

Press Statement

## **UPR Outcome Document: Indonesia Steps Forward, Philippines Steps Back**

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus Response to the Views on Conclusions presented by Indonesia and the Philippines, the State under review of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) 4th Cycle.

**JAKARTA-INDONESIA,** The human rights situation of both Indonesia and the Philippines were reviewed for the fourth time by the UN Human Rights Council through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in November 2022. The conclusion of the UPR of both countries took place during the 52nd regular session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva earlier today March 27, 2023.

Through the UPR, both countries received recommendations to advance the human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons. For Indonesia, 13 out of the 269 UPR recommendations were specific to SOGIESC. For the Philippines, 9 out of the 289 UPR recommendations tackled non-discrimination towards LGBTQIA+ persons.

“We believe that the recommendations received by both countries reflect the advocacy priorities of the LGBTQIA+ movements. These include the passage of legislations and policies protecting LGBTQIA+ persons from discrimination and violence, the repeal of legislations that jeopardises the human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons, and the prohibition of hate crimes. We thank UN member states for listening to advocates and amplifying our calls during their review of Indonesia and Philippines human rights records,” said Ryan Silverio, Executive Director of ASEAN SOGIE Caucus.

Interesting developments however surfaced as the UPR of both countries culminated. Indonesia, a country that has received global attention over human rights regressions resulting from recently passed penal legislation that allows the local government to penalize LGBT people, accepts 8 out of the 13 SOGIESC-specific UPR recommendations. Meanwhile, the Philippines, a country with a vibrant queer movement pushing for inclusive legislations, rejects all of the SOGIESC-specific UPR recommendations.

Arus Pelangi, Indonesia’s LGBTQIA+ federation, expressed appreciation towards the Indonesian government for the support of 8 SOGIESC-specific recommendations. Despite the acceptance of the SOGIESC recommendations, there remains concerns over the Indonesian government’s stance on the universality of human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons.

*“We believe that this adoption of the recommendations is a commitment of the state to protect the citizens' rights regardless of their SOGIESC. Nevertheless, we regret that the Indonesian government commented in their report that the human rights of LGBTQIA+ persons has not been universally agreed upon. We recognize that there are many international human rights standards that affirm our rights from the CEDAW to CRC, to general comments, and to the UN Human Rights Council Resolutions on SOGI,”* said Nono Sugiono, Chairperson of Arus Pelangi.

Activists from the Philippines expressed disappointment over the government's rejection of all SOGIESC-specific UPR recommendations.

"We remain hopeful that despite its rejection of SOGIESC recommendations, the government won't dilute the various initiatives of the LGBTQIA+ movement toward an inclusive Philippines. In the absence of clear support from the national government, particularly from the Executive, we believe that there are diverse ways to advance our rights at the local level with the support of civil society and the business community," said Angel Romero, Board of Trustee of the Philippine LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

In November 2022, the Philippine government shunned the SOGIESC-specific recommendations as "unacceptable" further commenting that they are about "same-sex marriage" which are contrary to local culture and religion.

For Media Inquiry

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