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March 14, 2021

The Independent Expert On SOGI  
United Nations Human Rights  
Office of the High Commissioner

Dear Sir

**RE: RESPONSE TO A CALL FOR INPUT TO A THEMATIC REPORT ON  
GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY**

Thank you for the extension in the deadline for submissions in response to the call for input to the thematic report on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The **Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAOG) Zambia** is the largest Pentecostal denomination in Zambia, with a holding of more than 1800 congregations spread right through our nation and is part of the **Pentecostal Assemblies of Africa (PAOA)** Southern Africa Chapter, that has 4000 congregations in 10 countries.

**The concerns and objections presented below are from the two broad constituencies of Christian believers:**

- We fundamentally disagree with the radical and unscientific transgender ideologies that underpin your request for submissions for your thematic report on Gender, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. We believe that the very questions and definitions you use illustrate a gross overstepping of your mandate.
- We are deeply disturbed by what appears to be the end goals of the call for inputs to your thematic report on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Please consider the following concerns in particular:**

- We believe that the leading questions and rhetoric used in your call for submissions demonstrate a clear bias in favor of radical sexual and gender theories and policies, which have been rejected by a large grouping of UN Member States on multiple occasions.
- The SOGI Independent Expert's mandate is to advance the rights of persons to be free from violence or unjust discrimination based on "sexual orientation" or "gender

**Pentecostal Assemblies of God Zambia - Headquarters**

*"We are labourers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9)*

identity,” however, your report undermines the very foundation upon which sex-based rights and protections are established.

- To be clear; we support the protection of all fundamental human rights of all persons regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Your report, however, is clearly aimed at, among other things, advancing radical gender theories and ideologies that seek to erase all differences between men and women and undermine the hard-earned gains for women in the area of human rights.
- We denounce all “violence” and unjust “discrimination” regardless, but would challenge your definitions for these two terms which go far beyond UN consensus agreements in harmful ways.
- We are concerned by what appears to be an imposition of controversial notions outside the internationally agreed human rights legal framework in ways that contradict the fundamentals of universality.
- We are deeply concerned that your current and past reports have and will go far beyond the content and scope of your mandate in harmful ways. Specifically, the thrust of your work is not in conformity with the principles as listed in HRC Res 5/1 which require “universality,” “impartiality,” “objectivity,” “non-selectiveness,” and a “gender perspective” as understood by States to mean a women’s equality perspective and not a transgender perspective.

**Additionally, we present the following specific concerns that have significant legal/policy implications:**

- The term “gender identity” does not appear in any binding international agreements negotiated by the full body of UN Member States. Every time it has been proposed, it has been rejected by UN Member States because it is too controversial.
- We reject your interpretations of the terms “violence” and “discrimination” as encompassing any criticism of radical gender theory or policies that protect women’s private spaces.
- The UN social policies with regard to gender equality were specifically designed to protect sex-based rights, not controversial transgender ideology.
- Intersectionality, gender theory and queer theory are akin to religious beliefs and should not be the underpinnings for UN policies nor international law.
- We oppose the SOGI Independent Expert’s distorted definition for gender and gender-based terms at the UN to encompass radical and unscientific gender ideology and queer theory.
- The SOGI Independent Expert is attempting to establish as a protected class by force of law the controversial concept of “gender identity” (i.e., transgender identity).



**Further, we wish to put on record that we strongly oppose and hereby reject the gender ideology advanced by the SOGI thematic report. We do so on the following grounds:**

- We are concerned that the Independent Expert on SOGI is actively trying to identify individuals, groups and countries that do not accept his ideology. What does he intend to do with this list? Will it be used to incite reprisals against those who do not accept radical transgender ideology?
- We are greatly concerned that the UN-appointed Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) is now at the forefront of UN efforts to reinterpret the concepts of “gender” and “gender equality” beyond the longstanding understanding of male and female and equality between the sexes which would erase all sex-based rights and protections for women and girls.
- The terms “gender” and “gender equality” are common terms used throughout the UN system and in multiple UN documents and resolutions adopted by consensus by UN Member States to advance the equality of women and girls and were never intended to advance highly controversial transgender polices.
- We oppose the efforts of the Independent Expert on SOGI to redefine “gender equality” specifically in UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 to encompass special rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity that would supersede women’s rights and then to mainstream these alleged “rights” throughout the 2030 Agenda.
- The Independent Expert on SOGI is redefining retroactively the term “gender” and gender-based terms in UN documents (i.e., resolutions, treaties, UN 2030 Agenda, etc.) to go beyond the longstanding concept of male and female based on biological sex, and instead is incorporating the concept of “gender identity” based on unscientific gender ideology.
- The Independent Expert on SOGI is attempting to mainstream queer theory throughout the UN system and to pressure UN Member States to do the same. His intent is to make all States accountable to his radical concept of a “gender framework” that would mainstream SOGI ideology in all laws and policies.
- The idea that a biological male becomes a girl or woman simply by adopting stereotypical female behavior and dress is regressive and harms girls and women by reinforcing the very stereotypes that have resulted in the harassment, discrimination, and violence against girls and women.
- The idea that a biological male can or should try to become or impersonate a girl or woman if they reject stereotypically male behavior or that a female can or should try to become or impersonate a boy or a man is regressive and can damage those who are gender non-conforming or those who reject male or female stereotyped roles.
- The elective, transgender hormonal or surgical interventions that your transgender gender framework would establish as universal rights are prohibitively expensive and would take critical limited resources away from those in developing countries who require basic support for survival.



- If we were to adopt a “gender identity” policy, how would it be defined? If all gender identities (there are over 112 different gender identities as reported on Tumblr) were protected under a gender identity policy, it would create great controversy among UN Member States.
- While every individual is entitled to basic human rights, imagine the chaos that would ensue if all of the controversial “gender identities” that have been conceptualized are established as part of a protected class. The New York City Commission on Human Rights “gender identity” policy now recognizes 31 genders and already multiple complaints have been filed against individuals or businesses accused of discriminating against these “identities.” If found guilty, these individuals or entities could be forced to pay fines up to \$250,000.<sup>1</sup>
- How can we create policies based on characteristics that are subjective, changeable, self-defined and that cannot be measured or quantified? For example, “Adamasgender” is defined as “a gender which refuses to be categorized,” and “Affectugender” is defined as “a gender that is affected by mood swings?” How can governments be expected to regulate policies based on an individual’s internal or individual experience of gender?
- Since both “gender identity” and “gender expression” are based on internal feelings unique to that individual rather than biological realities that can be independently verified, if we adopt a “gender identity” policy, only gender-confused individuals can determine if some policy or action violates the law. There is no other law in the world that functions this way.
- What if additional gender identities emerge after a policy on gender identity is adopted? Will we then be required to recognize any and all gender identities that are put forward?
- Instead of trying to create special protections for people based on their internal perceptions of themselves which can change over time, we should enforce existing laws and policies calling for the elimination of violence against anyone.
- Elective cross-sex cosmetic medical interventions used to change the outward appearance are expensive and often result in lifelong medicalization of those who previously were physically healthy.
- We are disturbed that failure to provide harmful puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and transgender surgeries for transgender-identifying persons is now being considered “discrimination.” The Independent Expert on SOGI also has equated hurt feelings and the inability for transgender-identifying persons to access elective cross-sex cosmetic treatments to the profound oppression and hardships girls and woman face such as

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<sup>1</sup> The 31 genders recognized by the New York City Commission on Human Rights are: Bi-gendered, Cross-dresser, Drag King, Drag Queen, Femme Queen, Female-to-Male, FTM, Gender Bender, Genderqueer, Male-to-Female, MTF, Non-Op, HIJRA, Pangender, Transexual/Transsexual, Trans Person, Woman, Man Butch, Two-Spirit, Trans, Agender, Third Sex, Gender Fluid, Non-Binary Transgender, Androgyne, Gender Gifted, Gender Blender, Femme, Person of Transgender Experience, and Androgynous.

inability to access educational opportunities, housing, health care and protection from physical and sexual abuse.

Yours in the service of humanity  
**Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAOG) Zambia**



Bishop Joshua HK Banda, PhD

**Presiding Bishop**

**President- Pentecostal Assemblies of Africa (PAOA) – Southern Africa Region**