

Homophobic and Trans-phobic Attack on LGBTI Youngsters at a Gay Party in Freetown, Sierra Leone

On Saturday the 9th of July 2011, there was a gay, bisexual and transgender party at Congress Road Kissy, Eastern Part of Freetown, Sierra Leone. The party was interactive, full of fun and laughter. We were on the transgender fashion parade when we heard noise outside. So we went outside to find out what went wrong. When we went out we were told that two gay men were caught having sex in an unfinished house in the bush. The two gay men who left the party to have sex outside ran back into the party which led to homophobic and trans-phobic attack.

The community people started pelting stones and bottles at the party house. We all ran into the party house and closed the gate and administered first aid treatment to the injured victims. The situation became worst that we called the police for protection who later on came. When the police came to the scene the community people told them that we were having a gay initiation party and they started using homophobic and trans-phobic statements such as “gay people should be killed as they do not deserve the right to live as they are evil and demonic people”.

The police ordered us to open the gate, hoping that they will protect us; when we opened the gate the police men started assaulting and aggressively arresting and throw us gay, bisexual and trans young people into the police truck. During the process some gay, bisexual and transgender people escaped.

The community people harassed and beat us and took all our personal belongings such as (phones, clothes, money, cameras, chains, necklaces and other jewelries). The police men arrested and detained 8 young gay men at the Kissy Police station, Eastern Part of Freetown until the next day for them to give statements.

We called George Reginald Freeman of WhyCantWeGetMarried.Com and Hudson Tucker of Dignity Association as they are the two LGBTI organizations in Sierra Leone. WhyCantWeGetMarried.Com later on went to the Kissy Police station on Sunday 10th July 2011 and to bail and released the 8 gay men who were detained. The police told us that they were detained on charges of immorality, fornication, adultery, public nuisance and indecent act against the order of nature.

WhyCantWeGetMarried.Com as an LGBTI human rights organization condemned the discrimination and hate crimes against LGBTI people based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. We cannot stop being LGBTQ people to please other people. The way we choose to express our sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; the way we choose to look and conduct ourselves; the people we choose to love and be with, these are our rights. Self expression, freedom of association, dignity and safety,

peaceful gathering and demonstration these are our rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Yogyakarta Principles and the Constitution of Sierra Leone. We claim these rights as citizens of Sierra Leone. We demand that our rights should be respected and recognized in the society as LGBTI youngsters.

WhyCantWeGetMarried.Com as an organization says:

STOP!
FULL STOP!
STOP THE HATE
AGAINST US LGBTI
YOUNGSTERS IN
SIERRA LEONE!