Research Report

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Forum: *Human Rights Council*
Issue: *Transgender health and human rights*

Position: *President*

Introduction

We live in a world that is rapidly changing. Due to globalization, political and social issues are globally discussed and human rights are criticized and improved. By means of the internet, more and more people have the chance to express themselves, albeit anonymously. Subjects that used to be taboo are now somewhat discussable. However, this unfortunately does not mean that we now live in a world that fully accepts everyone. To this day, discrimination is still very much alive and people are still shamed for expressing themselves. For this reason, transgender health and human rights is a very important topic to discuss. There is still a lot to improve and a lot to change and it is time to openly try to change this. In this research report, the definition of key terms in this issue will be given, followed by a general overview, major parties involved and solutions for this problem.

Definition of Key Terms

Transgender:
In this research report, the term transgender is used as a term for 'trans people'. This includes all people that do not identify themselves with the gender they were born as. Either because they feel like the opposite gender (and may or may not want to undergo a sex change operation) or because they do not identify themselves as man or woman, but as the so called third gender.

General Overview

As mentioned in the introduction, due to globalization, our world is changing and becoming more accepting. However, this does not mean that all is well and good. Transgenders may be a more open topic right now, but there are definitely still problems. Due to discrimination, transgenders do not always have access to the things they have the right to. This happens on a lot of levels, from school to work and even healthcare.
There are no numbers on exactly how many transgenders there are, since not all visit clinics or undergo a sex change. This means that it is very hard to keep track of these people and to make sure they have access to healthcare, school and even a workplace.
Right now, transgenders do not always have access to these essential things. Violence, stigma, social exclusion and discrimination harm transgenders' health and wellbeing. Because of discrimination, younger transgenders can decide to stop going to school or college. Due to not having finished their education, especially in non-Western countries, they are forced to work in the sex industry.
Even in workplaces, transgenders are often discriminated. Not only harming words, but also violence is a very common occurrence in the lives of transgenders. Between the 1st of January 2008 and the 31st of October 2013, there were 1,374 reported killings of trans

people in 60 countries, collected by the Trans Murder Monitoring projects[1].
Not only discrimination is a real problem. The fact that not all countries have legal gender recognition forms a major issue. This means that in some countries, after having changed sexes, a person's papers are not accepted anymore, meaning that they are denied of basic human rights, such as healthcare.
Aside from accepting sex change, some states do not recognize the third gender. This means that people who do not identify themselves as either male or female, are not even recognized as people.
This discrimination also deters transgenders from seeking HIV help, which is especially important. Apart from normal healthcare and HIV help, transgenders should also always have access to extra services, like hormones. This is not the case at all right now.
Even though this all sounds very depressing, the internet could be a very positive development and it already is. The internet is creating a platform for people to express themselves exactly how they want to, which also causes positivity and acceptance to grow. However, the negative side of internet – anonymous hate and irrelevant information – should not be able to take over.
Right now, discrimination is still major and it is preventing transgenders from living the life they deserve. They should be protected from discrimination and given access to all human rights. As mentioned before, this does not only mean that discrimination should not exclude them from school, work and healthcare, but also that they should be offered extra services, like hormones and such.

Major Parties Involved

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP[2] works in nearly 170 countries, trying to reduce poverty and inequality. By releasing the discussion paper on Transgender health and human rights[3], they put this issue on the agenda. This paper was released in December 2013, but is still very accurate and informative. It is an important source for people to find out more about this issue and to find possible solutions.

The Organization of American States (OAS)

The OAS[4] is the world's oldest regional organization. It is important in this issue because it has strongly affirmed the rights of transgenders by adopting four General Assembly resolutions on this topic and by adopting the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance. This has secured the rights of transgenders, since they are explicitly mentioned in this document.

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[1] http://tgeu.org/tmm/
[2] http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/about_us.html
[3] http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/HIV-AIDS/Governance%20of%20HIV%20Responses/Trans%20Health%20&%20Human%20Rights.pdf
[4] http://www.oas.org/en/about/who_we_are.asp

The Trans Murder Monitoring Project
As mentioned before, the Trans Murder Monitoring Project keeps track of murders against transgenders (specifically targeted against them because they are transgender). This is a very important organization because it shows how many work still needs to be done.

Timeline of Events

A lot of important events have happened concerning transgenders. However, not all are of the same importance. The ones that have had the biggest impact on this specific issue are listed below.

1952	Christine Jorgenssen creates awareness of trans issues.
1966	Compton Cafeteria Riots
1972	Sweden legalizes Gender Reassignment
1993	Transgender youth Brandon Teena is murdered in Nebraska
1999	First Transgender Day of Remembrance
2002	Transgender Law Center founded
2012	EEOC declares transgender employees protected

Previous Attemps to solve the issue

As seen in the timeline of events, this issue has only been on the political agenda for about sixty years. However, that does not mean it did not exist before this time.
As shown above, a lot of action has already been undertaken. However, definitely not enough. Most of these events happened in the United States of America, where the problem is indeed big, but the issue is most relevant in the non-Western part of the world, where not so much attempts have been made to solve this issue.

Possible Solutions

An endless list of possible solutions could be given, since this is a very broad topic. On very diverse events, more than one solution could be given.
First of all, to even start remediating this problem, legal gender recognition should be applied in every single country in the world, as well as the recognition of the third gender.

In this way, all transgenders can be legally accepted, which helps giving them access to healthcare.
Furthermore, awareness should be spread, starting in primary school. This will help reduce discrimination, since the topic will then be known to more people. In this way, the number of transgenders that drop out of school due to discrimination will decrease, meaning that they can continue their education. As a result, less transgenders will end up working in the sex industry.
Moreover, crimes against transgenders should be prevented and punished more severely. The number of murders mentioned before is enormous. By spreading more awareness and punishing less severe crimes against transgenders harder, this could be prevented.
Also, a way should be found to keep track of all transgenders, to make sure that they get the right healthcare and that they do not encounter dangerous situations due to discrimination. For example, more talk groups or safe places should be installed.
In addition, healthcare should be provided for everyone. Hormones and HIV-treatment should not be something special, but accessible to all transgenders. Again, this will also help spread awareness, thus reducing crimes against transgenders.
Lastly, smaller solutions, such as non-gender restrooms, should also be considered.
There are a lot more solutions to be thought of and there is definitely some work to do. However, if all states are able to work together to create a safer world for transgenders, in which they are recognized and helped, this issue will hopefully soon be one of the past.

Useful documents

UNDP Discussion Paper on Transgender health and human rights - http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/HIV-AIDS/Governance%20of%20HIV%20Responses/Trans%20Health%20&%20Human%20Rights.pdf