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ARC UPDATE

Towards a Strategic International LGBT Human Rights Agenda

- January, 2005

ARC (“Allied Rainbow Communities”) International has just completed a successful year, and 2005 promises to be equally busy and challenging!

We have recently returned from a very productive consultation that ARC hosted in Geneva in December, 2004, bringing together 60 activists from more than 40 different countries to identify priorities and strategies for advancing sexual orientation and gender identity issues internationally.



Participants in ARC's Geneva consultation, December 2004

In addition to a rich range of panel presentations and discussions on human rights issues affecting lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people in regions around

the world, participants had the

opportunity to attend an opening reception hosted at the Canadian Mission, meet with their government embassies in Geneva, meet with Louise Arbour, former Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada and current UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and take part in a vigil in memory of Fannyann Eddy from Sierra Leone and other activists who have lost their lives in the struggle for equality.

In a world where some countries still have the death penalty for homosexuality, and our human rights are often abused with impunity, the task ahead seems daunting, but activists emerged from ARC's Geneva consultation with a renewed sense of energy and determination to put LGBT issues squarely on the agenda of the United Nations.



Vigil for Fannyann Eddy
World Human Rights Day

2005 promises to be a landmark year as we prepare for the World Social Forum, continue to build strong global networks, liaise with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and work with others around the world in preparation for the upcoming UN Commission on Human Rights, taking place in Geneva in March-April 2005.

We have appreciated the support of CIDA, the John Holmes Fund, the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Sweden, the Canadian Autoworkers Union, CUPE, the Steelworkers Humanity Fund, the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and our individual donors, whose generosity has enabled this valuable work to progress.