

ABA's Statement of Repudiation of Bolsonaro Administration's new attacks on Human Rights and Gender and Sexuality Issues at the UN

The Brazilian Association of Anthropology, through its Gender and Sexuality Committee, expresses repudiation of the vile stances of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the UN preparatory meetings to be held in Geneva this coming week. In recent days Brazilian newspapers have reported Itamaraty's new instructions that veto the use of the word "gender" in multilateral diplomatic affairs. Such instructions also define that "gender" only refers to "biological sex".¹ As if that were not enough, today Bolsonaro administration has also abstained from the UN vote on issues of sexual and reproductive health of populations affected by humanitarian crises at a time when violations of women's and children's human rights in situations of humanitarian crises are making headlines.²

Vetoing any reference to the term "gender" in preparatory meetings for UN resolutions, equating Brazil to countries that do not have a historic commitment to women's and LGBTI people's rights, is a very serious fact and contributes to a deepening of the precariousness of millions of vulnerable people. "Gender" is a scientific concept of great relevance, formulated more than fifty years ago and established in the field of international politics. This concept contributes significantly to deepening scientific understanding of historical, social, cultural and political processes related to identities, differences, inequalities and different forms of violence in different fields of knowledge. It is, then, a social marker of difference and a fundamental analytical category for contemporary scientific thought. In addition, it is a basic concept for the establishment of human rights and for the search for greater equality in the contemporary world. The systematic denial of scientific research through this administration's foolish stances represents a serious threat to the rights of women, LGBTIs, indigenous and quilombola populations, not to mention an undeniable political setback.

The new Itamaraty guidelines, in addition to associating Brazil with the most conservative stances regarding foreign policy, also reflect a pattern that has been repeated in the Bolsonaro

¹ Source: <https://universa.uol.com.br/noticias/redacao/2019/06/26/ao-dizer-que-genero-e-igual-a-sexo-biologico-ministerio-ignora-a-ciencia.htm>. Accessed on June 27, 2019, at 1:26 pm..

² Source: <https://jamilchade.blogosfera.uol.com.br/2019/06/26/brasil-se-abstem-em-voto-sobre-saude-sexual-e-reprodutiva-na-onu/>. Accessed on June 27, 2019, at 1:08 pm..

administration, which, instead of guaranteeing basic human rights, as expected in a Democratic State of Law, has been developing absurd and condemnable practices in Brazil and in its foreign policy. This increases the vulnerability and precariousness of millions of lives.

Finally, it is important to underline that these stances have been announced in the same context as the one in which the Brazilian Supreme Court has favorably decided on the criminalization of homophobia and transphobia, equating such expressions of violence with the crime of racism. It also took place on the eve of June 28, a date observed worldwide as LGBT Pride Day. The attempt to silence gender and sexuality as categories of analysis reproduces the inequalities of gender and sexuality. In this sense, the Administration's retrograde stances regarding these issues in the domestic sphere and international politics point once again to the need for the Brazilian Executive and Legislative branches to pass laws and create policies to combat inequalities and violence related to such axes of subordination and vulnerability, instead of reinforcing the context in which such inequalities and violences are reproduced and deepened.

São Paulo, June 28, 2019.

Brazilian Association of Anthropology - ABA and its Committee on Gender and Sexuality