LAW AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN THE CARIBBEAN WORKSHOP

MAY 11 AND 12, 2012

ORGANIZED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF HAVANA LAW SCHOOL
CENESEX
UNION NACIONAL DE JURISTAS DE CUBA
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, CENTER OF LATIN AMERICA AND LATINO STUDIES
ALAS NETWORK

LOCATION:
MAY 11: UNIVERSITY OF HAVANA LAW SCHOOL
MAY 12: UNION NACIONAL DE JURISTAS

Objectives:

Discrimination and violence against LGBTI people is unfortunately widespread around the globe. In the Americas, this phenomenon is especially worrisome in the English-speaking Caribbean, where statutes criminalizing homosexual conduct are still enforced and violence against LGBTI people is many times officially ignored and even supported.

Many people have started rising their voices against this problem. Several NGOs and international organizations are working to improve the situation of sexual minorities in this region. Law schools, however, could do much more to contribute to the decrease, and hopefully elimination of violence against this group. Law school is the first place future attorneys and judges gain an understanding of what the law is and what a system of rights should do for each individual.

In this two-day meeting, a group of law professors from the Americas, the Caribbean, and Spain will gather to discuss how law schools can and should contribute to teaching about equality in a way that is meaningful to LGBTI individuals. Discussing models used in countries both of the Caribbean region and abroad, the group will discuss the successes, failures, and vacuums within legal education with regards to discrimination and violence against disadvantaged groups.
**Program**

**Friday, May 11**, University of Havana Law School. Conference open to public

9:00 - 10:00  Inaugural presentation: Cuba: A Revolution of Sexualities, Gender and Bodies. Msc. Mariela Castro Espín, Director National Center of Sexual Education Educación Sexual (CENESEX), Cuba

10:00 - 11:00  Panel discussion: Sexualities and the Law: an approach to the Cuban legal system. Speakers TBC, University of Havana Law School, Cuba. Moderator: Professor Esther Vicente

11:00 – 11:15  Coffee Break.

11:15 – 12:15  Comparative perspectives in the protection of LGBTI individuals. Professor Maria Mercedes Gomez, University of Los Andes, Colombia, Professor Jose Gabilondo, Florida International University Law School, United States, Professor Victor Gutierrez, University of Jaen, Spain. Moderator: Professor Efren Rivera

12:30 – 13:30  Family Law and Sexual Orientation. Dr. Rafael Rosselló Manzano, University of Havana Law School, Cuba, Professor Macarena Saez, American University Washington College of Law, United States. Professor Tracy Robinson, University of West Indies, Barbados. Moderator: Ms. Diana Hortsch

13:30 – 15:00  Lunch

15:15 – 16:15  The meaning of equality and the many faces of violence. MsC. Rita María Pereira, University of Havana Law School, Cuba. Professor Efren Rivera, University of Puerto Rico Law School. Professor Westmin James, University of West Indies, Barbados. Moderator: Professor Macarena Saez

16:30 – 18:00  Activism and legal education: models to follow. Professor Brenda Smith, American University Washington College of Law, United States. Professor Arif Bulkan, University of West Indies, Barbados. Professor Esther Vicente, Inter American University, Puerto Rico. Ms. Diana Hortsch, Center for Reproductive Rights, United States. Moderator: Professor Maria Mercedes Gomez

20:00 hrs  Cuban Gala against Homophobia (Karl Marx Theater). Dir. Carlos Rey
Saturday, May 12, Unión Nacional de Juristas. Closed meeting for program speakers only.


Professors Robinson, Bulkan, and James will provide with a diagnostic of the current status of legal education in the English-speaking Caribbean. After this presentation each participant will provide the group with a short description of his/her own experience in teaching law or promoting legal education as an instrument to advance gender and/or sexual equality.

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee break

12:00 – 13:30 Questions for discussion (just as reference):

1. Should legal education have a specific agenda for promoting gender and sexuality rights?
2. Are there core courses in law school that should be taught with a gender and sexuality perspective?
3. Is there a specific teaching methodology or methodologies that would help to mainstream sexuality perspectives in legal education?
4. What have been, in your experience, major issues in advancing specific group rights (women, racial minorities, LGBTI, etc.) within legal education?

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 17:30 What’s next? The group will identify possibilities of immediate collaboration, as well as activities and actions to be developed in the next two to three years. Collaboration can, for example, include the possibility of seeking funds to advance legal education with a sexuality perspective in the Caribbean, look for strategies to attract more professors and deans of law schools to this endeavor, create a data base of materials that we can offer to law professors, etc.
Participants:

1. Professor Tracy Robinson, University of West Indies Law School, Jamaica
2. Professor Westmin James, University of West Indies Law School, Barbados
3. Professor Arif Bulkan, University of West Indies Law School, Trinidad
4. Professor Macarena Sáez, American University Washington College of Law
5. Professor Efren Rivera, University of Puerto Rico Law School
6. Professor Esther Vicente, Inter American University Law School, Puerto Rico
7. Professor María Mercedes Gómez, University of Los Andes, Bogota, Colombia
8. Professor Jose Gabilondo, Florida International University Law School, Miami.
10. Professor Yamila Gonzalez, University of the Havana Law School, Cuba
11. Dr. Rafael Roselló Manzano, University of the Havana Law School, Cuba
12. Professor Rita María Pereira, University of the Havana Law School, Cuba
13. Mariela Castro, Director of CENESEX, Cuba
14. Professor Victor Gutierrez, University of Jaen, Spain