



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

31 January 2014

Mr Alex Greenwich
Member for Sydney
58 Oxford Street
PADDINGTON NSW 2021

Dear Mr Greenwich

Thank you for your letter dated 17 December 2013 outlining your concerns regarding the Indian Supreme Court ruling in December to re-criminalise homosexual acts. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, The Hon Julie Bishop MP.

Australia believes that all persons are entitled to respect, dignity and legal protection regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We condemn discrimination on these grounds, particularly violence, intimidation or harassment of LGBTI persons or communities. Australia advocates strongly for non-discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, in all fora. We are actively engaged in the UN system, including the UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly.

The Australian Government engages broadly with India in a constructive manner on human rights, including on LGBTI rights. The Australian High Commission in New Delhi will continue to monitor the issue closely and make representations as appropriate in support of proposed legislation that would decriminalise homosexual acts.

The Department has also updated its travel advice for India to note that while prosecutions are rare, a conviction for homosexual behaviour could carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Thank you for bringing your views to the attention of the Minister.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Kirlew', written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Kirlew
Acting Assistant Secretary
South Asia Branch