



Press Statement

A call to the Zimbabwe Government to Protect the Rights and Safety of LGBTIQ+ individuals and organisations

13 June 2024: The AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa (ARASA) affirms its solidarity, comradeship, and support for GALZ and the entire LGBTIQ+ community in Zimbabwe. ARASA unequivocally denounces the recent incidents of anti-homosexuality attacks and property vandalism targeted at GALZ and LGBTIQ+ persons in Zimbabwe.

We call upon the Zimbabwean government to promptly take action to ensure accountability, enhance protection, and establish strong security measures to safeguard the rights and lives of all key populations, including LGBTIQ+ individuals. We emphasise that LGBTIQ+ persons are entitled to the rights outlined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees the safety and well-being of all citizens, irrespective of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. It is incumbent upon the government to guarantee that all citizens, including LGBTIQ+ individuals, can live without fear of violence, discrimination, and persecution and can freely exercise their constitutional rights.

ARASA unequivocally asserts that the hateful and discriminatory actions being witnessed are entirely unacceptable and have no place in a fair, just, and progressive society that values the bodily autonomy and integrity of all individuals. These actions go against the human rights commitments at both regional and international level that the Zimbabwean government has committed to uphold. We strongly condemn any form of violence, discrimination, or animosity aimed at LGBTIQ+ individuals and groups. It is imperative that civil society organisations are able to function without the threat of persecution, irrespective of the communities they support.

While acknowledging the diversity of perspectives on sexuality and gender identity, we stress the significance of conducting discussions that are respectful, evidence-based, and centred on human rights. Advocating for discrimination or harassment against LGBTIQ+ individuals and groups undermines the core values of respect, empathy, and pluralism that are fundamental to a democratic and diverse society like Zimbabwe. We urge all communities to embrace diversity, shun prejudice, and seek common ground based on our shared humanity.

ARASA urges the Zimbabwean government to safeguard the rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals and organizations by enacting anti-discrimination laws and policies and ensuring that everyone can live freely and without fear.

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