**Consulta abierta con el Experto Independiente sobre protección contra la violencia y la discriminación por motivos de orientación sexual e identidad de género.**

**5 de Febrero de 2020**

**Intervención de Uruguay**

Let me begin by thanking the IE for convening this consultation, in which is our pleasure to participate.

We also take this opportunity to stress our strong support to the work of the IE and its good practices, including in the drafting of its next report on conversion therapies, that we are sure will contribute to the better understanding of this concerning issue by the international community.

At our national level, conversion therapies have been identified as harmful to the people targeted by them, and efforts are made to ensure that if somebody tries to offer this kind of treatments, it will be reported to the Ministry of Public Health.

As an example, the **“guide for health professionals regarding sexual and reproductive health”**, published in 2016 through a joint effort of the Ministry of Health, the University, civil society and UNFPA, includes information regarding the conversion therapies. This is the reference document used to train medical and other health related students, and is also part of the permanent training of the existing professionals. (<https://psico.edu.uy/novedades/salud-y-diversidad-sexual-guia>)

In effect, the guide considers that this type of practices are based in discriminatory assumptions with the aim of redirecting the desire of LGBT people. The guide for health professionals also stresses that the conversion therapies are against the fundamental human rights of LGBT people, and that when applied, they can lead to counterproductive effects, as the increase of the homophobia, depression and anxiety, self-rejection, low self-esteem, self-destructive behaviors and distrust in health care, and especially mental health, professionals.

At the same time, the guide emphasizes that the conversion therapies are opposed to affirmative therapies, that seek to reinforce each person sexual orientation and gender identity, recognizing the validity of their personal options.

In 2010, Uruguay also started, with the support of UNFPA, the project called **“health center frees from homofobia”** (<https://uruguay.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/151_file2_2.pdf>). In addition to trainings with different stakeholders, as part of the project, for example, banners have been placed in health centers waiting rooms to raise awareness on the damages of the conversion therapies.

Finally, we also want to share another national experience: the creation of the **“Friendly reference center”** (Cram) by the University of Psychology and the Minister of Social Development of Uruguay, that offers free psychological services to the LGBTIQ people and works to avoid discrimination towards the LGBTIQ community in the health services since 2013 (<https://cram.psico.edu.uy/>).

Indeed, as part of the efforts made by Uruguay to detect and combat any bad practice at the health services level, through the work of that Center, a Guide was published with the objective of helping to recognize a good psychological intervention practice with LGBTIQ+ patients. (<https://psico.edu.uy/sites/default/pub_files/2019-12/Flyer.pdf>)