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**United Nations Human Right Council 12<sup>th</sup> Session  
Geneva, September 2009.  
UPR Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia – ILGA Europe**

Mr President,

I have the honour to present a statement on behalf of the International Lesbian and Gay Association of Europe.

We wish to address recommendations 13 and 18 in the Working Group report. These recommendations deal with the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, the inclusion of such grounds in public awareness initiatives, and the equal treatment of same-sex partners.

We strongly commend the government, in its response, for accepting these recommendations. These commitments are consistent with international principles of equality and non-discrimination, and with the government's support of the joint statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity delivered at the UN General Assembly December 18, 2008, on behalf of 67 States from all 5 UN regions.

We note that the government is explicit in its response in identifying sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination. May we clarify whether gender identity will also be included in the Antidiscrimination Law in accordance with the recommendations? We would urge that the inclusion of this ground be explicit, in order to better protect the rights of transgender people.

We also welcome the government's response that it has already begin awareness raising and anti discrimination programmes as part of a broader *Macedonia without Discrimination* initiative. Such campaigns are vital in preventing discrimination and in support of other measures contributing to the realization of dignity and respect to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. In developing and implementing such campaigns, we would encourage the government to work in partnership with relevant civil society groups, and to make use of the *Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity* as guidance.

Finally, in the context of recommendation 18(b), we would appreciate information about what reforms are proposed to ensure that same-sex partners are provided with equal rights and responsibilities as opposite-sex partners.

Thank you Mr President.