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PRESS RELEASE

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IRANTI CELEBRATES THE RENEWAL OF THE MANDATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

1. On 12 July 2019, the United Nation Human Rights Council voted in favour of renewing the mandate of the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IE SOGI) at the 41st session.
2. This vote means that the IE SOGI will continue to do the important work that it has been doing including to investigate, report and advise on the realisation of human rights around the world focusing on issues pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity.
3. Iranti supported the historic vote in 2016 to pass a resolution that created the first IE SOGI and celebrates this renewal of the mandate in face of hostile amendments proposed by states to dilute the work of the IE SOGI.
4. Iranti urged the South African government in a letter to the Minister of International Relation and Cooperation and the Ambassador to South Africa to vote in favour of the mandate, To co-sponsor the resolution and to deliver a statement at the Human Rights Council in support of the mandate for renewal for IE SOGI.
5. We are thrilled that South Africa did all three. In a statement supporting the mandate that. The South African Ambassador, Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, said: “The Independent Expert has admirably fulfilled his mandate of privileging dialogue with affected communities and opening channels of communication. He has done so with a great deal of sensitivity avoiding the naming and shaming of countries [...] Mr President, the Constitution of South Africa was the first in the world to outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation and continues to inspire us to do our utmost best to counter violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The work undertaking under this mandate indicates that a lot more still needs to be done to protect the human rights of the LGBTI people, in recognition



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of inherit dignity and their equal and inalienable rights as members of the human family [...] My delegation supports the renewal of this mandate and oppose the amendments.”

6. Iranti believes that the work of the IE SOGI is important and that the renewal of the mandate will allow the IE SOGI to continue to do the necessary work to ensure that human right violations of LGBTI+ people are eliminated in all corners of the world.
7. Iranti believes this renewal will go a long way in ensuring that we live in a world that promotes dignity, freedom and equality of all.
8. We want to acknowledge and thank the UN Ambassador for South Africa, Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, for her role in making this victory happen, working closely with our allies in the lead-up to this vote to ensure the mandate is renewed, and being an ever-present force for human rights protections in Geneva.

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