



International Conference on LGBT¹ Human Rights :1st Outgames Montreal 2006²

Because of the financial assistance of Presbyteray Laurentien and Montreal-Ottawa Synode, I took part of International Conference on the human rights of the Lesbians, Gais, Bisexuel/les and Transgenders (LGBT), held within the framework of 1st Outgames world which gathered more than 1,500 people of 102 countries from 26-26 July 2006, in Montreal.

Speakers from several countries testified how the religious integrist speeches encourage with the homophobia and with violence in all its forms. Here only some examples. In Africa, the speech conveyed by Christian and Islamic Churches, with the effect which the condemnation of condom causes the AIDS, fact of the devastations. In Poland, where 95 % of people are catholic and 65 % practise, people are obliged to remain officially Catholic if not they risk their careers. Any demonstration for the rights of merry and lesbians is prevented or repressed. Budgets which come from catholic fundamentalist Churches of the United States provide posters and documentation which makes, in Poland, the promotion of anti-merry prejudices. A budget of million dollars per year coming from these groups is devoted for the same cause to Canada. In nine Islamic countries, homosexuality is punishable of death. In Iran, last year two minor boys were hung for this offence.

Canada is a country envied per many participating of this Conference. Religious remarks as those held by Cardinal Ouellet on July 26 showed us that the assets are fragile. The law **project C38** is threatened. Indeed, with the Basilica of Ste-Anne-in Beauré, Québec[...] "Mgr Ouellet also made a new exit on the marriage between joint of the same sex. It was happy that the Harper Prime Minister wanted to reopen the debate by studying the possibility of having a free vote on this question.. "

Personaly, I wonder how a religious institution could be against the Declaration of Montreal, of which here extracts: [...] "the LGBT, just like their activities, exist and will continue to exist in all the cultures and all the places of our planet; they

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

² I presented this report at the *National United Church Women* meeting in Pickering Ontario, September 19 2006. I was invited for the French Ministries.

form part of the human condition quite simply. To fight ignorance and the injustice remain our priority "[...]"? We require that the religious institutions, just like the not-denominational organizations, into practice to put their principles of tolerance and of equality for the LGBT which are in their rows and to contribute to the world fight for the human rights of the LGBT. "[...]" We must fight discrimination in our own rows. We can tolerate neither the sexism nor racism in our community. We are Moslem, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, hindouists, sikhs, not believing... and humanistic "[...] Let us not forget that too many suicides are consequences of ignoring remarks. It is even more tragic when which they are related to a religious homophobia. www.montreal2006.org

Through the presentations here some crosschecks:

- Alliance between the fight of the women's rights and that of the fight of gays and lesbians.
- The religious integrism continue to support discrimination and violence against people LGBT.
- The change of the laws is a stage; the change of mentalities in the company requires much longer time.
- The tolerance is not sufficient, the need for the acceptance of diversity is to be aimed.

Visibility of United Church :

- I co-animated a workshop, while I presented the Official speech of the Catholic Institution and that of the United Church of Canada in bond with homosexuality. Catholic discourse who doesn't understand homosexuality and United Church who recognizes as possible love between same sex persons and allows marriage .Unfortunately, our presentation in French , was at the same time as another one about Religious discrimination (in English)...
- I attended to a workshop about the lesbian existence in Protestantism: a case study in the **Church Linked in Canada and Japan**. The presentator illustrated a lesbian existence that has been silenced by both heterosexism and misogyny in a non-Christian society, Japan. In Japan Lesbians are invisible in churches. There is a solidarity between women lesbians and non lesbian to fight against sexism and homophobia.

The program "Affirming Congregations" in Canada, with the alliance between gay men and women is an inspiration for Japanese Churches.

I feel privileged to be related with United Church of Canada. I am proud to belong to a church who is inclusive; I feel free to live as a Christian woman, to love and be involved in hat Community . My wish

is that more and more French speaking people will discover our Church where it is good to be ourselves under God's love.

Nicole Hamel

Ex Catholic. Member of United Church St-Pierre, Québec since 2001. Because of that, I lost my job. *Member of Council in Affirm United/S'affirmer* ensemble as a French connection. Co-fondator of the Spirituality group for LGBT : *Entre-nous* . Since 30 december 2004, I am married with my spouse.

Co-author of the book : *L'amour entre femmes dans l'Église Catholique* : www3.sympatico.ca/rejnic.