

World Bank Appoints Adviser for LGBT Community

The World Bank has appointed its first adviser tasked with promoting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) issues in its development work.

The newly created senior position is part of the bank's efforts to solidify its commitment to researching and curbing discrimination against LGBTI persons across the 136 countries where it has offices, it said on Thursday.

The initiative by the poverty-fighting institution comes at a time when discrimination against LGBTI people is facing increased scrutiny globally.

The bank, which makes loans in developing countries and conducts research, named Clifton Cortez to fill the position. With two decades of experience in development, Cortez most recently managed partnerships for the United Nations program on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS.

In recent years, the bank's research has increasingly turned to the economic impact of discrimination on LGBTI persons, the bank said.

This year, the organization has been collecting data on the socioeconomic status of LGBTI persons worldwide and launched several research projects on LGBTI discrimination.

The World Bank's announcement comes a day after the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) publicized a new rule barring its foreign aid contractors from discriminating against LGBTI persons in the services it funds.

Last month, the United Nations appointed its first independent investigator to help protect the community worldwide from

violence and discrimination.

A U.N. report last year said hundreds of LGBTI people have been killed and thousands injured in recent years, in violence that included knife attacks, anal rape and genital mutilation.

OutRight Action International, a New York City-based group that advocates for LGBTI rights globally, said the new World Bank position was encouraging. {eo}

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