

April 5, 2015

The Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society (JCHS) has noted an open letter to President Obama by various LGBT groups in the USA published online (April 3, 2015 https://freedomhouse.org/article/president-obama-should-raise-concerns-about-human-rights-lgbt-people-during-jamaica-visit#.VSCNx_nF-Y0).

They have called for the President to advocate for "rights" of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons when he meets with the Prime Minister of Jamaica and CARICOM Heads of Government in a few days' time. Such "rights" are not established in international law.

The JCHS also takes note of the recent US State Department's appointment of its first-ever special envoy to advocate globally for the "sexual rights" of LGBT persons. Jamaica and other CARICOM nations have been named as countries to be targeted for the repeal of their buggery laws.

The JCHS takes this opportunity to remind the Honourable Prime Minister of Jamaica and other Government officials that LGBT sexual "rights" and lifestyles are not supported by the majority of Jamaicans.

This was made clear in the Bill Johnson poll (September 2014) and the presence of over 40,000 Jamaicans attending the combined Jamaica CAUSE rallies in Kingston and Montego Bay (June and November 2014). Additionally, 140 organisations from 11 CARICOM territories representing hundreds of thousands of Caribbean nationals rejected attempts to change our laws through the PANCAP Declaration (June 2014). The CARICOM Heads then agreed to defer discussions on this Declaration pending further national consultation.

The JCHS denounces violence against all persons, be it our most vulnerable citizens – our children, or be it such self-described LGBT persons. The JCHS affirms the inherent dignity of every human being. We make a clear distinction between the discrimination against persons and discrimination against behaviours that are high risk for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Whilst we fully endorse programmes to eliminate discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS, we reject attempts to restrict or stigmatise social discrimination against unwholesome behaviours. We reject efforts to encourage or legitimize behaviours that are high risk for HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Behaviours that are socially dysfunctional and have a demonstrably high statistical association with diseases cannot be endorsed.

We call on the Government of Jamaica to protect every Jamaican citizen by preserving our true fundamental rights and freedoms as currently enshrined in our Constitution. We are horrified at the human rights abuses suffered by countless ordinary Americans – bakers, florists, fireman, pastors, parents, teachers, IT specialists, lawyers and navy chaplains among others- who have had their freedoms of conscience, speech, religious liberty and parental rights crushed all in the name of LGBT “rights”.

It is known that HIV/AIDS affects black populations disproportionately with rates as high as a shocking 64% (in 2012) among some black men who have “sex” with men (MSM) in New York. Further it has been established that 98% of the difference between HIV rates in heterosexuals and MSMs is due to the practice of anal receptive intercourse and role reversal among MSM networks. Why would President Obama be seeking to encourage Caribbean countries to embrace homosexuality?

We commend the Honourable Prime Minister for her recent bold stance in New York and urge her to maintain this position in her upcoming meetings. We urge her to continue defending the truth, that there are no reports of abuse by the Jamaican State against homosexuals, that MSMs have no impediments to access to healthcare, that Jamaica’s model for HIV/AIDS treatment is praised around the world.

Finally, we anticipate that the Government of Jamaica will uphold its reported commitment made at the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in July 2014; to seek the full and informed consent of the Jamaican people on such fundamental issues as the philosophy on which our nation will function.

The Jamaica Coalition for a Healthy Society (JCHS)

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