**Research Report**

**General Assembly 2**

***The question of LGBTQI+ rights in religious environments***

Student Officers:

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**Introduction:**

The question of LGBTQI+ rights in religious environments is a complex and ongoing debate between traditional religious teachings and the evolving societal views on sexual orientation and gender identity. Historically, many religious institutions have held conservative positions on LGBTQI+ issues, often citing texts and doctrines to justify it. However, over time, there has been a growing movement within a lot of religious communities advocating for LGBTQI+ inclusion, calling for the recognition of LGBTQI+ rights as a matter of social justice and human dignity.

While some religious groups have adopted policies of full inclusion, others continue to uphold traditional views on marriage and sexuality. This divide has caused intense discussions about the role of religion in shaping public policy and individual rights.

Despite improvements in how LGBTQI+ individuals are treated, especially in more progressive places, discrimination is still a major issue. In many countries, same-sex relationships are still illegal, and laws against transgender rights are common. Religious beliefs play a big part in this, as many religious groups believe that same-sex relationships and non-binary gender identities go against their faith’s teachings. These beliefs often lead to a rejection of LGBTQI+ people in religious communities.

The discussion surrounding LGBTQI+ rights and religion focuses on the intersection of faith, freedom of expression, and the rights of marginalized communities. While supporters argue that equal rights for all individuals are fundamental human rights that come before religious doctrines, there is resistance in many religious settings, where groups rely on traditional teachings to justify not accepting LGBTQI+ people. Bridging this gap requires discussions to find ways to respect religious beliefs while ensuring that LGBTQI+ individuals are treated fairly and equally. Different religions and communities interpret this issue in various ways, which adds to the complexity.

**The Committee**

General Assembly 2 is a fairly ordinary committee, meaning there are no special Rules of Procedure specific to this committee. In MUNA, General Assembly 2 deals with issues on human rights, which can include an immense number of topics. In this General Assembly, nations come together to discuss one’s (individual) rights and find solutions in a peaceful and respectful manner. When debating on different solutions, it is important to note money is not an issue as nations can call upon the UN’s unlimited funds. Hence, a delegate should never vote or speak against a resolution because of financial reasons.

An important fact to note is that the real Second Committee deals with economic and financial issues and that the Human Rights Council would actually discuss the issues we do in this committee. Due to restrictions in space, human rights are being dealt with in General Assembly 2.

**Keywords**

**LGBTQI+**: acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex. The "+" symbol represents the inclusion of other sexual orientations and gender identities that fall under the broader spectrum of sexuality and gender diversity.

**Marginalized**: treated as insignificant

**Doctrines**: set of principles or beliefs that are promoted and taught by an organization, such as a church, political party, or other group.

**Celibate**: abstaining from marriage and sexual intercourse

**Arguments:**

Many faiths actively welcome LGBTQI+ people. Excluding people for their identity goes against the core values of dignity found in most religions. On the other hand, some religious communities believe their traditions on gender and sexuality are central to their faith. They argue that practicing these beliefs is an important part of religious freedom. However, oppositions say this can lead to harmful stereotypes and discrimination against LGBTQI+ individuals.

The Universal Declaration of Human rights and the Vienna Declaration should be kept in mind, which stress that individuals have the right to live free from discrimination and violence. The discrimination in religious settings can be seen as a denial of these fundamental rights.

**Timeline of events:**

**1869**: The term "homosexuality" is created, challenging religious and societal norms against same-sex relationships​

**1968**: The Metropolitan Community Church is founded, focusing on LGBTQI+ inclusion within Christianity​

**1993**: The Evangelical Lutheran Church allows celibate LGBTQI+ clergy

**2003**: The Episcopal Church appoints Gene Robinson, the first openly gay bishop

**2011**: UN Human Rights Council Resolution. The first UN resolution addressing LGBTQI+ rights

**2015**: Pope Francis advocates for a more compassionate Catholic stance on LGBTQI+ issues, though no doctrinal changes follow​

**Present**: Progressive religious groups increasingly support LGBTQI+ rights, while traditionalist groups continue to resist

**Resolution:**

When composing a resolution, a delegate should carefully consider their country’s perspective and opinion on the matter. This research report is a good starting point for your research. Try to think of ways that offer a solution for all countries involved to protect cultural diversity of national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities. Remember to focus on all nations in the world keeping in mind the different crises in the world and the effects people all over the world experience from them. Make sure the measurements are realistic and achievable.

Moreover, you should keep in mind that different countries have different policies and keep the global differences in mind. These differences might be economic; however, they are also largely cultural. Make sure to research your country in detail, and keep in mind that you are speaking as if representing that nation. Therefore, make sure to have done some research about your country’s policies before joining the conference.

**Useful sites:**

* <https://lawblogs.uc.edu/ihrlr/2024/05/17/navigating-the-intersection-of-religion-and-lgbtqi-human-rights-recent-developments-and-ongoing-challenges/>
* <https://lifesupportscounselling.com.au/resources/blogs/what-does-it-mean-to-be-lgbtqiplus/#:~:text=LGBTQI%2B%20is%20an%20acronym%20for,LGBTQI%2B>
* <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/06/freedom-religion-or-belief-not-incompatible-equality-lgbt-persons-un-expert>
* <https://www.un.org/en/lgbtiq-people>
* <https://home.heinonline.org/content/lgbtq-rights/>
* <https://time.com/3975630/pope-francis-lgbt-issues/>
* <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/from-lgbt-to-lgbtqia-the-evolving-recognition-of-identity/>
* <https://home.heinonline.org/content/lgbtq-rights/>
* <https://www.cfr.org/article/changing-landscape-global-lgbtq-rights>