



Dear all-

We are excited to announce a conference entitled "International Dialogue on Gender, Sexuality, HIV/AIDS and Human Rights: Focus on Asia". ARC International is working in collaboration with the Korean Sexual-Minority Culture & Rights Center to present this conference from **November 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Seoul, South Korea**. (A brief description of both sponsoring organizations is below.) By hosting this year's Dialogue in Seoul, we honour the historic decision of South Korea to be a signatory to a statement on sexual orientation at this year's UN Commission on Human Rights, the only Asian country to do so.

We hope to be able to accommodate approximately 55-60 participants for the full Dialogue, and higher numbers for those just interested in attending the pre-conference Human Rights Institute on November 24<sup>th</sup> (a tentative agenda is below). The participants will be comprised of stakeholders in the international arena (NGOs, academics, and funding organizations) from all geographic regions, particularly those with some experience advancing human rights regionally and/or internationally. We invite you to **apply by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005** using the form below.

Building on similar consultations held in Rio de Janeiro and Geneva, some of the goals of this Dialogue are to:

- ✓ Conduct specific training on domestic, regional and international human rights mechanisms;
- ✓ Explore linkages between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights through a HIV/AIDS lens
- ✓ Build the capacity of NGOs specifically through engagement with funders and tools for documentation and reporting human rights violations;
- ✓ Engage with UN experts;
- ✓ Identify strategies and concrete follow-up re: Korean government's commitment to human rights and those of other Asian countries poised to follow Korea's lead;
- ✓ Raise awareness of UN reform proposals and discuss possible impact for our communities;
- ✓ Explore faith-based and other responses to religious fundamentalism;
- ✓ Identify regional priorities, and develop strategies to assist in advancing those priorities, with particular focus on the Asia region

In terms of funding, our priority is to attempt to assist selected delegates facing barriers to participation, for example those from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. "Assisting" might mean direct funding through us, or facilitating individual delegates to approach their own

regional funding sources. We are still in the process of fundraising for conference activities and interpretation/translation, and any assistance that individuals and organizations can provide, including letters of support, would be most appreciated.

As we confirm participants, speakers and venues we will send out more comprehensive information.

Sincerely,

Kim Vance, ARC International

Huso Yi, Deputy Director, Korean Sexual-Minority Culture and Rights Center

John Fisher, ARC International

### ***Tentative Agenda***

#### ***Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup>***

*Pre-Conference Institute – Mechanisms for Advancing Human Rights in the International Arena*

**\*\* Intended for local activists and human rights defenders from Asia and new Dialogue participants or those wishing to refresh/expand their knowledge of these topics)**

Morning:

- *Registration for Pre-Conference Institute*
- *Domestic/Regional Human Rights Mechanisms within Asia*
- *Regional human rights mechanisms around the world (European Court of Human Rights, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and Court of Human Rights, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, etc.)*

Afternoon:

- *International mechanisms: The UN Commission on Human Rights, Special Rapporteurs, Treaty Bodies, International Criminal Court, ILO, Human Rights Committee, etc.*

Evening:

*Registration (for full Dialogue)*

#### ***Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup>***

Morning:

- *Introductions and International exchange*
- *Panel Presentation and Discussion:*

Where are we now on the international arena regarding issues of sexuality, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights? A recap and analysis, including challenges to be addressed throughout the conference:

- *Overall Human Rights*

- Execution/Torture/Violence
- Freedom of Expression and Association
- Families and Relationships
- HIV/AIDS and Health

➤ *Roundtable:*

UN Reform: the proposed Council on Human Rights and the role of progressive social justice organizations in the reform process.

Afternoon:

➤ *Regional Caucuses:*

What is the domestic/regional situation relative to the international one and what are domestic/regional priorities.

➤ *Plenary:*

Report back from regional caucuses and mapping out effective international strategic and domestic responses to those priorities.

International, regional and domestic strategies for mobilizing and capacity-building specifically within Asia.

➤ *Workshop:*

Building the capacity of human rights defenders (Part 1): Financial Resources - an opportunity for participants to learn of resources and funding to support their work, and for funders to learn of regional needs and priorities.

Evening:

➤ *Panel Presentation and Discussion:*

Past, Present and Future: Advancement of human rights based on gender and sexuality in Korea and in Asia more broadly - Building cross-regional linkages

***Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup>***

Morning:

➤ *Panel Presentations:*

Responding to Religious Fundamentalism/Building and Strengthening Progressive Interfaith Networks.

Mainstreaming Equality: Situating lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues within broader human rights, sexual rights, and health agendas.

➤ *Caucus/Networking meeting time*

Afternoon:

➤ *Keynote Address*

➤ *Workshop*

Building the capacity of human rights defenders (Part 2): Documentation and Reporting Mechanisms

Evening:

➤ *Caucus/Networking meeting time*

- *Celebration Dinner and Event* – A celebration of Korean LGBT culture

## **Sunday, November 27th**

Morning:

- *Intensive Strategy-Building Session:*

Based on discussions arising out of domestic/regional needs and priorities, what is our international strategy? How can we map out a consistent and clear message for all international human rights mechanisms? How can we share the work? How can we mobilize new allies? What are short-term goals/objectives and what are the long-term goals/objectives?

Afternoon:

- *Roundtable:*

Health and Issues of HIV/AIDS: challenges to health education, outreach and prevention efforts within repressive social environments; exploring linkages between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights; strategies, set-backs and successes.

- *Open Meeting with Korean government officials*

Evening:

- *Closing Plenary: Reports back, Next Steps and Evaluation*

# APPLICATION FORM

1. What is your name and city/country of residence?
2. What is your organisational affiliation(s)?
3. What is the primary focus of your or your organisation's work (e.g. human rights, women's rights, sexual and reproductive rights, lgbt, faith-based, labour, youth, etc.)?
4. We are seeking funding to enable the Dialogue to take place, as much as possible, in English, Spanish, Korean and Japanese. Please indicate whether you will be able to participate in any of these languages. If so, which do you prefer? If not, what other language(s) can you communicate in?
5. Why do you wish to participate? What do you feel you would bring to the Dialogue? What do you feel you would get out of it?
6. What international knowledge or experience do you possess (e.g. World Conferences, UNCHR attendance, regional conferences etc)? Please explain.
7. What regional/domestic knowledge or experience do you have (e.g. mobilising national networks, influencing governments, local activism or regional networking)? Please explain.
8. Please describe the ways in which your participation will help ensure a diverse and representative consultation (e.g. are you a member of a racialised/indigenous group, person with a disability, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, intersex person, person living with HIV/AIDS, etc)?
9. Do you have experience working on sexual orientation, gender identity of HIV/AIDS issues? Please summarise.
10. There will be a registration fee of US\$200/€175 to help cover the costs of the Dialogue. Do you require funding assistance to attend? If so, please indicate whether you need support in paying for airfare, accommodation, a registration fee reduction or waiver and/or per diem meal allowance, and briefly explain why you or your organisation need financial support to attend.
11. Do you have any special or accessibility needs (e.g. dietary restrictions, wheelchair access, assistance with childcare etc) that you would like us to consider when planning this conference?
12. Is there any other information you would like to include?

**Please apply by September 30 to [arc@arc-international.net](mailto:arc@arc-international.net)**

*This conference opportunity is being facilitated by ARC International and the Korean Sexual-Minority Culture and Rights Center.*

*ARC International ([www.arc-international.net](http://www.arc-international.net)) is a project-driven organization designed to make a contribution to the development of a strategic international LGBT human rights agenda. ARC works cooperatively with existing domestic and international organizations active on LGBT and related issues to foster the development of networks, positive communications and access to international human rights mechanisms through the development of resources.*

*Korean Sexual-Minority Culture and Rights Center (KSCRC) is the first center for sexual minorities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and those who support the rights of sexual minorities in Korea. KSCRC, through working*

*in/outside of the sexual-minority communities of Korea and the world, serves as a national center to protect and promote the well being of Korean sexual minorities as well as to celebrate diversity. The website of the KSCRC is [www.kscrc.org](http://www.kscrc.org).*