

APRFF2018 Statement in honour of the Global Day of Parents

Hong Kong, 1st June 2018 - This joint statement was developed over the course of the *2018 Asia-Pacific Rainbow Families Forum* (APRFF2018), held from May 11th - May 13th, 2018 in Hong Kong, by Asia and Pacific community organisations, allies and independent advocates.

APRFF2018 have chosen to release this statement to coincide with the [United Nations Global Day of Parents](#), a day observed on the 1st June every year since the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) [resolution A/RES/66/292](#). Based on [Article 16](#) of the Universal Human Rights Declaration (UDHR), it honours parents throughout the world for their selfless commitment to children and their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship.

[On 27th April 2011](#), the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN CESCR) [stated](#) that, "The forms of families have changed and will continue to change. Therefore, we encounter very different family forms today. This is not surprising against the background of the economic, cultural and political changes, but rather a normal part of the continuous change of society in general."

Today is an occasion to remember that families remain at the centre of social life ensuring the well-being of their members, educating and socialising children and youth, and caring for young and old. In particular, family-oriented policies can contribute to the achievement of the [Sustainable Development Goals 2030](#), specifically Goals 1 - 5 relating to:

- overcoming poverty and hunger;
- ensuring healthy lives;
- promoting well-being for all ages;
- ensuring educational opportunities throughout a person's lifespan; and
- achieving gender equality.

Rainbow Families are families headed by LGBTIQ+ or SOGIESC identifying adults, with children, or those seeking and planning to have children.

On May 3rd 2018 at the [official launch](#) of International Equality Day in Geneva, Bess Hepworth affirmed that, "indisputable to anyone, is the undeniable fact that the family is the most important system within human society for children. We know that children don't fear diversity, variation or difference, in fact they celebrate it, until they are taught not to."

We as Rainbow Families representing the Asia-Pacific region, wish to highlight the importance of visibility, engagement, full inclusion, safety and health of our families, and all the individuals who make up these families, within communities and jurisdictions of the Asia-Pacific.

We believe that Rainbow Families are formed in a myriad of ways, and above all seek to support the positive development of children to become thriving and contributing citizens by providing loving environments that are safe, developmentally appropriate, and provide for all the children's basic needs.

We seek the recognition of all families, not just those formed through biological or

short-sighted legal means, but inclusive of those formed through adoption, kinship, foster care, surrogacy, and out of emergency need focused on the needs of children.

We call on governments, UN bodies, public and private institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs), community and individual leaders globally to:

1) Proactively work on legislative frameworks that:

- a. Protect Rainbow Families and their members from discrimination, violence (physical, emotional, economic), and violations of human rights;
- b. Recognise all members of Rainbow Families legally, inclusive of all the associated government documentation connected to this recognition (e.g. immigration status, welfare benefits, birth certificates, etc.);
- c. Recognise and fully integrate Rainbow Families as an established family unit in all our communities.

2) Provide timely and cost effective services included by not limited to:

- a. Reproductive services;
- b. Mental health services;
- c. Educational and child-care services;
- d. Training and support for social service professionals to be able to effectively work with Rainbow Families;
- d. Other specific social and health supports needed by Rainbow Families within the SOGIESC community context.

3) Provide assistance and support to civil society organisations, including faith and secular groups, to:

- a. Ensure the voice of Rainbow Families, including children, be heard as a crucial part of the dialogue about families;
- b. Encourage peer support for Rainbow Families by providing safe meeting spaces and fostering knowledge-sharing;
- c. Create safe spaces for Rainbow Families and peer lead support programs;
- d. Strengthen relationships across community and indigenous groups locally, regionally and globally;
- e. Highlight the need to access, participate in, contribute to and benefit from social, political and economic systems to ensure the development of equity and equality for all Rainbow Families.
- f. Develop policies that ensure adequate representation for Rainbow families and vulnerable groups in governance and leadership roles, to foster peaceful and inclusive societies, in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) n°16

We support the idea that as the center of humanity's social life, families are the bedrock of any functioning society. The family unit acts to protect, nurture and support children, help children to avoid poverty and hunger, promote the health and well-being of all members, and reciprocally supports strong communities and society.

In conclusion, our entreaties contained in this statement are not requests for new rights or additional privileges, but are simply to equalise laws and policies to ensure that all families are recognized, can thrive and contribute to the greater good of society..

“It's about all families – single-parent, indigenous, multi-generational, families of choice – and the values that are expressed through relationships of kinship, parenting, brotherhood,

sisterhood, friendship, partnership, community and so many more!. We need to open the door wide, not try to close it.”

Finally, we are thrilled to officially announce that the next Asia-Pacific Rainbow Families Forum will be in the Kingdom of Tonga in July, 2022 and hosted by the Tonga Leitis Association and organised by Planet Ally and IFED. See you there!

For more information, please contact bess@planetally.org

This APRFF2018 Statement is Signed By the Following Advocates and Organisations:

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Kelsey Hadjirul - DAKILA Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism
Bess Hepworth - Planet Ally and International Family Equality Day
Toni Kruger-Ayebazibwe - GIN-SSOGIE
Victoria Petitjean - GIN-SSOGIE
Jay Lin- Taiwan - Taiwan LGBT Family Rights Advocacy
Amao Leota Lu - Public Speaker, Performer and Fa'afafine activist
Celine Martin - Destination Justice
Jason Masters - Uniting Network (NSW/ACT) within the Uniting Church of Australia NSW/ACT Synod
Joleen Mataele - Tonga Leitis Association
Kumiko Matsumoto - Niji-ro-Kazoku (Rainbow Family Japan)
Sushant Naidu - Inspire Spiritual Communities and GIN-SSOGIE
Kakay Pamaran - Metropolitan Community Church of the Quad Cities (MCCQC), GIN-SSOGIE
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Mitch Yusof - SEED and Asia-Pacific Transgender Network
Lini Zurlia - ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, Indonesia



SPARKING CHANGE



台灣同志家庭權益促進會
Taiwan LGBT Family Rights Advocacy



International Family Equality Day

Celebrating the Rainbow of families in our world!



Event Organisers

Planet Ally

Founded in 2016, our mission is to build a planet of allies. As a leading nonprofit dedicated to empowering allyship, we give people the resources and tools to advance human rights and help build stronger, more resilient communities. Our flagship events are the Asia-Pacific Rainbow Families Forum, Miles of Love Travel Forum and the Human Dignity Festival. Across APAC and MENA, we empower communities online, on the ground and when travelling. "We want to live on a planet of allies!"

IFED

The first International Family Equality Day (IFED) was launched in 2012 as a sign of solidarity and pride to promote equality for all families. The 7th International Family Equality Day in 2017 was commemorated in 102 towns and 44 countries worldwide, whether on a smaller scale with picnics, gathering together, celebrating in safe spaces or with big public events. The Council of Europe recognises the IFED as an important tool to combat homophobia and transphobia and to promote a tolerant and cohesive society.

The Global Day of Parents

The Global Day of Parents is observed on the 1st June every year. The Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2012 with resolution A/RES/66/292 and honours parents throughout the world. The Global Day provides an opportunity to appreciate all parents, in all parts of the world, for their selfless commitment to children and their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship.

Since the 1980s, the important role of the family has increasingly come to the attention of the international community. The General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions, and proclaimed the International Year of the Family and the International Day of Families.

Emphasizing the critical role of parents in the rearing of children, the Global Day of Parents recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children. For the full and harmonious development of their personality, children should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.