

**United Nations Human Rights Council, 53rd Session  
19 June 2023 to 14 July 2023  
Item 4 – ID with IE on sexual orientation and gender identity  
Speaker: Joint representative for Humanists UK<sup>1</sup> and Ozanne Foundation:  
Jayne Ozanne**

This intervention is made jointly by Humanists UK and the Ozanne Foundation.

We believe that to counter the religious harm caused to LGBT+ people one must first provide irrefutable evidence of that harm, which this excellent report so powerfully does, and then encourage religious leaders to admit, apologise for, and address the harm caused.

That is why I launched the Global Interfaith Commission on LGBT+ Lives in December 2020, which brought together hundreds of senior faith leaders from around the world to sign a Declaration where they admitted ‘certain religious teachings have often caused and continue to cause deep pain and offense to those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and intersex’.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, they ‘acknowledged with profound regret’ that some religious teachings ‘have created and continue to create oppressive systems that fuel intolerance, perpetuate injustice and result in violence’.<sup>3</sup>

Importantly, they called ‘for an end to criminalisation on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, for violence against LGBT+ people to be condemned and for justice to be done on their behalf’ They also called for a global ban on harmful ‘conversion practices’ that seek to ‘change, suppress, or erase a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity’.<sup>4</sup>

Will the Independent Expert urge religious leaders from all UN member states to sign the Declaration and encourage humanists to support this common goal?

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<sup>1</sup> Humanists UK is the operating name of the British Humanist Association.

<sup>2</sup> Global Interfaith Commission on LGBT+ Lives, <https://globalinterfaith.lgbt/>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.