



FREE & EQUAL
UNITED NATIONS FOR LGBT EQUALITY

UN Free & Equal Campaign First Year Impact Report 2013-2014



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



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Introduction

Free & Equal is an unprecedented global United Nations public education campaign for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality. A project of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), implemented during its first year in partnership with the Purpose Foundation, the campaign is aimed at raising awareness of homophobic and transphobic violence and discrimination, and promoting greater respect for the rights of LGBT people everywhere. By fusing the authority and credibility of the United Nations brand with the reach of social media and the appeal of popular celebrities, the campaign has generated global attention and contributed to the kinds of conversations that need to take place if social attitudes towards LGBT people are to evolve.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE CAMPAIGN INCLUDE:

1. To project the United Nations' anti-homophobia message in traditional and social media by mobilizing senior UN officials and international celebrities to speak out publicly about homophobic and transphobic violence and the criminalization of homosexuality, globally and in various regions.
2. To support country-level OHCHR and wider United Nations work on homophobia and decriminalization, including through distribution of public information materials and tools.
3. To lend support and greater legitimacy to civil society efforts to counter homophobia and press for the decriminalization of homosexuality and other reforms needed to protect the rights of LGBT people.





Overview of Activities through 1 August 2014

TO DATE, THE FREE & EQUAL PROJECT HAS:

- Designed and launched a brand and website (www.unfe.org) visited by more than 250,000 unique visitors;
- Created social media accounts with some 55,000 followers across channels;
- Collected more than 15,000 email addresses for a mailing list;
- Garnered more than 2 billion media impressions¹ around the world through traditional and digital media outlets;
- Created more than 50 pieces of original content, including dozens of electronic postcards and fact sheets in all UN languages, and two dozen original videos -- two of which are the most viewed UN Human Rights videos to date, and among the top most viewed videos produced by the United Nations;
- Reached more than 15 million people via video content;
- Engaged celebrity "Equality Champions" from around the world to help spread the message. Equality Champions include the Puerto Rican pop star Ricky Martin, South African musician Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Brazilian singer Daniela Mercury, Bollywood actress Celina Jaitley, U.S.

¹ Media impressions, which take into account website visits, social media reach and newspaper and TV circulation and viewership figures, provide an indication of the number of people potentially exposed to the campaign.

rap duo Macklemore & Ryan Lewis, and the U.S. ban fun., who combined have a social media reach of more than 32.5 million people worldwide.

- Supported the launch of spin-off national campaigns in Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru, with plans for further national launches already underway in a number of countries.

Campaign Events

The campaign was launched on 26 July 2013 at a press conference in Cape Town, South Africa, featuring UN then High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and South African Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron. The launch generated extensive media coverage and a high level of attention on social media, helping to introduce the campaign to a global audience.

Campaign events have also taken place during the past year in Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the United Kingdom and the United States. In many cases, OHCHR worked closely with UN country teams and activists to contextualize global campaign materials for local use. There are plans to launch the campaign in several additional countries in the coming months. More details on the national-level events are provided below.





Campaign Outputs

VIDEOS

Over the course of the campaign, Free & Equal has produced 20 original videos that have been watched by more than 4 million² people around the world.

The campaign's first output was a pre-launch video, "[The Riddle](#)," which introduced the campaign brand and key messages. The video was released in May 2013, just ahead of the International Day of Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT), and features the voices of people of diverse backgrounds and identities and cameo appearances by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and then High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay. To date, the video has been watched by nearly 1.7 million people around the world and has inspired a number of local remakes, including in Ecuador, Mexico and Peru.

In April 2014, the campaign released "[The Welcome](#)" which was the first-ever UN Bollywood style music video for LGBT rights, produced with support from Equality Champion Celina Jaitly. The video was launched at a well-attended press conference in Mumbai, which also served as the national launch of the campaign in India. The video has been viewed by more than 2.2 million people around the world to date and is by far the most watched UN human rights video ever produced.

In May 2014, the campaign released a new video for IDAHOT, entitled "[The Power of Sharing](#)" which activists and UN offices around the world screened at IDAHOT events and which was shared

² 15 million people around the world were exposed to the campaign's videos; 4 million watched more than 30 seconds of the videos.

online leading up to and on the day. The video was accompanied by a mini-campaign encouraging people to share their stories and use social media to show their support for the LGBT friends and family members. In addition to producing this original video, Free & Equal worked with the Burkle Center at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and with the IDAHOT Committee on an infographic outlining the history of LGBT rights around the world and debunking myths relating to LGBT people.

The campaign has also supported, promoted and captured on film historic events at UNHQ, including the first [Ministerial-level Meeting on LGBT rights](#), held at the United Nations in New York in September, 2013, and a Human Rights Day event on the fight against homophobia held at UNHQ on 10 December 2013 featuring prominent sport and media celebrities, including tennis star Martina Navratilova and NBA player Jason Collins. For the Human Rights Day event, the campaign created a new infographic video, "[A History of LGBT Rights at the UN](#)," which has since been viewed by more than 50,000 people on YouTube. The campaign subsequently released videos of both events, which were widely shared online and generated additional media coverage.

Throughout the campaign, Free & Equal has captured diverse voices speaking out for the rights of LGBT people, which were turned into a series of video messages. Among those featured in the video messages are Indian actor Imran Khan, athletes Martina Navratilova and Jason Collins, South African Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, UN human rights chief Navi Pillay, South African Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron, Equality Champions Yvonne Chaka Chaka and members of the band fun., and the activists Thandeka Mkhuma and Hida Viloría.





Additionally, in order to educate the public about the experience of LGBT people in a way that is relatable, two separate videos featured mothers from Brazil and South Africa talking about their own journeys to acceptance of their gay and lesbian children.

Please see Appendix for a list of all campaign videos released to date.

FACT SHEETS

The campaign has created a series of short fact sheets relating to various types of human rights violations experienced by LGBT people around the world. Six factsheets have been produced to date; all are available in all UN languages, easily accessible on the campaign website and formatted for easy printing by OHCHR and other UN field offices, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

Please see Appendix for a list of fact sheets produced to date.

MACROS/E-POSTCARDS

Free & Equal has created a series of branded images with language over them, called macros. These convey critical facts and campaign messages in a clear and appealing way, and make it easy for target audiences to share information via social media.

These macros have included facts about human rights law, messages about the detrimental effects of homophobia and transphobia, supportive statements by the campaign's celebrity Equality Champions and by senior UN officials, and ways to honor key dates. For example, the macro to the upper right, which was shared on the Transgender Day of Remembrance, dedicated to those who lost



The above image of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, with a quote from his speech to the International Olympic Committee ahead of the opening of the 2014 Winter Olympics, reached more than 5.5 million people through Free & Equal Facebook fans and Twitter followers. The image was also tweeted out by @UN, @UNRightsWire and @UNICEF, with a combined reach of more than 6.5 million people worldwide.



CAMPAIGN WEBSITE AND EMAIL LIST

More than 250,000 people have visited unfe.org since the launch of the campaign. Visitors logged on from around the world, including the below, which were the top ten countries from which traffic came to the site.

1.		United States
2.		Mexico
3.		Brazil
4.		India
5.		Peru
6.		United Kingdom
7.		Canada
8.		Algeria
9.		Philippines
10.		Colombia

More than 15,000 people signed up for the campaign's email list and received an introductory email telling them more about the campaign, and subsequent emails with new information about campaign outputs.

MESSAGE TESTING

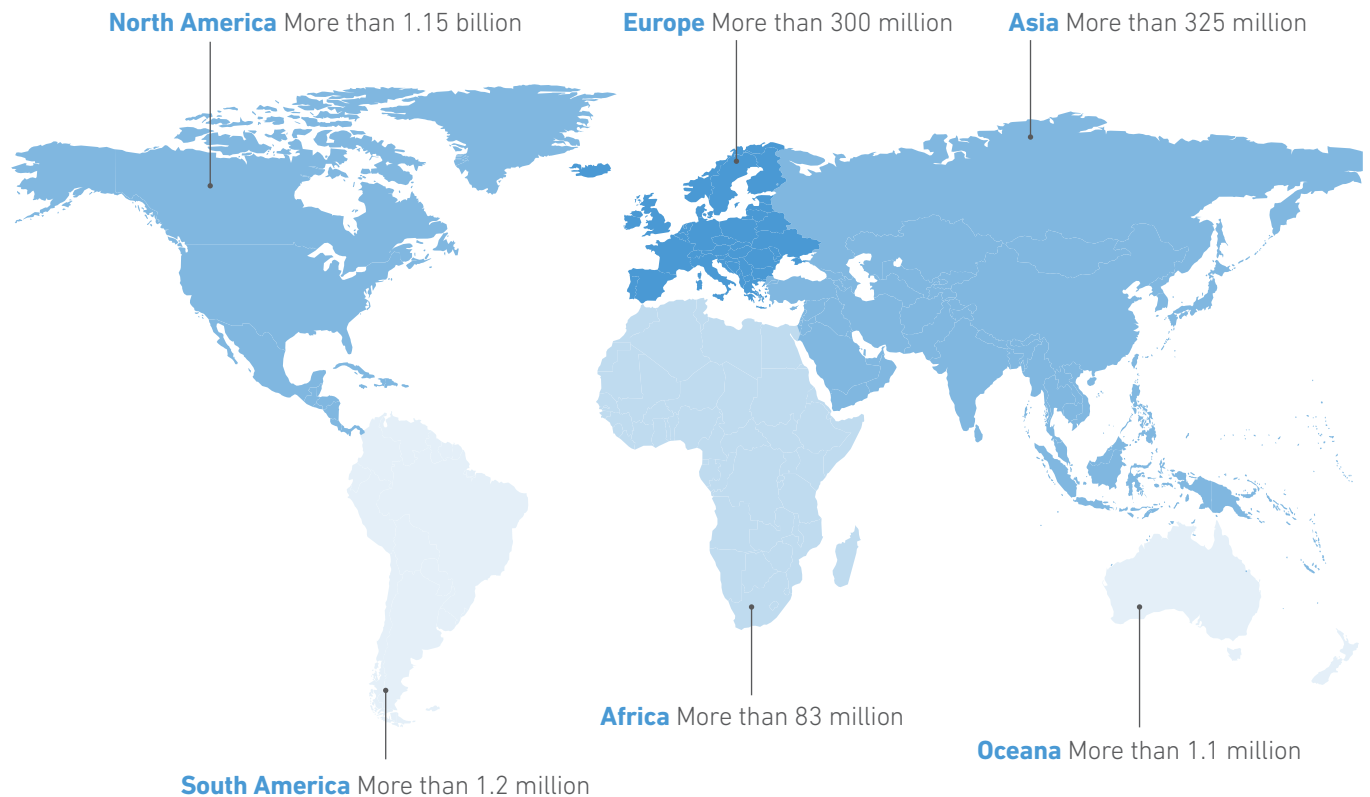
In January and March 2014, a professional public opinion research firm conducted qualitative message testing in India and South Africa on behalf of the Free & Equal campaign. In India, focus groups were conducted in Mumbai, Delhi, Chandigarh, Mysore, Chennai, Pune and Kolkata; in South Africa, focus groups were conducted in Johannesburg, bringing in groups from varying socioeconomic strata. The testing resulted in two reports:

1. The first report provides guidance as to the most effective messages to use with the "movable middle" - audiences who are not strongly in support of or opposed to the rights of LGBT individuals. These messages are broken out by the most effective in each country, with some guidance on which messages seem to be more universal;
2. The second report is a guide to conducting similar testing in additional countries around the world in future.



PRINT, BROADCAST AND DIGITAL NEWS MEDIA

News stories about Free & Equal have been distributed on six continents by print, broadcast and digital media outlets. Below is a map to illustrate the size of the audience of the outlets who have published these news stories:



In total, information about Free & Equal has been published or broadcast in outlets with a reach of more than 1.86 billion people worldwide, including the Associated Press, Agence France Presse, Al Jazeera, AllAfrica.com, Globo, The Australian, Reuters, The Times of India, The Guardian, The Daily Mail and the

**These numbers reflect only the impressions that the campaign was able to capture, with significant limitation in tracking non-English language media and broadcast media in all languages.*

BBC. Campaign videos were also featured prominently on popular websites such as Upworthy, BuzzFeed and Huffington Post. Including outlets whose geographic location reach cannot be identified, Free & Equal has garnered more than two billion media impressions³.

³ In fact, the real level of impressions is likely to be higher, since the campaign did not have access to comprehensive media tracking. As a result, the figure given excludes some English-language coverage and most non-English language coverage of the campaign.



Social Media

Throughout the year, the campaign shared campaign materials on social media, and encouraged various supporters, including the main UN social media channels, as well as a variety of celebrity supporters, including the campaign's Equality Champions, to share the content as well. The UN's handles shared Free & Equal content dozens of times, reaching their millions of followers each time.

FACEBOOK

On Facebook, Free & Equal had nearly 20 million total impressions.

Top fans by country:

1. Indonesia
2. Cambodia
3. Philippines
4. India
5. United State of America
6. Malaysia
7. Mexico
8. Thailand
9. Brazil
10. South Africa

Top fans by city:

1. Phnom Penh, Cambodia
2. Bangkok, Thailand
3. Jakarta, Jakarta Raya, Indonesia
4. Mexico City, Distrito Federal, Mexico
5. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
6. Manila, Philippines
7. Quezon City, Philippines
8. Cebu City, Philippines
9. Siem Reap, Cambodia

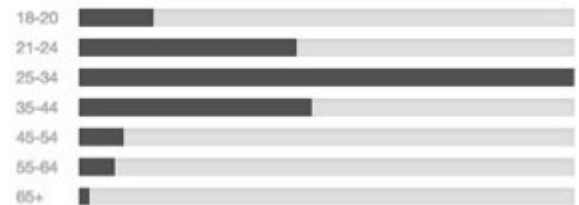
Top fans by language:

1. English
2. Indonesian
3. Spanish
4. Portuguese
5. Thai
6. Spanish
7. Malay
8. French
9. German
10. Italian

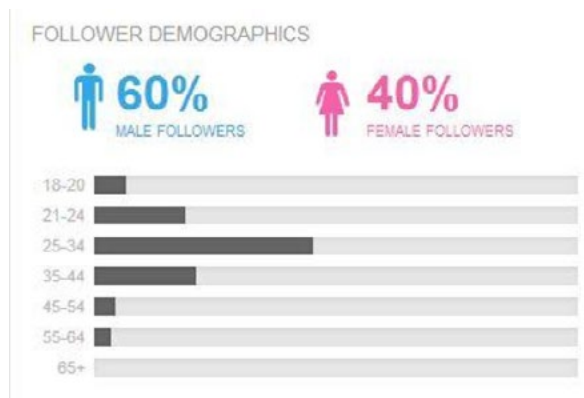
TWITTER

On Twitter, Free & Equal had more than 4,000 followers and created more than 75 million impressions:

By age range



By gender





TWITTER

Audience engagement has been widespread, especially in response to the most popular pieces of content. Here is a sample of what people are saying:

@free_equal Thank you for finally legitimizing our fight for freedom!

@free_equal Kindest regards and my support from Ecuador, good energies, success!

Great to see @UN @free_equal equality champion @CelinaJaitly due to speak at @ecell_iitb #eSummit14 #LGBT equality

@free_equal I couldn't agree more and I couldn't say it better myself either!

@Martina has always been a hero of mine, and this video illustrates a big reason why: [https://www.unfe.org/en/actions/martina-navratilova ...](https://www.unfe.org/en/actions/martina-navratilova...) ... @Free_Equal

An extraordinary video from @UN @free_equal featuring @YvonneChakaX2 - just beautiful [http://www.unfe.org/yvonne-chaka-chaka ...](http://www.unfe.org/yvonne-chaka-chaka...)

#LGBT people have been part of all societies throughout history. An awesome infographic from @free_equal: <https://www.unfe.org/en/actions/idahot-infographic>

MOST POPULAR CONTENT

Some of the most popular content on social media included various campaign supporters holding Free & Equal posters online, including UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, both of which were incredibly popular on social media:



Ban Ki-moon's photo garnered more than 4 million impressions from followers of Free & Equal on social media and thousands posted the image to their own pages on Facebook, as well as on blogs and various websites, including the First Lady of Gabon, who posted the photo to her Facebook wall with a call for acceptance of LGBT people.



High Commissioner Navi Pillay's photo garnered more than 700,000 impressions, in addition to the views garnered by various United Nations social media handles sharing the content as well, reaching more than 3 million people.

Paid Digital Media

Times of India Ads

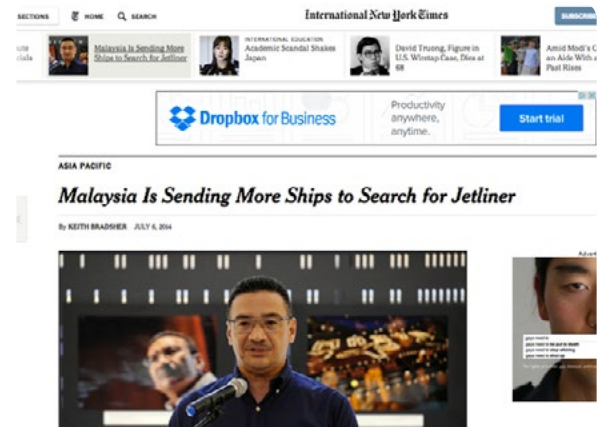
Shortly after launching "The Welcome", Free & Equal ran video banner ads on the Times of India website. The ads featured a shorter "teaser" version of "The Welcome" and anyone who clicked on the ad was directed to the full length version on the Free & Equal website.

The ads reached more than 250,000 people in India.



New York Times International Ads

In July 2014, Free & Equal used its most compelling campaign content to advertise on the New York Times' international website, reaching readers in Brazil, India, Japan, Mexico, Philippines and South Africa, as well as in the United States.





Total Impressions: more than 750,000

Impressions by country:

India: 220,000

United States: 125,000

Brazil: 122,000

Mexico: 120,000

South Africa: 85,000

Japan: 50,000

Philippines: 40,000

YouTube Ads

Free & Equal ran advertisements on YouTube for several of its campaign videos including "The Welcome," "The Riddle," "The Power of Sharing," and the video messages by Yvonne Chaka Chaka and Imran Khan.

Facebook Ads

Throughout the campaign, Free & Equal ran a variety of ads through Facebook in order to grow the campaign's audience online by advertising for "likes," as well as promote popular pieces of content to existing followers and their friends.

Twitter Ads

Free & Equal also advertised some of its most popular content by using "Promoted Tweets" on Twitter, which expand the reach of the campaign's tweets and thereby its content.

Official Recognition Of The Campaign

In December 2013, the European Parliament adopted Resolution 2013/2152 (INI), which included the following commendation of the Free & Equal campaign:

"[The European Parliament] commends the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTI persons, notably through statements, reports, and the new Free and Equal campaign."

In July 2014, Equality Champion Yvonne Chaka Chaka's Public Service Announcement was screened at the 2014 AIDS Conference in Australia.

Free & Equal's video "The Welcome" has been screened at Film Festivals and events around the world.

The campaign has also been awarded the World Pride Innovation Award for 2014.





Country-level Free & Equal Campaigns

The campaign has worked closely with UN Country Teams and with national partners around the world to create and execute specialized campaign launch events aimed at garnering additional media attention and spreading the campaign's messages at the national level with nuanced, local messages. In addition to providing content and programmatic support, the campaign also made available a range of advocacy and promotional materials for dissemination at national launches, including Free & Equal posters, booklets, tote bags, pins and bracelets.

BRAZIL

In April 2014, Free & Equal was launched at an event in Sao Paulo, Brazil, featuring Equality Champion Daniela Mercury, the Mayor of Sao Paulo, and various municipal, national and UN officials and human rights activists. Free & Equal ads were run on the city's buses and trains for a number of weeks after the launch, with a potential audience of over ten million people. The Municipality of Sao Paulo further publicized the campaign with its own Free & Equal parade truck during the city's Pride Parade on 4 May, which attracts millions of people each year.

CAMBODIA

In Cambodia, Free & Equal was featured at events organized in collaboration with the UNDP/ USAID project "Being LGBT in Asia", including at the launch of the project's Cambodia report. The campaign was also promoted in the run-up to the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia at UN sponsored events and on billboards. UN teams have been working with the

media to encourage significant changes to the language referring to LGBT persons, calling for neutral or positive representation of LGBT people rather than using derogatory terms.

CHILE

In May 2014, OHCHR, in collaboration with the National Human Rights Institute of Chile and the Foundation "Todo Mejora", launched the campaign in Santiago, Chile. The launch event focused on the eradication of bullying and rights abuses targeting LGBT youth and the main audience was students from primary and secondary schools and their teachers.

COLOMBIA

In July 2014, the UN Resident Coordinator in Colombia and the head of the OHCHR country office joined the Vice President of Colombia and local activists at an event to launch Free & Equal Colombia.

ECUADOR

UN partners in Ecuador launched Free & Equal on the 16th anniversary of decriminalization of same-sex relations in the country, 27 November 2013, at an event in Quito. A joint statement was made by the Vice Minister of Public Health, the Vice Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Religious affairs, the Ombudsman, the Mayor of Quito and civil society to join efforts to end discrimination against LGBT people in the country. As part of the launch, the team created an Ecuadorian version of "The Riddle" entitled "El Enigma." On 17 May 2014, to celebrate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the institutions behind the statement organized a photo exhibition entitled "Free and Equal".

INDIA

In April 2014, the Free & Equal campaign was launched in India with the release of "The Welcome," featuring Equality Champion Celina Jaitly. The video, which features a young man being accepted by his family when he brings his boyfriend home for the first time, generated significant media coverage in India, where homosexuality was recently re-criminalized by the nation's Supreme Court. The launch also featured a press conference attended by Indian celebrities and activists, who participated in a question and answer session on a variety of issues facing India's LGBT community.

PERU

In June 2014, Free & Equal Peru was launched at an event organized jointly by the OHCHR Regional Office, the UN Country Team and the Lima City Hall. The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, as well as civil society organizations and the private

sector were also actively engaged in the event. As part of the launch, the team created a Peruvian version of "The Riddle" entitled "El Enigma."

PARAGUAY

In May 2014, the United Nations team in Paraguay launched Free & Equal on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. The launch was attended by representatives of state institutions and civil society.

GLOBAL FILM SERIES

In partnership with the UN Department of Public Information and with support from Film Independent, the campaign launched the Free & Equal Global Film Series at the Los Angeles Film Festival in June 2014. UN Information Centres, OHCHR field offices and other UN offices around the world will have an opportunity to screen a collection of documentaries addressing issues facing LGBT and intersex people around the world.



LAUNCH EVENT IMAGES
AROUND THE WORLD



CHILE



INDIA



PARAGUAY



BRAZIL



MEXICO

Yo tengo derecho a trabajar.



COLOMBIA



SOUTH AFRICA



PERU





Conclusion

During this first year, the Free & Equal campaign broadcast the UN's position on the rights of LGBT people to a potential audience of billions of people around the world through social and traditional media. By amplifying the voices of respected human rights leaders and celebrities, the campaign is raising awareness globally of homophobic and transphobic rights abuses and promoting respect for the rights of LGBT people everywhere.

New York, September 2014

Appendix

VIDEOS (RELEASED TO DATE)

- The Riddle
- Meet Edith Modesto, Brazilian mother
- Human rights leaders speak out for LGBT equality
- Highlights from First-Ever Ministerial Meeting on LGBT Rights
- Desmond Tutu calls for a world that is Free & Equal
- This South African Mom's Story Will Break Your Heart
- A History of Human Rights at the UN
- UN Equality Champion fun. stands up for a Free and Equal world
- The Welcome
- Behind the Scenes of The Welcome
- Jason Collins for United Nations Free & Equal
- A History of Human Rights at the UN (Updated Version)
- Melissa Etheridge for United Nations Free & Equal
- Martina Navratilova for United Nations Free & Equal

- Yvonne Chaka Chaka for United Nations Free & Equal
- Imran Khan for United Nations Free & Equal
- Navi Pillay for United Nations Free & Equal
- Justice Edwin Cameron for United Nations Free & Equal
- Thomas Roberts for United Nations Free & Equal
- United Nations Free & Equal: One Billion Rising

FACT SHEETS

- LGBT Rights: Frequently Asked Questions
- International Human Rights Law and Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- Equality and Non-Discrimination
- Criminalization
- Homophobic & Transphobic Violence
- Refuge and Asylum

MEDIA ADVISORIES

- [26 July 2013](#): UN Human Rights Office Launches Unprecedented Global Campaign for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality
- [26 November 2013](#): Hip Hop Duo Macklemore & Ryan Lewis Named United Nations Free & Equal Campaign Equality Champions
- [10 December 2013](#): Free & Equal Releases Video on the 65th Anniversary of the Adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- [17 December 2013](#): Free & Equal Releases Video of Landmark Event Featuring United Nations Leaders, Sports Stars and LGBT and Intersex Activists
- [8 April 2014](#): Grammy Award Winning Band fun. Named United Nations Free & Equal Campaign Equality Champion





HUFFINGTON POST BLOGS

- [26 July 2013: UN Launches Unprecedented Global Campaign for LGBT Equality](#)
- [26 September 2013: Foreign Ministers Talk LGBT Rights at the UN](#)
- [24 October 2013: UN Campaign Reveals Shocking, Depressing Gay Google Auto-Complete Function](#)
- [20 November 2013: Do We Care About Trans Rights?](#)
- [10 December 2014: Inspiring New UN Video Reveals Seismic Shifts in Global LGBT Rights Debate](#)
- [30 April 2014: United Nations Goes Bollywood for Gay Rights \(VIDEO\)](#)

