

MEDIA RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA MARKED IN BRUNEI FOR THE FIRST TIME

Tuesday 17 May 2016: Ahead of today's globally recognised International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT), members of Brunei's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) community and their allies recently came together for the first time to officially mark IDAHOT with a small, private event that was organised and funded by The Brunei Project. Hosted by a member of the local LGBTI community, the event was also supported by regional-based ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, B-Change Foundation and the Islands of Southeast Asia Network on Male and Transgender Sexual Health (ISEAN). Among the invited guests at the event were members of the diplomatic community, who came along to show their support for Brunei's LGBTI community and to recognise the daily struggles faced by LGBTI people around the world.

Since 2004, LGBTI communities the world over have been marking IDAHOT, which was created with the aim of drawing attention to the violence and discrimination faced by LGBTI people in many parts of the world. IDAHOT is now celebrated by more than 130 countries each year. Each IDAHOT has a theme and the theme of this year's IDAHOT is "Mental Health and Well Being". Central to the health and well-being of anyone is access to relevant and inclusive information and support services. With very limited access to LGBTI-related information and support services within Brunei, the focus of Brunei's event this year was raising awareness about the range of services and resources accessible by local LGBTI at a regional level, ranging from advocacy of LGBTI rights to sexual health information. As part of the event, a number of information sessions were conducted by members of regional-based LGBTI organisations highlighting the services and resources they provide. The event also provided a much needed opportunity for Brunei's largely isolated LGBTI community to network with some of these regional service providers, which it is hoped will lead to stronger ties between the local LGBTI community and regional LGBTI networks.

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The Brunei Project

