

INDIA AGAIN ABSTAINS AT UN VOTE, DRAWS CRITICISM

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The resolution received support from most member countries.

India on Friday abstained at the vote for extending the mandate of an important UN official who reports on violence and discrimination against sexual minorities.

India's abstention at the resolution for term-renewal of the independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva drew criticism from activists, especially since it came after the Supreme Court struck down Section 377 and decriminalised the LGBTQ community.

The resolution received support from most member countries at the Human Rights Council but India, Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Hungary, Togo and Senegal abstained during the final voting. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, China, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Qatar and Somalia opposed the resolution. Earlier, India had abstained during the 2016 vote on the appointment of the Independent Expert. The current Independent Expert is Victor Madrigal Borlioz of Costa Rica.

Activists pointed out that though India abstained, they were surprised to see that the Indian delegation had supported some amendments brought by countries that opposed the work of the Independent Expert. They chose Nepal and Philippines for supporting the resolution which was about opposing violence against the LGBTQ persons, which is essentially a form of gender violence.

The Resolution numbered L10 Rev 1 granted an extension of three years to the Independent Expert to carry on reporting on incidents of violence against the LGBTQ community all over the world.

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