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UN LGBT RIGHTS DECLARATION

Written by staff  
Friday, 27 March 2009

**National News**

**Obama Administration Supports U.N. LGBT Rights Declaration  
Bush Administration Previously Refused to Sign**

The Obama administration formally endorsed a United Nations declaration calling for an end to discrimination and other human rights abuses based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The move is a reversal of the Bush administration's refusal to sign the statement, which made the United States the only western nation not to support the measure when presented by the U.N. General Assembly in December.

"This is a welcome step forward as it signals to the world that, after years of a hostile administration, the United States recognizes the humanity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people at home and abroad," said Human Rights Campaign (HRC) President Joe Solmonese in a statement. "We applaud the Obama administration for joining the other 66 member nations that have officially recognized that basic human rights include the equality of LGBT people."



"The United States supports the U.N.'s statement on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity and is pleased to join the other 66 U.N. member states who have declared their support," said the State Department in a statement. "The United States is an outspoken defender of human rights and critic of human rights abuses around the world. As such, we join with other supporters of this statement, and we will continue to remind countries of the importance of respecting the human rights of all people."

In December, HRC was among many lgbt organizations that were highly critical of the Bush administration's refusal to sign the declaration. Nearly 2,500 HRC members called the State Department urging it support the declaration.

HRC also released a joint statement denouncing the Vatican's opposition to the declaration. The statement, which was signed by faith program directors from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and National Black Justice Coalition, can be found read online by visiting, <http://www.hrc.org/news/11728.htm>.

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