

REPORT BACK

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY & LGBTQI+ CRISIS RESPONSE: NEW TRENDS IN DISPLACEMENT

UNITED NATIONS SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE SIDE EVENT



CO-SPONSORS

Outright International

Equal Rights Coalition

Permanent Mission of Malta
to the United Nations New York

Permanent Mission of Colombia
to the United Nations New York

Government of Canada

SPEAKERS

Dr. Nishin Nathwani
Head of Strategy at Rainbow Railroad

Ambassador Bob Rae
Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN,
and President of the UN Economic and Social
Council (ECOSOC)

Graeme Reid
UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation
and Gender Identity

Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta
to the United Nations

Ambassador Juan José Quintana
Permanent Representative of Colombia
to the United Nations

Richard Wilson
Executive Director of Lighthouse
Equality Advocacy Project

André Du Plessis
United Nations Program Director
at Outright International

Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala
Director of UNHCR Office in New York

COVER: Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala,
Director of UNHCR Office in New York

All photos in this report are credited to
Andrew Kelly, 2024

AT A GLANCE

Key Themes Discussed	3
Key Recommendations for Action	4
Introduction	5
International Peace and Security & LGBTQI+ Crisis Response	6
Enhanced Multilateralism and International Peace and Security	7
Key Interventions	8
Panel Reflections	10
Conclusion	15



KEY THEMES DISCUSSED

- Panelists discussed how increased multilateralism can enhance international peace and security.
- Experts discussed how to integrate the perspectives of LGBTQI+ persons in crisis contexts to collectively re-envision how the international community adapts and responds to threats to human rights.
- Participants shared examples of successful partnerships with states, international organizations, and civil society, and identified areas where countries can champion the fight against LGBTQI+ persecution.
- State representatives and UNHCR provided insights into programming and pathways intended to reach and prioritize LGBTQI+ persons in forced displacement, while a speaker with lived expertise shared some of the challenges and intersecting barriers faced by LGBTQI+ persons navigating the international refugee and asylum apparatus.
- Speakers shared how queer perspectives can be integrated into global agreements such as the [Pact for the Future](#) and in the [Declaration on Future Generations](#).
- Experts explained how the global anti-gender movement is not only leading to legislative and social regressions that target LGBTQI+ communities, but also has broader implications for rising authoritarianism and destabilizing international peace and security.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Mainstream LGBTQI+ perspectives into broader discussions of forced displacement, humanitarian protection, and peace and security.
- Mainstream the perspectives of LGBTQI+ persons at every level of crisis response efforts: from monitoring of early warning systems, to active humanitarian protection and forced displacement initiatives, to post-conflict peace-building efforts.
- Coordinate responses between multilateral entities, states, and civil society organizations who are best placed to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ persons amidst the global forced displacement crisis.
- Leverage existing international mechanisms and fora to enhance support to at-risk LGBTQI+ communities in crisis-affected contexts including: the Equal Rights Coalition, the UN LGBTQI+ Core Group, councils such as the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, agencies such as UNHCR, offices of Independent Experts such as the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and resolutions such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
- Create new opportunities for multilateral coordination on international crisis response affecting LGBTQI+ persons through fora such as the [Queer Forced Displacement Initiative](#).



INTRODUCTION

Rainbow Railroad convened and moderated a timely dialogue on “International Peace and Security and LGBTQI+ Crisis Response” in a side event for the [United Nations Summit of the Future](#). The Summit is a high-level event that focuses on building a better present by bringing world leaders together to forge a new international consensus and foster global cooperation to improve political and economic structures as a way of safeguarding a better future for all.

This event took place through the co-sponsorship of Outright International, the Equal Rights Coalition, and the Governments of Malta, Colombia, and Canada, and through close collaboration with UNHCR’s Division of International Protection and its New York Office, as well as the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

Rainbow Railroad was able to convene this discussion because of recently granted special consultative status under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which enables us to bring grassroots partners and refugees into high level meetings, providing a platform for those who lack the resources to attain this status themselves.

Dr. Nishin Nathwani, Head of Strategy at Rainbow Railroad, moderated the discussion which featured expert interventions from:

- Ambassador Bob Rae, Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, and President of the UN Economic and Social Council
- Graeme Reid, UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations
- Ambassador Juan José Quintana, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations
- Richard Wilson, Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project
- André Du Plessis, United Nations Program Director at Outright International
- Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala, Director of UNHCR Office in New York



From left to right: Pax Santos, Director of Advocacy at Rainbow Railroad, André Du Plessis, United Nations Program Director at Outright International, Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala, Director of UNHCR Office in New York, Graeme Reid, UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Ambassador Bob Rae, Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, and President of the UN Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Juan José Quintana, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, Dr. Nishin Nathwani, Head of Strategy at Rainbow Railroad, Richard Wilson, Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project



Graeme Reid, UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY & LGBTQI+ CRISIS RESPONSE

Over the past three years, Rainbow Railroad has seen a steady rise of laws and policies that newly target LGBTQI+ individuals, even as many countries and regions have made meaningful strides toward inclusion in their legal and policy frameworks. The emergence of what has been called the global anti-gender movement has mobilized a coalition of populist groups and funders to target a wide range of programming including sexuality education, and discussion on sexual and reproductive rights. This rising tide of legislative and social changes that newly target LGBTQI+ communities presents an urgent global issue.

In several regions, Rainbow Railroad has observed a marked increase in the appeal to “morality” and “public order” as pretexts to restrict LGBTQI+ rights, which not only contravene international human rights norms but also disrupt the social and legal protections necessary for peace and security writ large. Legislative regression and democratic backsliding are undermining peace and security in multiple regions with stark consequences for LGBTQI+ people.

The spectrum of trends we are observing ranges from punitive laws against same-sex intimacy to subtler forms of legal regression, such as the erosion of anti-discrimination protections and constraints on freedom of expression, particularly for LGBTQI+ civil society organizations and human rights defenders. These developments have real-world implications, often forcing LGBTQI+ individuals into precarious, and sometimes life-threatening, situations and all too often into forced displacement from their communities and countries. These crises are prompting a collective need to rethink the landscape of how the international community adapts and responds to threats to the protection of LGBTQI+ human rights.

ENHANCED MULTILATERALISM AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Experts explained how the global anti-gender movement is not only leading to legislative and social regressions that target LGBTQI+ communities, but also has broader implications for rising authoritarianism and destabilizing international peace and security. In response, the session explored how multilateral partnership can contribute to international peace and security.

Participants noted how LGBTQI+ civil society continues to organize and generate practical and innovative solutions to complex global challenges, understanding that LGBTQI+ civil society cannot act in isolation and requires collaboration and support by the broader UN humanitarian coordination system. Speakers shared examples of successful partnerships between civil society organizations and states, and identified opportunities for state actors to champion the fight against LGBTQI+ persecution.

Experts highlighted the ongoing mobilization of populist groups and funders targeting a wide range of LGBTQI+ friendly programming and policies under the anti-gender movement. This underscored how the global anti-gender movement is driving legislative and social regression aimed at LGBTQI+ communities, and forcibly displacing them from their homes. LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees often face distinct challenges on their journeys to find safety relative to other migrants, including heightened risks of violence, marginalization, and discrimination, lowered access or exclusion from traditional humanitarian protection systems, and limited opportunities for local integration.

In the midst of these challenging conditions, LGBTQI+ individuals, organizations and protection actors across the globe are generating creative strategies and solutions reflective of the unique needs and perspectives of forcibly displaced people with diverse identities. State representatives and UNHCR shared insights into programs and pathways designed to prioritize LGBTQI+

persons in forced displacement. A speaker with lived expertise shared some of their own experiences navigating challenges in the international refugee and asylum apparatus as well.

The panel emphasized how international mechanisms have been successfully utilized and could be further leveraged to enhance support for at-risk LGBTQI+ communities in crisis-affected contexts. Guest shared the importance of integrating LGBTQI+ perspectives into the [Pact for the Future](#) and in the [Declaration on Future Generations](#) where possible, despite growing state pushback about mentioning LGBTQI+ persons in shared agreements. Panelists also emphasized the importance of understanding global humanitarian systems from an intersectional perspective, and recognizing the complexities faced by those experiencing multiple forms of marginalization. Finally, there was collective understanding that strengthening multilateralism is pivotal to enhancing humanitarian responses, supporting forcibly displaced LGBTQI+ persons, and fostering conditions for enduring peace and security.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

Dr. Nishin Nathwani acknowledged how the recent surge in legislative rollbacks targeting the safety and rights of LGBTQI+ persons poses significant threats to global peace and security. The global anti-gender movement has intensified its efforts to undermine a broad spectrum of rights affecting LGBTQI+ people, and this trend of democratic regression and growing persecution contributes to increased instances of forced displacement. Dr. Nathwani outlined the need to prioritize inclusion and dignity for all, and leverage spaces such as the Summit of the Future in order to effectively address crises in the future.

H.E. Ambassador Bob Rae described Canada's commitments to advancing LGBTQI+ rights internationally as outlined in frameworks such as the [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#). The Ambassador highlighted that forced displacement has doubled in the past decade, and while current data does not specify the number of LGBTQI+ individuals affected, evidence suggests they are disproportionately represented due to multiple geopolitical crises, the rise of the anti-gender movement, and increasing criminalization.

The Ambassador noted the particular challenges LGBTQI+ persons face in forced displacement: "At all stages of their journey, forcibly displaced LGBTQI+ persons face risks of violence, abuse, and exploitation. These risks include by immigration security authorities, traffickers, smugglers, and even within hosts and refugee communities."

In response, the Ambassador referenced Canada's recent partnership with Rainbow Railroad to refer LGBTQI+ refugees to Canada. Given the current context, he explained, "it's critical for us to say how pleased we are to have been able to launch a new partnership with Rainbow Railroad."

Finally, Ambassador Bob Rae cautioned that anti-gender political organizers are making efforts in various UN bodies, including the General Assembly, to roll back progress made on inclusion and protection of LGBTQI+ persons.



AT ALL STAGES OF THEIR JOURNEY, FORCIBLY DISPLACED LGBTQI+ PERSONS FACE RISKS OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE, AND EXPLOITATION. THESE RISKS INCLUDE BY IMMIGRATION SECURITY AUTHORITIES, TRAFFICKERS, SMUGGLERS, AND EVEN WITHIN HOSTS AND REFUGEE COMMUNITIES.

AMBASSADOR BOB RAE

UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (IE SOGI), Graeme Reid, also emphasized that forced displacement is at an all-time high, particularly for those at risk due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Driven by discriminatory laws and policies as well as pervasive homophobic attitudes, more than 65 countries still criminalize LGBTQI+ identity. On the issue of LGBTQI+ forced displacement, the IE remarked:

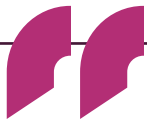
“I’ve had the good fortune of working with Rainbow Railroad in various capacities prior to taking up the role of Independent Expert. It’s their tailored expertise and depth of knowledge and understanding of the specific vulnerabilities of LGBTI+ people that makes them particularly well placed to address these issues. But the scale of the problem means that civil society organizations like Rainbow Railroad and others cannot do it alone.”

The IE SOGI also referenced his recent report on Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in relation to the human rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association ([A/HRC/56/49, April 2024](#)). The report highlights how freedom of expression, association, and participation are increasingly under threat, with anti-propaganda laws silencing LGBTQI+ activists and foreshadowing broader crackdowns on civil society.

The Independent Expert highlighted the [2021 Global Roundtable on Protection and Solutions for LGBTQI+ People in Forced Displacement](#), which was co-organized by his predecessor and led to four focal areas being identified by UNHCR:

1. Expand partnership and engagement with national and refugee-led LGBTIQ+ organizations, while fostering collaboration with global and regional LGBTIQ+ advocacy actors.
2. Invest in training/capacity development of UNHCR staff and partners to implement inclusive responses.
3. Improve systems and processes for ethical, safe, proportional, and standardized collection and recording of SOGIESC data.
4. Pursue strategic advocacy with States, humanitarian and development actors, and human rights mandate-holders.

Finally, the IE SOGI noted that, while LGBTQI+ civil society groups such as Rainbow Railroad have come up with creative practical solutions, wider multilateral coordination by institutional bodies with the capacity to address these issues is necessary: “Addressing forced displacement requires a coordinated response between multilateral entities, states, and civil society organizations who are best placed to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ people.”



I’VE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE OF WORKING WITH RAINBOW RAILROAD IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES PRIOR TO TAKING UP THE ROLE OF INDEPENDENT EXPERT. IT’S THEIR TAILORED EXPERTISE AND DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES OF LGBTI+ PEOPLE THAT MAKES THEM PARTICULARLY WELL PLACED TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES. BUT THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM MEANS THAT CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS LIKE RAINBOW RAILROAD AND OTHERS CANNOT DO IT ALONE.

GRAEME REID

UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity



PANEL REFLECTIONS

Supporting LGBTQI+ Persons in Forced Displacement

Experts shared their experiences responding to and supporting LGBTQI+ refugees seeking protection in fragile contexts. Given that many LGBTQI+ refugees are hosted in countries where their identities are criminalized, delivering services and ensuring access to resettlement remains a significant challenge.

Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala, Director of UNHCR Office in New York, explained how age, gender and diversity mainstreaming underpin UNHCR's approach to working with LGBTQI+ persons in forced displacement. Despite some countries welcoming refugees and having developed legal frameworks, many still deny asylum based on SOGIESC, forcing LGBTQI+ people into dangerous onward journeys, exposing them to even greater risks. Therefore UNHCR has adopted a coordinated regional approach across UNHCR country operations and with sister agencies and states, and other stakeholders such as Rainbow Railroad. Director Dhanapala also highlighted UNHCR's efforts to conduct needs assessments, evaluate conditions in countries of origin conditions and track persecution trends to ensure that LGBTQI+ individuals

can access third-country solutions and can disclose their identity safely.

UNHCR collaborates with domestic human rights institutions and other branches of the government, including the judiciary, to advance the rights of LGBTQI+ people. At the international level, UNHCR emphasized the importance of leveraging institutional spaces dedicated to refugee protection. The contributions of states such as the US, Canada, and Sweden were noted for their major pledges at the [UNHCR Global Refugee Forum](#) (GRF), which have been instrumental in providing third-country solutions where resettlement is the most appropriate option. Mr. Dhanapala also noted how spaces such as the GRF have evolved as evidenced by the high number of civil society organizations that engaged in December 2023.

UNHCR noted that partnering with local organizations is essential to fostering community-based protection in discriminatory contexts and advancing advocacy efforts. Mr. Dhanapala recognized that local LGBTQI+ communities play a critical role, as they are best equipped to understand specific challenges in their own contexts.



HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MY STORY AND LISTEN TO THE PROPOSED POLICIES AIMED AT SUPPORTING DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY, GAVE ME HOPE. I FELT THAT THE VOICES OF PEOPLE LIKE ME WERE NOT JUST BEING HEARD BUT ALSO INTEGRATED INTO SOLUTIONS THAT COULD MAKE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE. SEEING GLOBAL LEADERS TAKE OUR CONCERNS SERIOUSLY AND COMMIT TO TAKING ACTION WAS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL.

RICHARD WILSON

Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project

Integrating Intersectionality

In this vein, panelists recognized that those forced to navigate humanitarian systems understand their challenges better than anyone else. The Pact of the Future states “the importance of meeting the needs and aspiration of all young persons, including those in vulnerable situations and those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.” Richard Wilson, a human rights defender and activist originally from Jamaica, supported by Rainbow Railroad in resettling, shared their lived expertise on this issue. They expressed how these crises consist of real people seeking safety when their governments are failing to protect them. Richard described the challenges they faced settling as an immigrant in a new country, and how those living at the intersection of race, status, and SOGIE continue to be subjugated to anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-migrant sentiments. Richard particularly noted the additional barriers Black LGBTQI+ refugees face during resettlement.

Reflecting on this aspect of the conversation, Richard Wilson shared:

“Having the opportunity to share my story and listen to the proposed policies aimed at supporting displaced individuals, especially those in the LGBTQI+ community, gave me hope. I felt that the voices of people like me were

not just being heard but also integrated into solutions that could make a tangible difference. Seeing global leaders take our concerns seriously and commit to taking action was incredibly powerful.”

Leveraging the UN Security Council

Speaking to state support for LGBTQI+ issues and opportunities to leverage international institutions, H.E. Ms. Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations provided insights on how Malta has been mainstreaming LGBTQI+ persons and perspectives in international conversations. Malta has been a leader in advancing discussions on LGBTQI+ issues in the international peace and security sector, including through H.E. Frazier’s Presidency of the Security Council in February 2023 and April 2024, and Malta’s key role in the Equal Rights Coalition. H.E. Frazier expressed how the UN Security Council has largely remained silent on LGBTQI+ issues in conflict, with few discussions addressing the topic.

Malta recognized the importance of advocating for LGBTQI+ issues during peacetimes, and that instability and humanitarian crises exacerbate the existing marginalization experienced by LGBTQI+ persons, noting particular conflicts that have recently disproportionately affected LGBTQI+ communities in countries such as Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. Ms. Frazier shared how Malta advocates for intersectionality and inclusivity in UN peace and security efforts and frameworks, and pushes for more resolutions addressing sexual orientation and gender identity.

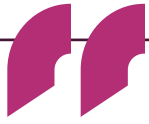
In April 2024, Colombia, Malta and Outright International supported a [landmark intervention](#) on the role of LGBTQI+ persons and civil society in post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building efforts. During their April Presidency of the Security Council, Malta invited Colombia Diversa, an LGBTQI+ civil society organization, to brief the UN Security Council in a regular session to discuss the importance of including LGBTQI+ people in peacebuilding and post-conflict discussions. This marked the first time the Security Council received such a briefing.

Ambassador Quintana, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, spoke to Colombia's support in coordinating Colombia Diversa's intervention, as well as the state's practical experience integrating the perspectives of LGBTQI+ persons into the post-crisis peace building and reconstruction process. Colombia facilitated the intervention by lesbian human rights defender, and Executive Director of Colombia Diversa, Marcela Sánchez, to brief the Security Council on the Colombian peace process. In their intervention, Sánchez "called for an end to attacks against LGBTQ persons in Colombia and demanded the full, equal, and safe participation of women and LGBTQ people in the implementation of Colombia's peace agreement." ([Outright International, April 2024](#)).

Despite this monumental achievement, H.E Quintana also spoke to the incremental nature of progress, highlighting the five year negotiation on Colombia's peace agreement that integrated gender issues, but which was ultimately defeated in a referendum due to prejudice against LGBTQI+ people.



Ambassador Bob Rae, Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, and President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)



THIS EVENT OPENED MY EYES TO THE GLOBAL NATURE OF THE LGBTQI+ CRISIS RESPONSE. IT SHOWED ME THAT WHILE THE STRUGGLES OF LGBTQI+ IMMIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE UNIQUE, THEY ARE NOT ISOLATED. THE PANEL GAVE ME A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPLEX INTERSECTION BETWEEN DISPLACEMENT, IDENTITY, AND SECURITY. IT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ADDRESSING THESE CRISES AND REASSURED ME THAT THERE ARE ONGOING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEMS IN PLACE TO PROTECT AND SUPPORT PEOPLE LIKE ME.

RICHARD WILSON
Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project

André du Plessis, Outright International's UN Program Director, spoke to the organization's leadership in bringing LGBTQI+ issues to the forefront of the UN agenda. Having supported Colombia Diversa's intervention at the Security Council, Outright has also been leading LGBTQI+ inclusion in other multilateral fora through the UN. André spoke about how the organization leverages their key role as Secretariat of the UN LGBTQI+ Core Group, an informal cross-regional group of 42 United Nations Member States. Outright co-sponsored the March 2023 Arria-formula meeting with the UN Security Council on Integrating the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons into the Council's Mandate for Maintaining International Peace and Security. The event was the first open informal Security Council meeting on LGBTQI+ issues. Outright also noted their work in supporting engagements by Iraqi activists, referencing their interventions in a closed-door Arria-formula meeting in 2015, on the targeting of LGBTQI+ persons in Syria and Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). André du Plessis acknowledged progress and challenges associated with addressing LGBTQI+ issues within the international system including experiences of prejudice within the UN itself.

Referencing the general lack of UN Security Council focus on displacement, UNHCR noted champions such as High Commissioner Sadako Ogata who actively advocated for its inclusion, as displacement both stems from and contributes to peace and security issues, thus offering hope for future discussions on LGBTQI+ concerns.

Partnering with LGBTQI+ Civil Society in Humanitarian Contexts

Outright also advocates for LGBTQI+ inclusion in humanitarian efforts, and has partnered with governments and the humanitarian coordination system. Outright launched an LGBTQI+ technical working group in Ukraine as a pilot to integrate inclusion into responses and recently held a global consultation to unite activists and humanitarians to discuss solutions.

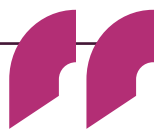
UNHCR highlighted partnerships with civil society organizations in crisis-affected contexts to support LGBTQI+ people in forced displacement, sharing best practices for collaboration. UNHCR enters into informal and formal partnerships with various LGBTQI+ organizations, and referenced the recent exchange of letters with Rainbow Railroad to engender closer collaboration on LGBTQI+ forced displacement.

UNHCR emphasized the importance of engaging directly with affected communities, including LGBTQI+ civil society groups, to tap into their knowledge, raise awareness, and promote non-discrimination. There are also examples of joint partnership with LGBTQI+ organizations through the UNHCR Innovation Fund, and other small grants to empower local LGBTQI+ organizations. UNHCR also works with local LGBTQI+ and feminist organizations to provide cash assistance, emergency shelter, and Sex and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) services.

Mr. Dhanapala also highlighted the way that inclusion of civil society and those with lived expertise is both new and becoming more normalized at the UN: “Engagement and inclusion are becoming much more modus operandi in these fora and summits. There was a time when states did not even want to hear from civil society to articulate their views. For the Summit of the Future, we have some 15 refugee youth representatives to interact at side events.”

Reflecting on the discussion, Richard Wilson emphasized the broader significance of such conversations:

“This event opened my eyes to the global nature of the LGBTQI+ crisis response. It showed me that while the struggles of LGBTQI+ immigrants and asylum seekers are unique, they are not isolated. The panel gave me a deeper understanding of the complex intersection between displacement, identity, and security. It also highlighted the importance of international cooperation in addressing these crises and reassured me that there are ongoing efforts to improve the systems in place to protect and support people like me.”



HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MY STORY AND LISTEN TO THE PROPOSED POLICIES AIMED AT SUPPORTING DISPLACED INDIVIDUALS, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE LGBTQI+ COMMUNITY, GAVE ME HOPE. I FELT THAT THE VOICES OF PEOPLE LIKE ME WERE NOT JUST BEING HEARD BUT ALSO INTEGRATED INTO SOLUTIONS THAT COULD MAKE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE. SEEING GLOBAL LEADERS TAKE OUR CONCERNS SERIOUSLY AND COMMIT TO TAKING ACTION WAS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL.

RICHARD WILSON

Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project

CONCLUSION

Collective action and partnerships in multilateral spaces are vital to bring LGBTQI+ perspectives to the forefront of global peace and security conversations, and convenings such as these are critical to generating creative solutions in international crisis response.

Summary

- Mainstream LGBTQI+ perspectives into broader discussions of forced displacement, humanitarian protection, and peace and security.
- Mainstream the perspectives of LGBTQI+ persons at every level of crisis response efforts: from monitoring of early warning systems, to active humanitarian protection and forced displacement initiatives, to post-conflict peace-building efforts.
- Coordinate responses between multilateral entities, states, and civil society organizations who are best placed to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQI+ persons amidst the global forced displacement crisis.
- Leverage existing international mechanisms and fora to enhance support to at-risk LGBTQI+ communities in crisis-affected contexts including: the Equal Rights Coalition, the UN LGBTQI+ Core Group, councils such as the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, agencies such as UNHCR, offices of Independent Experts such as the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, and resolutions such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
- Create new opportunities for multilateral coordination on international crisis response affecting LGBTQI+ persons through fora such as the Queer Forced Displacement Initiative.



Left to Right: Mr. Sivanka Dhanapala, Director of UNHCR Office in New York, Richard Wilson, Executive Director of Lighthouse Equality Advocacy Project, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, André Du Plessis, United Nations Program Director at Outright International, Ambassador Juan José Quintana, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Dr. Nishin Nathwani, Head of Strategy at Rainbow Railroad