

July 28, 2014

## CAPE TOWN DECLARATION: **Gender Incongruence in Childhood**

We are a group of 40 transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex-focused health practitioners, advocates, activists, researchers, family members, parents, and members of the trans\* community. Collectively we represent over 11 different countries and cultures, with a large majority of our members based in countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

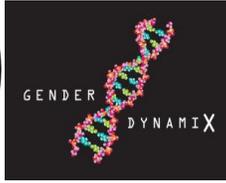
On June 2, 2014, we met as a working group at Gender Dynamix, TIA and SHE's 2<sup>nd</sup> Trans\* Health, Research and Advocacy Conference in Cape Town to discuss the WHO proposals for a GIC diagnosis directed at pre-pubescent children. At this event there were a number of sessions held concerning the impact of this diagnosis: 4 1 ½ hour direct sessions were held, alongside a number of affiliate talks, which lead up to our 3-hour working group dedicated to the WHO's proposition. Overall, at this conference more than the equivalent of a full working day was dedicated to this matter.

We feel that this pre-pubescent diagnosis is the most pressing issue facing the trans community at the moment. At our working group members registered extreme concern and outrage that the WHO would be in support of this pathologising and discriminatory approach to gender diversity among children and youth. Even across the vast array of our different cultures and different countries, and as representatives of different concerned groups, there was substantial agreement that the WHO's proposal should be outrightly rejected.

As such, and with the support of an overwhelming majority of our working group delegates, we set the following statements before you. We have also included our voting tallies below, to indicate the number of delegates in favour vs. those against.

**1. Children are ever changing developing individuals, who explore themselves, their personalities and their potential as they grow. This includes their sense of, and expression of, their gender.**  
(30 in favour/0 against)

**2. Gender diversity is not a pathology. We therefore feel that no pre-pubertal children should be given a diagnosis based on their gender identity or expression.**  
(32 in favour/0 against)



**3. The proposed GIC diagnosis makes no clinically utilizable sense for children.  
(34 in favour/1 against)**

**4. Affirmative counseling, information and support should be made available by way of non-pathologising alternatives. This should be made accessible both for a child, parents and other significant persons in the child's life.  
(32 in favour/0 against)**

**5. An adolescent or adult diagnosis should not require a previously documented history of a gender-based diagnosis.  
(33 in favour/1 against)**

Having examined the ICD reform process and the proposals for ICD-11, we formally request that the WHO discard the current Gender Identity Disorder of Childhood diagnosis and refrain from replacing it with any new pathologising diagnosis, including GIC.

Signed,

1. Nthabiseng Mokoena, Transgender and Intersex Africa (TIA), South Africa
2. Lesego Ramphele, South Africa
3. Dr. Simon Pickstone-Taylor, South Africa
4. Ricky Nathanson, Zimbabwe
5. Dr. Arnaud de Villiers, South Africa
6. Dr. Diana Dickinson, Botswana
7. Skipper Mogapi, Rainbow Identity Association (RIA), Botswana
8. Busisiwe Deyi, Gender Dynamix (GDX) South Africa
9. Xolile Mabuza, Swaziland
10. Nompumelelo Ncongwane, South Africa
11. Carol Musikanth, South Africa
12. Therona Moodley, South Africa
13. Mishka Moodley, South Africa
14. Beverley Toker, Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH) Gender Clinic, South Africa
15. Ronald Addinall, UCT & Triangle Project, South Africa
16. Tom Klopper, South Africa
17. Sibusiso Kheswa, Gender Dynamix (GDX) South Africa
18. Lex Kirsten, South Africa
19. Celia Engelbrecht, South Africa
20. Germaine de Larch, South Africa



21. Celeste Roberson, South Africa
22. Liesl Theron, Gender DynamiX (GDY) South Africa
23. Etienne Thomas, South Africa
24. Lieketso Kokome, South Africa
25. Gayle Bowey, South Africa
26. Chris/tine McLachlan, South Africa
27. Vuyokazi Gonyela, South Africa
28. Kaylyn Nel, South Africa
29. Tina Sandra West, South Africa
30. Anonymous, Kenya
31. TshepoKgositau, Botswana
32. Athena Petersen, South Africa

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While this document originated at the working group session held at GDY, TIA and SHE's 2<sup>nd</sup> Trans Health, Research and Advocacy Conference we felt that this pressing issue was of such significant importance to the global transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex human rights movement that it demand further exposure. As such we have solicited further signatures from our regional partners, activists and advocacy groups, and community members throughout Africa and elsewhere.

Hereby we submit to you these additional endorsements in support of our declaration:

- 1.