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# Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and International Human Rights Law: Contextualising the Yogyakarta Principles

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## Abstract

On 26 March 2007, a group of human rights experts launched the Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of Human Rights Law in Relation to Sexual

Orientation and Gender Identity (the Yogyakarta Principles). The Principles are intended as a coherent and comprehensive identification of the obligation of States to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all persons regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Since their launch the Principles have attracted considerable attention on the part of States, United Nations actors and civil society. It is likely that they will play a significant role within advocacy efforts and, whether directly or otherwise, in normative and jurisprudential development. The present article constitutes the first published critical commentary on the Principles. It seeks to situate them within the contexts of (a) the actual situation of people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and (b) the applicable international human rights law as it stands today. Thus situated, the Yogyakarta drafting process and the outcome text are examined. The final section of the article comprises a preliminary review of the impact and dissemination of the Principles.

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