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**UN Human Rights Council**  
**53<sup>rd</sup> Session, 21 June 2023**

**Item 3: ID with IE on SOGI**

Delivered by H.E. Meirav EILON SHAHAR  
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Israel warmly welcomes the Independent Expert and thanks him for his report. As his tenure is coming to an end, Israel would like to congratulate him for an exemplary implementation of his mandate, and thank him for all his efforts during these years.

Israel thanks the IE for clearly presenting some of the violations and abuses of human rights that the LGBTIQ+ community endures in the alleged name of religion and protection of the “traditional family”. Unfortunately, this exclusionary vision is present here at this Council. Once again, its important to note that we are not trying to create new rights or enthrone LGBTIQ+ people over other groups, we are simply trying to ensure that they are able to enjoy the same rights as everyone else.

Mr. President,

While certain matters have been subjected to religious law in Israel, the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of SOGI is an important part of Israeli legislation and may be found in several laws.

Different religious NGOs and leaders act to maximize the acceptance of LGBTIQ+ persons among the religious society. Moreover, the courts have ruled against businesses that refused services on religious grounds. Furthermore, Israel established a Unit for promoting LGBTI rights, within the Ministry of Social Equality, that develops dialogue, outreach and practical actions aiming at promoting the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community.

We would like to ask: how can we reach more general religious communities, when the denial comes from their leaders?

Once again, we would like to thank the IE for his outstanding work over his tenure.

Thank you, Mr. President.