



UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

RELIGIOUS ACTION & ADVOCACY CENTRE

STATEMENT ON HOMOPHOBIA

The 2014 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade celebrates the 36th anniversary of the continuing struggle for human rights and equality waged by, and for, LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) citizens in Australia, including those in the Jewish and broader community.

It should also provide a strong reminder to us all that there are still many places in the world where people are not only denied these basic rights but are being persecuted because of their sexual orientation.

The Jewish people's adoption of the mantra "Never again" following the Shoah was to remind society of the devastating destruction caused by the evil forces of the Nazi regime against not only the Jewish people but against many other sections of society, including homosexual men who were forced to wear a pink triangle.

Beyond that, "Never again" was a determined call to ensure that such acts of hatred would not be repeated or condoned by the civilized world, and that Jews would take all possible action to prevent its recurrence.

In recent years there have been unfathomable yet ghastly attacks on the freedoms of LGTBI citizens in countries such as Uganda, Russia and India, including the recent adoption of harsh homophobic laws.

The consequences of this persecution are justifiably likened to the situation that arose during the Nazi era in Europe, and it, therefore, behooves Jewish people around the world to call on their communal and national leaders to speak out and take action against these nations.

As we celebrate the many achievements of the gay and lesbian movement in Australia in making our society more fair and open, the Union for Progressive Judaism calls on our community to use the freedom that we enjoy to condemn all who perpetuate discrimination and persecution based on ignorance.

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PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM