



Advancing an American Foreign Policy  
Inclusive of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

## PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Mark Bromley – Council Chair  
202-719-0511, [Mark@GlobalEquality.org](mailto:Mark@GlobalEquality.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2009  
[www.GlobalEquality.org](http://www.GlobalEquality.org)

### **U.S. Government Documents Trend of Severe Human Rights Abuses Against LGBT People – Responses Urgently Needed** *Council for Global Equality Posts “Top Ten” List of Countries Where the U.S. Should Do More*

Washington, DC – February 26, 2009 – On Wednesday, the State Department released a report to Congress that examines the human rights record of every country around the world. Once again, the State Department report documents an unfortunate crisis in human rights abuse directed against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people worldwide. Based on that report, the Council for Global Equality offers its own “Top Ten Opportunities for the U.S. to Respond” to the abuses cited by the State Department.

The Council’s list of the “Top Ten Opportunities for the U.S. to Respond” provides examples of how the U.S. could use its influence to make a critical contribution to human rights by reacting more assertively to abuses in each country. The list includes Egypt, Gambia, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Lithuania, Nigeria, and Uganda. Details on how the U.S. should respond to the human rights crisis in each country can be found at [www.globalequality.org](http://www.globalequality.org).

This year’s human rights report from the State Department is the most comprehensive to date with regards to sexual orientation and gender identity issues (referenced in 190 country reports) and points to a growing crisis in human rights abuse directed against LGBT people around the world. LGBT-related incidents cited in this year’s report include arbitrary arrest and detention, police abuse, rape, and even murder. Many of the most egregious abuses have been committed in countries considered to be friends and allies of the United States, including those that receive sizeable U.S. development or security assistance. In many cases, there sadly is evidence that the police or other government officials have been complicit in the crimes.

Although the facts in some cases are unclear, the Council for Global Equality believes the State Department must move beyond a reporting agenda to an affirmative “protection agenda” that actively seeks to redress these serious and ongoing human rights violations. “The United States government should respond to LGBT abuses abroad with the same principled concern that we have shown for other international human rights issues, including persecution of minority groups or trafficking in human beings,” stated Mark Bromley, Chair of the Council.

“We have reviewed the 2008 report, and selected our ‘top ten’ countries to show where the United States could do more to end such horrific abuses of the human rights of LGBT people,” added Julie Dorf, Senior Advisor to the Council. “We saved an honorable mention for the United States on our list – because we still have much to do at home to restore our nation to its leadership position on these issues of fairness and equality,” added Ambassador Michael Guest, also a Senior Advisor to the Council.

The Council’s “Top Ten” list can be found on the Council’s web site at [www.GlobalEquality.org](http://www.GlobalEquality.org), along with the entire compilation of sexual orientation and gender identity citations from the 2008 report. The Council for Global Equality can offer additional spokespeople for the media from member organizations to discuss the report, including regional specialists from Global Rights, Hartland Alliance, Human Rights First, Human Rights Watch, and the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission.