aimed at extending human rights protections to trans and gender non-conforming people in Canada. A year later, C-16 is closer than ever to becoming law, as it currently awaits Third Reading in the Senate. Last summer, at Pride events in communities large and small, you showed your support for LGBTI refugees. In November, following efforts from Amnesty supporters around the world, openly gay Venezuelan politician Rosmit Mantilla was released after more than two years in prison. This year, Amnesty released its first ever report on the rights of intersex people. And on May 17th, the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, whistleblower and trans activist Chelsea Manning walked free. We have a lot to celebrate!

Unfortunately, we have also seen new and continuing threats to the rights of LGBTI people around the world. The Pride movement traces its origins to a riot at the Stonewall Inn in New York City, a response to years of police harassment, raids, and violence. Continuing in this tradition, Pride is a protest – a call to action to communities here at home and around the world, to respect and defend the rights of LGBTI people to live free from violence and discrimination. In this Pride Toolkit you will find resources and ideas for your group to participate in Pride events in your community, and actions to:

- Continue to show support for LGBTI refugees by calling on Canada to rescind the Safe Third Country Agreement;
- Keep your #EyesOnChechnya by calling for an investigation into the abduction, torture, and killing of men believed to be gay;
- Call on Japan to pass equal marriage and anti-discrimination laws; and
- Show solidarity with trans people in Venezuela by calling for an investigation into police violence against a trans lawyer and his daughter.

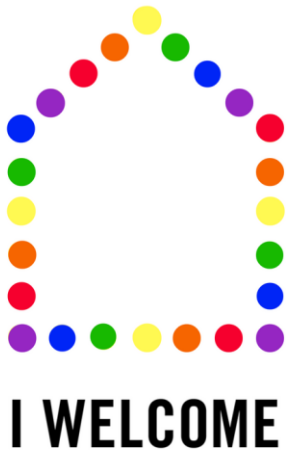
Don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any questions – and as always, we'd love to hear what you've been up to and see photos of your events.

Happy Pride!

George Harvey and Alex Xavier, LGBTI Coordinators

LGBTICoordinator@amnesty.ca |  /aicanadalgbti |  @LGBT_Amnesty

CANADA: #IWELCOME LGBTI REFUGEES!



Once again this year, we have chosen a refugees theme for Pride. On a global scale, the refugee crisis is larger than ever, and here in Canada this issue is of particular concern because of the Safe Third Country Agreement we have with the United States. This Agreement means that refugees attempting to enter either country at a land border crossing must make their claim in the first country in which they arrive, either the US or Canada. As a result, most refugees who pass by land through the United States cannot make a refugee claim in Canada.

Since the beginning of 2017, the climate for both refugees and LGBTI people in the US has shifted dramatically. The federal government has attempted to use executive orders to severely curtail the number of refugees it will accept, and several dozen bills have been introduced in state legislatures attempting to legalise discrimination against LGBTI people in the guise of religious freedom. We know that the US is **NOT** a safe country for refugees, especially those who are LGBTI – so why has our government refused to rescind the Safe Third Country Agreement?

“Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.”
Article 14, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

On the following page, you will find a petition calling on the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship to do just that. For more information and resources, check out our website:

- At www.amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/refugees-and-migrants, in the Resources tab, you can download and print signs and door hangers to carry and distribute at Pride
- At www.amnesty.ca/our-work/campaigns/i-welcome-refugees, you find further resources and actions, as well as the latest news on the #IWELCOME campaign

We encourage you to partner with refugee advocacy, sponsorship, and resettlement groups in your community to raise awareness of the issues that LGBTI refugees face, and show the world that LGBTI refugees are welcome in Canada!



Canada: Rescind Safe Third Country Agreement

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Recently signed Executive Orders in the United States demonstrate a total disregard for the rights of refugees. Crucial principles with respect to non-discrimination, *non-refoulement*, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, fair trials and the rights of children are under threat.

The Canada-USA "Safe Third Country Agreement" assumes that both Canada and the United States respect refugee rights, and bars most refugees already in the United States from seeking protection in Canada.

The United States cannot be considered "safe" for the purposes of refugee protection. Access to asylum is seriously at threat; particularly for those detained under conditions which are cruel and punitive. Detainees frequently do not have meaningful access to legal counsel, and are impeded in launching a meaningful asylum claim.

I call on you to immediately rescind the designation of the United States as a 'safe third country'.



I WELCOME

Petition created: February 2017
Please submit petition by September 2017 to:
 Amnesty International Canada
 1992 Yonge St 3rd Fl
 Toronto ON M4S 1Z7
Contact: gnafziger@amnesty.ca

I wish to receive email alerts and updates about Amnesty's human rights work (1-2 times per month)

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RUSSIA: KEEP YOUR #EYESONCHECHNYA!

In early April, the courageous journalists at Russian Newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* reported that over a hundred men suspected of being gay had been abducted, tortured, and some killed in a coordinated government campaign in the southern Russian republic of Chechnya. Men who are released from detention are not safe; they may face honour killings by family members. In response, Chechen officials denied the existence of gay men in Chechnya, and denied that they had ordered 'preventative mopping up' of people considered to be undesirable.

Chechnya is a semi-autonomous republic within the Russian Federation. Russia passed a law in 2013 banning "propaganda of homosexuality among minors," a law restricting human rights and which has fuelled homophobia.

As you can imagine, in a climate where independent voices are so stifled, *Novaya Gazeta's* report was bold. In response to their report, their journalists have been publicly threatened, to the point that journalist Elena Milashina has had to flee. Gay men have also begun to flee Chechnya.

So what can we do from Canada? In addition to calling on authorities to investigate the violence and to ensure the safety of both gay men and journalists, we are asking Canada to grant asylum to those fleeing Chechnya because of their real or perceived sexual orientation. On social media:

- Commend Foreign Affairs Minister for her strong statement on LGBTI rights in Chechnya, and continue to call for further action. Twitter: @cafreeland
- Use #EyesOnChechnya to keep the issue visible to both the public and to officials in Chechnya and Russia. We know that government officials monitor social media – and we know that when the world is watching, rights abuses are less likely to happen.

In addition to collecting signatures on the petition found on the following page, you can also promote our online actions:

- Investigate the violence and ensure the safety of the LGBTI community in Chechnya: goo.gl/Okb7xj
- Investigate the threats and ensure the safety of journalists reporting on human rights abuses: goo.gl/AAAdNYs

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Everyone has a right to freedom of expression, and to live in safety and free from discrimination. As chair of the Investigation Committee of the Russian Federation I call on you to:

- Promptly, thoroughly and effectively investigate reports of abductions, torture, and killings of men believed to be gay in Chechnya, and threats against *Novaya Gazeta* journalists, and hold perpetrators to account;
- Condemn discriminatory and threatening comments made by officials in Chechnya;
- Ensure the safety of LGBTI individuals in Chechnya; and
- Uphold human rights obligations to prohibit discrimination, investigate and prosecute hate crimes, uphold the right to freedom of expression, and protect journalists.

Please submit petition by end September 2017 to:
Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9
Contact: lhansen@amnesty.ca

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JAPAN: SAY “I DO” TO EQUALITY!

In Japan, LGBTI people face discrimination in employment, education, in access to health services, family life and in other settings such as detention centres and disaster affected areas. In addition, some politicians and government officials continue to make explicitly homophobic statements which likely encourages discrimination against LGBTI people. Many LGBTI people cannot disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace, to their families, or in their social life, often leading to a sense of social and emotional displacement. Some LGBTI people have difficulties accessing or being provided with the necessary medical care, including transition-related care for trans people.



While trans people are able to legally change their gender, access depends on criteria that violate their human rights, including the requirement that they undergo transition-related surgeries – they must be sterilised in order to have their gender legally recognised. They must also be unmarried, as same-gender marriage is not recognised in Japan.

However, LGBTI activists in Japan are actively fighting for their rights. The public debate on human rights for LGBTI people has gained momentum, especially around equal marriage and protection from discrimination. Japan has also won the rights to host the 2020 Summer Olympics – the Olympic Charter mandates equality, including on matters of sexual orientation and gender identity, and the world will be watching. Now is the time for activists around the world to put pressure on the Japanese government to recognise Love #BeyondGenders!

Take action:

- Collect signatures on the petition on the following page
- Show your support on social media! Use #BeyondGenders and #EqualLove, and tweet a photo of yourself or your group with one of these campaign placards:

goo.gl/VDKL6Y and goo.gl/XxADJG

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of colorful arches. The arches are arranged in two columns and five rows. The colors of the arches are: Row 1: Pink, Grey; Row 2: Grey, Yellow; Row 3: Blue, Grey; Row 4: Grey, Green; Row 5: Orange, Dark Grey; Row 6: Grey, Pink. The arches are stylized and have a slight 3D effect.

Love Beyond Genders

LGBTI people in Japan have waited long enough for equality. I call on you to:

- Please submit petition by end December 2017 to:**
Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9
Contact: ihansen@amnesty.ca

To receive email alerts and updates about Amnesty's human rights work (1-2 times per month)

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VENEZUELA: PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

Transgender lawyer Samantha Seijas was threatened by a police officer from the Aragua Police Force, in central Venezuela, while filing a complaint in a police station accompanied by his daughter. Fears exist for their safety.

On 31 January, 2017, after filing a complaint at a police station, transgender lawyer Samantha Seijas and his daughter Aleska Seijas were beaten in the head and face by police officers from the Police Force of Aragua, who uttered derogatory phrases such as “what happened to trying to act all manly?” in reference to his gender identity. He told Amnesty International that as well as beating them, one of the officers threatened Samantha by saying “pray to God that I don’t find you out alone at night.” It is important to note that Samantha and his daughter live in front of the police station.

The day after these events, Samantha presented a complaint before the Public Prosecutor’s office. He is afraid that the proximity of the police station and by extension, the presence of the officers from the Aragua Police Force, will lead to the threats being carried out.

To date, there have been no reports of an investigation having been initiated based on Samantha Seijas’ complaint.

Take action! Collect signatures on the petition on the following page, calling on authorities to investigate these events, and to ensure the safety of Samantha and Aleska in accordance with their wishes.

I call on you to:

- Please submit petition by end December 2017 to:**
Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9
Contact: jhansen@amnesty.ca

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AMNESTY@PRIDE: Being a Good Ally

Ally is a verb, not a noun. Allyship is about continuous work and lifelong learning. Please read and use these tips when attending Pride and participating in LGBTI activism.

Start by doing your homework. Learn about the diversity of gender and sexuality, LGBTI history, culture, and policy issues. In particular, **learn about the activism that is already going on in your community.** Listen to the experiences and voices of LGBTI people. Sometimes, this means listening without commenting. Reflect on what you learn and hear.

Don't make assumptions about anyone's gender, sexuality, or identity. Don't assume that your friends, family, colleagues, classmates, or other members of your community are straight or identify as male or female.

Think about your own identity. How do you identify your own gender and sexuality? What does your identity mean about how you interact with the world? How might your identity and experiences be different from someone else's?

Understand your privilege. Having privilege does not mean that your life has been easy, that you are wealthy, or that you've never struggled or worked hard. Privilege means that there are issues and struggles that you will never have to experience or think about just because of who you are. If you are a straight and/or cisgender person, you have rights and privileges that LGBTI people do not. How can you use that privilege to act in solidarity?

Step up: speak up about LGBTI rights! Those rights aren't limited to marriage equality; they include youth homelessness, workplace discrimination, healthcare access, high rates of violence against trans women of colour, intersex genital mutilation, and many more. Speak out against statements and jokes that attack LGBTI people. Have conversations about prejudices. Challenge ideas about gender roles and behaviours.

Step back: when LGBTI people are speaking and sharing their experiences and stories, listen! Don't speak over LGBTI voices, and make sure that you are not taking credit for what LGBTI communities are saying or the work they have done.

You will make mistakes – it's okay! Being an ally is a learning process. Don't get defensive – listen, be accountable, apologise, and keep working.

AMNESTY@PRIDE: Ideas for Activism



Go beyond marching! March in the Pride parade. Organise a table at the end of the parade route to collect petition signatures and share info about your group. But go beyond! Organise a human rights vigil during Pride week. Arrange a creative demo at a Pride festival. Partner with other local organisations for a panel discussion on LGBTI rights.

Make some noise. If you are marching, come prepared with chants! You can also bring noise makers, whistles, drums, and other things to help your group be loud and proud.

Grow the movement. The more people who become members of Amnesty, the more capacity we have to educate our communities and make change on critical human rights issues. Bring a sign-up sheet and information about your group to give out.

Be prepared for the sun! Apply sunscreen, bring water, and wear comfortable shoes.

Don't be shy, but keep it short and simple. If you are collecting petition signatures you'll need to get your pitch down to a short conversation. Working the crowd before a march is a great time to get people interested!

Bring swag! Check out the Amnesty website for printable signs, stickers, and more. See the next page for more info on materials you can order – we have lots of swag to spread Amnesty's messages!

Go beyond Pride. Organise a screening of *Last Chance*, *Call Me Kuchu*, or another documentary to shine a light on LGBTI rights abuses. Invite someone from your local LGBTI community to speak at a group meeting.

Ask for help! If this is your first time organising or participating in a Pride event and you're not sure how to get started, or if you have any questions about Amnesty's work on LGBTI rights, contact George and Alex at LGBTICoordinator@amnesty.ca

AMNESTY@PRIDE: Get the Word Out!

Tweet Tweet!

Live tweet from Pride events. Use #AmnestyPride, and tag us @LGBT_Amnesty. You can also follow us for the latest news and actions!



Show Your Pride!

To order beach balls and rainbow candle t-shirts contact orders@aito.ca

To order *Love is a Human Right* t-shirts and *My Body My Rights* underwear contact materials@amnesty.ca

Visit amnestyinternationalcanada.myshopify.com/ to see what else you can order!



Get In Touch!

Our website: www.amnesty.ca/lgbt

For LGBTI-related inquiries: LGBTICoordinator@amnesty.ca

For banners, tablecloths, pamphlets, and other resources: materials@amnesty.ca

REGIONAL ACTIVISM STAFF

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The 2017 Pride Toolkit was created using OpenDyslexic, an open source font that increases readability for people with dyslexia: <https://opendyslexic.org/>

If there's anything else we can do to make the Toolkit more accessible to you or your group, please don't hesitate to let us know!