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From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 22, 2010 4:54 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Fwd: [InsidersOut] Clinton equates LGBT rights to human rights

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From: Richard Socarides [redacted]
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Sent: Tue Jun 22 16:43:36 2010
Subject: Fwd: [InsidersOut] Clinton equates LGBT rights to human rights

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From: Chris Johnson [redacted]
Date: Tue, Jun 22, 2010 at 3:47 PM
Subject: [InsidersOut] Clinton equates LGBT rights to human rights
To: insidersout@googlegroups.com

<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2010/06/22/clinton-equates-lgbt-rights-to-human-rights/>

Clinton equates LGBT rights to human rights

[Chris Johnson](#) | Jun 22, 2010 | [Comments 0](#)

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Tuesday equated the pursuit of LGBT rights to the pursuit of human rights as she celebrated Pride month with gay State Department employees.

During a speech, Clinton said her belief that LGBT rights are synonymous with human rights as a whole is consistent with remarks she made as first lady in favor of women's rights during a visit to China.

"Just as I was very proud to say the obvious more than 15 years ago in Beijing that human rights are women's rights — and women's rights are human rights — let me say today that human rights are gay rights and gay rights are human rights," she said.

Clinton made her remarks during a State Department event commemorating June as Pride month. Gays & Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies, the affinity group for LGBT employees at the State Department, coordinated the event.

The secretary compared LGBT rights to human rights after describing discrimination and oppression that many people face in other countries. She said these abuses sometimes consist of people being "harassed, beaten, subjected to sexual violence — even killed — because of who they are and who they love."

"In some places, violence against the LGBT community is permitted by law and inflamed by public calls to violence," she said. "In others, it persists insidiously behind closed doors. These dangers are not gay issues. This is a human rights issue."

Clinton was well received by the more than 400 people who attended the State Department event. She received a standing ovation before and after her speech.

The secretary said she's been "greatly motivated" by the personal stories of LGBT people over her lifetime and that they helped shape the course of her political career.

She recalled how as a first lady she marched in a Pride parade — something a first lady had never done before — and noted she co-sponsored a number of pro-LGBT bills in her previous role as a U.S. senator from New York, including hate crimes bill and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

In an effort to continue that commitment to LGBT people, Clinton said the State Department would "advance a comprehensive human rights agenda" that would include an end to violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

She said efforts to confront this oppression consist of "elevating our human rights dialogues" with foreign governments to protect LGBT people as well as documenting anti-gay abuses in the State Department's annual human rights report.

One of the arms of the State Department that Clinton commended for taking the lead at confronting anti-gay abuses was the Bureau of African Affairs, which she said directed every U.S. embassy in Africa to report on the conditions of local LGBT communities. Clinton noted that she's asked every regional bureau "to make this issue a priority."

Clinton said Foreign Service officers in the State Department are siding with pro-LGBT groups overseas despite threats to personal safety. She cited the participation of U.S. officials last month in Slovakia's first ever Pride parade as one example.

"There were anti-gay protesters who became violent and the police used tear gas, which our chargée and other diplomats were exposed to — a quite unpleasant experience, but a service to a just cause," she said.

On the domestic front, Clinton recognized that many LGBT Americans feel frustrated on the lack of progress on advancing LGBT issues. Still, Clinton urged patience and said much progress has already been made.

"I know when you're in the midst of a great movement of change, it seems like it is glacial, but any fair assessment — from my perspective, and I lived longer than at least more than 75 percent of you — is that it is extraordinary what has happened in such a short period of time," she said.

Clinton said the U.S. has come "such a far distance" in advancing LGBT rights, but said are there many people within the country who need outreach and support to "stand up and be who they are."

"The struggle for equality is never, ever finished," she said. "And it is rarely easy, despite how self-evident it should be, but the hardest fought battles often have the biggest impact."

The secretary encouraged LGBT people to look out for others who may need a hand — such as LGBT youth, whom Clinton said "still, in numbers far beyond what should ever happen, take their own lives rather than live that life."

"So, I hope that each and every one of us will recommit ourselves to building a future in which every person — every single person — can live in dignity, free from violence, free to be themselves, free to live up to their God-given potential — wherever they live and whoever they are," she said.

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