

UN Secretary General Speaks Out Against the Persecution of LGBT People

For the first time in its history, the Secretary General of the United Nations directly addressed a United Nations Meeting specifically on the issues of sexual orientation and gender identity when Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon called for an end to human rights violations based on sexuality at the January 2011 session of the UN's Human Rights Council.

He said that the persecution of people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity should be rejected. He also said that when lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people get arrested, detained or executed, they still deserve support in the safeguarding of their fundamental human rights even when they may not have popular or political support.

"I understand that sexual orientation and gender identity raise sensitive cultural issues, but cultural practice cannot justify any violation of human rights," he said.

"When our fellow human beings are persecuted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity we must speak out... Human rights are human rights — everywhere, for everyone."