



ABVAKABO FNV

## ISP- AMERICAS LGBT REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 27-28, 2013

CSA/ORITAuditorium – Rua Formosa, 367– Centro - São Paulo/SP

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### Project to promote Equal Opportunities for LGBT Workers in the Public Sector in Brazil/Inter-Americas

#### 1. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Names of the Unions: ISP Americas affiliates, representing the 4 sub-regions of Latin America: Brazil, Southern Cone, Andean and Central America. Representatives of ABVAKABO/FNV also attended the meeting.

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Country: Brazil

Name of Activity: Meeting of the LGBT Committee of ISP-Americas

Location and date: São Paulo/SP, June 27 – 28, 2013

Participants: 5 women, 8 men,

For information contact: Jocelio Drummond, Monica Valente

#### 2. BACKGROUND

This is the First Meeting of the LGBT Committee of ISP-Americas, held for the creation of a Committee as specified in “The Promotion of Equal Opportunities for LGBT Workers in the Public Sector in Brazil and the Inter-Americas.”

#### 3. PROJECT OBJETIVES

**Development Goal:** To strengthen the union movement and encourage it to be more inclusive, providing equal opportunities for LGBT workers

**Project Goal:** To strengthen and consolidate the achievements and to raise the union movement’s awareness, so that the issue of equal opportunities for LGBT workers will be incorporated into union policies and perceived as positive force for innovation and inclusion.

#### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT AND TARGET AUDIENCE

- a) Organize the ISP Americas LGBT Regional Committee
- b) Begin organizing the campaign for workers rights and pension benefits for LGBT workers in the region.
- c) Identify progress in LGBT rights in the region to help prepare a text on the issue

**Target audience:** Union representatives for ISP-Americas affiliates in the in various sub-regions.

## 5. CONTENT

The meeting began with a description of the objectives of each activity and an introduction of each member attending. At which point the representatives of Brazil, the Southern Cone, the Andean and Central American countries reported on how the unions in each sub-region were dealing with LGBT issues. It appeared that only Brazil had a National LGBT Committee formed by ISP affiliates. In Argentina, despite significant advances in public policies in achieving LGBT rights, only one union - APUBA - has projects under way for the LGBT public, and this is included as part of the Committee on Gender. In the unions of the other countries, no LGBT projects could be clearly identified, which shows the weakness of this group's union organization in the region. On the other hand, it was reported that in various countries advances in LGBT rights had occurred, which suggests an excellent potential for projects in the areas not occupied by the unions in the Americas. The visibility of LGBT workers in the union world was seen to be is one of the problems to be overcome. "If the unions don't concern themselves with LGBT rights in the working world, no one will..." This is the phrase that best summarizes this point in the meeting.

Next, representatives of the ABVAKABO union described their history and experience in the organization of an LGBT committee, including a training course for unions given by the organizers as a way of showing the other managers how to create the favorable conditions for creating a Committee and overcome the resistance of some members who still think homosexuality is not a union issue. Further, they showed the gains achieved in European struggles and stressed that the support given to gay groups in their struggle with the miners in England as one more point marking the visibility of this group in the union world. They also commented on the retrograde proposals for LGBT rights as human rights such as, for example, the non-acceptance of gay or lesbian immigrants that has been argued by right wing politicians in Holland. "Human rights include LGBT rights" is the phrase that summarizes this part of the meeting.

This was followed by a presentation of ISP policy for LGBT, summarized in the conclusions of the Regional Conference of ISP Americas held in Cartagena, Columbia in 2010, and in the paper "Unions United for LGBT Rights", published by the ISP and by the IE in 2007. With regard to the resolutions from Cartagena, the group expressed its pleasure in seeing the proposals approved there becoming a reality, and with the global document of the ISP; the participants recognized their value and with regard to currency, suggested that they be reedited to include the updates of the advances achieved in recent years. Once again their importance was verified because it would then be possible to draft new texts for the Regional Conference of ISP Americas in 2015, and the World Congress of the ISP in 2017, thus making it possible to advance the LGBT policy within the ISP, including in the statutory bylaws for this group for workers.

There followed a discussion of all alliances and international activities, stressing the importance of the ILGA and the Out Games with the LGBT Human Rights Conference. A Representative of the International Lesbian and Gay Association For Latin America discussed regional activities of the organization, highlighting the actions

on May 17 against homophobia and October 20 for the effort to have the characterization of transsexualism as a disease removed from international codes. Recent advances achieved in the United Nations to recognize LGBT rights as human rights were reported as well as the negative reactions of religious representatives against these rights, suggesting to the unions that they be more alert to the periodic universal review that the United Nations makes on human rights in countries and reporting on problems that occur with LGBT workers. There were further comments from GALE, and their activities in favor of non-homophobic education. About the collective action of this committee with the ILGA in Latin America, it was suggested that they work together in those countries where both are represented.

Later, examples of public policies for LGBT activities were presented: one for local government and two for national governments. Local government activities reported on included the Coordination of LGBT for the city of São Paulo, where they work with educators to avoid homophobia in schools; with the police to learn how to deal appropriately with transsexuals; with doctors and nurses to provide the proper treatment of LGBTs in the health care system and the construction of safe houses for LGBT victims of abuse, among other activities. With regard to National programs, a federal government program "Brazil without Homophobia" was presented, with countless measures to combat discrimination and to promote equality, but unfortunately for reasons of politics and the influence of churches, particularly the neo-evangelical churches that are working against these changes, advances planned under this program were blocked. In any event, advances occurred as a result of legal decisions, including recognition of marriage of two persons of the same sex, welfare rights and others. In Argentina and Uruguay more concrete advances were noted, both for civil rights for workers, with laws being passed in the Congresses guaranteeing equal rights in these two countries.

Finally, an action plan for the next 12 months was discussed and the measures approved are described as follows:

## **6. FOLLOW-UP AND PLANS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

### **1- COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

- CONSOLIDATE THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE, SEEKING TO INTEGRATE THE USA, CANADA AND THE CARIBBEAN
- CREATE NATIONAL COMMITTEES: ARGENTINA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND COLOMBIA
- INITIATE LGBT COMMITTEE PROPOSALS IN SECTORAL AREAS SUCH AS UNIVERSITY AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS
- INITIATE DISCUSSIONS FOR THE 2015 AND 2017 CONGRESSES WITH REGARD TO BYLAWS, ACTION PLANS AND EMPOWERMENT FOR LGBT WORKERS

### **2- GIVE VISIBILITY TO THE COMMITTEE**

- PRESENT RESOLUTIONS TO THE SUBRACS AND IAMREC
- CREATE LGBT PAGES ON ISP AMERICAS SITES DA ISP AS WELL AS A CLOSED GROUP ON FACEBOOK
- LETTERS AND DIALOG WITH THE LATIN AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES ON THE WORLD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ISP REQUESTING SUPPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE TO GUARANTEE GREATER POLITICAL SUPPORT

### **3- WITH REGARD TO WORLD ISP**

- ATTEND THE 2013 OUTGAMES
- JULY 31, 1 - 2 AUGUST 2013 – ATTEND THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ANTWERP, PRESENTING THE RESULTS OF THIS MEETING AND THE CREATION OF AND LGBT COMMITTEE IN ISP AMERICAS
- SUPPORT THE RETURN OF THE LGBT CAUCUS AT THE WORLD ISP
- SEEK TO INITIATE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE WITH TURKEY AND POLAND
- ENCOURAGE DEMONSTRATIONS ON MAY 17 AND OCTOBER 20
- ATTEND THE ILGA CONGRESS IN MEXICO IN 2014

### **4- WITH REGARD TO THE REGIONAL ISP**

- PREPARE CAMPAIGN MATERIAL ON WORKERS RIGHTS AND SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS AS SPECIFIED IN THE PROJECT
- SET UP A COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ILGA, LAC AND THIS COMMITTEE
- SEE WHICH LGBT THEMES ARE BEING DISCUSSED IN THE OAS
- MONITOR AND PUBLISH THE ILGA MAP OF LGBT RIGHTS IN THE REGION
- PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMITTEE TO COMBAT RACISM IN THE ISP AMERICAS AS WELL AS WITH THE YOUNG WORKERS AND WOMEN’S COMMITTEES TO PROPOSE ALLIANCES AMONG THE GROUPS THAT SUFFER DISCRIMINATION IN UNIONS
- MAKE AN LGBT ISP AMERICAS BANNER TO USE AT SEMINARS, CONFERENCES ETC. WITH THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW

In addition, two motions were approved: one OPOSED TO THE GAY “CURE” PROJECT now being discussed in Brazil and the other AGAINST THE REPLACEMENT OF THE US AMBASSADOR TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FOR BEING A GAY MILITANT

### **7. MEETING EVALUATION**

The meeting was considered to be excellent by the participants who said that they were really excited about the formation of the Committees and the approval of the Plans of Work. The representatives from Brazil were especially pleased to see that the work that they had been doing on a national level will now be developed on a regional level.

**8 – FINANCIAL INFORMATION:** Is on file with the ISP Accounting Department

**Monica Valente**

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Regional Secretary ISP Americas