



The Council for Global Equality

August 12, 2025

U.S. State Department’s 2024 Human Rights Reports Erase LGBTQI+ Communities, Weakening U.S. Global Leadership on LGBTQI+ Human Rights Advocacy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Council for Global Equality condemns the drastic restructuring and glaring omission of violence and abuse targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons in the [U.S. State Department’s 2024 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) released today. Mandated by Congress and historically relied upon by human rights defenders, diplomats, legal practitioners, the press, and global advocates, these annual reports are instrumental in securing justice, shaping diplomatic engagement, and protecting individuals fleeing persecution worldwide.

“We denounce the Trump Administration’s efforts to politicize the State Department’s annual human rights reports by stripping longstanding references to human rights abuses targeting LGBTQI+ and other marginalized groups,” said Mark Bromley, Co-Chair of the Council for Global Equality. Bromley emphasized, “The reports are nearly six months late – presumably allowing time for the State Department to reorient the reports away from established international human rights standards and to strip all LGBTQI+ references from the initial reports that came in from U.S. embassies,” continued Bromley. “This is just the latest insult in the Administration’s wide-ranging assault on the rights of LGBTQI+ persons globally,” he emphasized.

“The Council for Global Equality urgently calls on Congress, U.S. diplomatic allies, and international human rights bodies to decry this selective approach to human rights,” added Julie Dorf, also Co-Chair of the Council for Global Equality. “Restoring comprehensive, factual, and inclusive reporting practices is essential to maintaining global human rights standards and effectively protecting all marginalized communities everywhere,” argues Dorf. “This shift undermines U.S. credibility and global leadership, but it is not surprising from this Administration, since they are joining a long list of countries that have demonized trans, nonbinary, and other LGBTQI+ people for political gain,” added Dorf.

The reports, finalized under Secretary of State Marco Rubio, represent a significant departure from the Department’s longstanding practice by omitting critical documentation of violence, discrimination, and abuses against LGBTQI+ persons and other marginalized groups. From

Argentina, Honduras and Russia to Tanzania and Uganda, these omissions are a slap in the face to LGBTQI+ human rights defenders around the world, who have worked with U.S. embassies for decades to report abuses and highlight the violence, stigma and discrimination facing LGBTQI+ people in those countries and globally.

Even where the reports recognize acts of sexual violence and torture carried out against those suspected of being LGBTQI+, they largely fail to discuss the identity of the victims or the likely intentions of the perpetrators. These omissions are both shocking and dangerous in their failure to provide crucial context. In the Uganda report, for example, the State Department notes that: “Government officials reportedly committed acts of sexual violence. NGOs reported police medical staff subjected at least 15 persons to forced anal examinations following their arrests. Opposition protesters stated security forces used or threatened to use forced anal examinations during interrogations.” But the report fails to mention the fact that LGBTQI+ persons are specifically and routinely subjected to these so-called “anal exams,” which are forensically discredited investigative procedures that rise to the level of torture in custodial settings.

Disappointingly, the Human Rights Report for Thailand states that “there were no significant changes in the human rights situation.” In reality, after years of dedicated advocacy and strategic engagement, the Marriage Equality Act was passed by both houses of Parliament and assented to by King Vajiralongkorn. This makes Thailand the first country in Southeast Asia to pass marriage equality and only the second in Asia. The lack of inclusion of this positive development in the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons in Thailand illustrates the Trump Administration’s contempt for LGBTQI+ persons and their right to live free and equal with dignity under the law.

Additionally, extensive sections addressing violations against various other marginalized groups—including people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and women in all their diversity—have been significantly reduced or removed entirely. Essential discussions on fundamental freedoms such as assembly, association, and speech, particularly crucial to marginalized communities, have also been notably watered down or stripped out altogether.

The diminished content severely compromises the reports' effectiveness as critical tools for assessing asylum claims, particularly for LGBTQI+ individuals fleeing violence and persecution. Courts and immigration authorities in the U.S. as well as allies around the world regularly rely on the thorough documentation in these reports. Without comprehensive information, vulnerable asylum seekers from countries like Uganda, Russia, and Iraq face heightened risk and diminished protection. The lack of information on abuses targeting LGBTQI+ persons in any given country, especially as compared to information from previous years, must not be interpreted as an improvement in the human rights landscape for LGBTQI+ individuals or organizations in that country.

In response to these dramatic omissions, [the Council for Global Equality is seeking the release of additional information, under the Freedom of Information Act \(FOIA\)](#), including any instructions provided by political appointees to strip references to abuses against LGBTQI+ persons from the reports.

The absence of accurate and comprehensive documentation further hampers global diplomatic and advocacy efforts, complicating international partners' abilities to address violations effectively. "The reports make LGBTQI+ persons and other minorities invisible and, in so doing, they undermine the human rights landscape that protects all of us," concludes Bromley.

***For press inquiries, please contact Matthew Bocanumenth at matthew@globalequality.org.**