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ILGA-Europe and COC Netherlands  
United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva. 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

Madam President,

We would like to commend Greece for its positive participation in the UPR process and its commitment to equality and non-discrimination.

We are very pleased to see Greece accept a recommendation to include sexual orientation and gender identity as grounds for protection in anti-discrimination protection. Whilst we appreciate that the current anti-discrimination law provides for the implementation of the principle of equal treatment regardless, *inter alia*, of sexual orientation in the fields of employment and occupation, we encourage Greece to extend this anti-discrimination protection to other fields, such as education, healthcare and access to goods and services.

We take note of the clarification that Greece provided in relation to the scope of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and its understanding that gender identity or expression falls within this scope. We do however underline that sexual orientation and gender identity are separate concepts, and conflating the two may lead to confusion, ambiguity in the law and incomplete protection for transgender people. We thus recommend Greece reconsider its given explanation and include gender identity and expression explicitly in its anti-discrimination legislation. We urge Greece to consider using the *Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* as a tool in such policy development. We also recommend the government of Greece to work closely together with civil society organisations in raising awareness on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Furthermore, we commend Greece for considering the recognition of same-sex couples. Such recognition will be an important step towards equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Greece. Could the government of Greece please clarify a timeframe for effectuating this recommendation?

Finally, we want to commend Greece for its support to the *Joint statement on ending acts of violence and related human rights violations based on sexual orientation & gender identity*, which was delivered at the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council on behalf of 85 UN Member States.

Thank you Madam President.