

An introduction to the Declaration of Montréal: An invitation to create change

From 26 July to 5 August 2006 the 1st World Outgames were held in Montréal, Canada. The Outgames involved three components: an international human rights conference, a cultural festival and a multi-sport event for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of the world.

The International Conference on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Human Rights from 26 to 29 July brought together 1,700 participants from every corner of the globe to discuss the worldwide situation of LGBT people. The thirty-five sport disciplines drew 10,248 athletes, while 835 people came together for the cultural component of the programme. Australia had almost 800 participants representing 6% of the total.

Keynote people from our region that participated in the international human rights conference included Justice Michael Kirby (High Court of Australia) and Ms Georgina Beyer (Member of Parliament, New Zealand). Other world-class speakers included the Honourable Louise Arbour, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and international tennis champion Martina Navratilova.

The Declaration of Montréal, unanimously endorsed by participants at the International Conference on LGBT Human Rights, remains one of the key moments of the 1st World Outgames. Over the coming months, the Declaration of Montréal will be delivered to officials at the United Nations and national governments around the world to seek meaningful support for the rights of the LGBT community. The council of the Borough of Ville-Marie of Montréal was the first political body to adopt the Declaration of Montréal on Tuesday, 1 August, before the 1st World Outgames had even ended.

To date, the following bodies have adopted the Declaration of Montréal:

- The Montréal Borough of Ville-Marie;
- The Montréal Municipal council;
- The National Congress of the National Democratic Party of Canada
- The City Council of Brighton , England.
- The Congress of the Parti Québécois

It is understood that the Declaration of Montréal will soon be adopted by:

- The National Assembly of the Québec Province;
- The National convention of the Bloc Québécois (opposition at the federal level in Canada);
- The City Council of Amsterdam
- The City Council of Utrecht

Delivery the Outgames is one of the objectives of the Gay and Lesbian International Sport Association (GLISA) and our region is represented by GLISA Asia Pacific. Melbourne's sporting team was auspice by the umbrella group QSAM (Queer Sports Alliance Melbourne) and team consisted of individuals, clubs and teams. QSAM represents over 500 people through its eleven club members and seven direct individual members.

GLISA Asia Pacific would like to work with the Municipal Association of Victoria and Councils and State Governments for them to adopt the Declaration of Montréal intended to guarantee the rights of the international LGBT community.