



MARIELA CASTRO TO SPEAK AT PRIDE

Dr Mariela Castro, a leading LGBT activist in Cuba, and Director of the Cuban National Centre for Sex Education (CENESEX), will be speaking at Pride on Saturday.

Mariela Castro is daughter of Cuba's president Raúl Castro, and as director of CENESEX campaigns for AIDS prevention along with the recognition of the rights of the LGBT community in Cuba. It's goals, according to Mariela are to contribute to "the development of a culture of sexuality that is full, pleasurable and responsible, as well as to promote the full exercise of sexual rights."

Speaking at events with the CENESEX director will be Dr Alberto Roque, a gay activist and one of the organisers of Cuba's first International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) marches in Havana this May. Both will also take part in a Q&A session before a screening of Strawberry and Chocolate (the first Cuban film to address issues of homophobia in Cuba) at the Barbican on Saturday.



CENESEX promotes equalities and LGBT rights and runs diversity projects to educate and challenge prejudices within Cuban society.

CENESEX's 1989 founding brought trans rights to the national stage and the government soon began backing sex-change operations. Then, in 1992 normalized age of consent laws, a symbolic equalisation of gay and straight sex.

On 16 May 2009, Cuba celebrated its second International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) will which was devoted to young people, and also to families, so that "parents may better understand" their homosexual or transsexual children.

A draft law is currently due to be debated by the Cuban parliament to draft a law to reform the Family Code, in force since 1975.

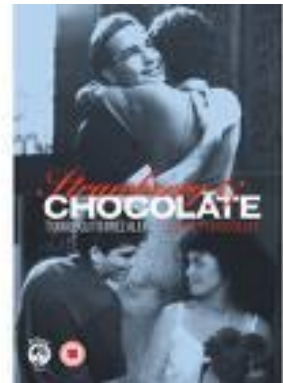
The reform bill includes proposals on gender identity and the rights of sexual minorities.

It would allow legal recognition of same-sex unions, and grant them the same rights as civil unions between heterosexual couples.

CENESEX's 2009 campaign for respect for freedom of sexual orientation, under the slogan "Diversity is Natural", aims to contribute to "the education of society in general, with an emphasis on university students, about respect for people's free and responsible sexual orientation and gender identity, as an exercise in equity and social justice."

FIND OUT MORE AT THE CSC FRINGE ON FRIDAY LUNCHTIME

**Special Screening
Strawberry and Chocolate**
Saturday 4 July, The Barbican



Mariela Castro, Dr Alberto Roque and director Juan Carlos Tabío will be answering questions following the screening of this ground-breaking Cuban film at the Barbican on Saturday 4 July at 8.45pm.

When Strawberry and Chocolate, was released in Cuba in 1994 it immediately created waves within society. (see article overleaf)

There will be a special discussion on the film and gay rights in Cuba following Saturday's screening, and the film alone is on all week.

Ticket Hotline: 0845 120 7527

TUC LGBT Conference Fringe
Challenging prejudices within and about Cuba

Friday 3 July, 1-2pm, Room 1, 5th Floor



WITH VERY SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER FROM CUBA

Dr Alberto Roque - activist and spokesperson for CENESEX

Pete Wilcox, FBU, Chair,
Anita Halpin, TUC General Council LGBT Committee

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