Global LBQ Conference

A victory for Transgender people in Kenya

News from around Africa
Global LBQ Conference

The PAN Africa ILGA team had the privilege of attending the Global LBQ conference hosted in Cape Town in early July. The conference was intended to bring together a host of LBQ identifying womxn, transbodies and non-binary persons from around the world. The LBQ Conference was held in Century City Cape Town. This conference was attended by 119 countries. This assembly of bodies was meant to represent different voices globally on feminist issues that affect persons who transwomxn, womxn and gender non-conforming. Prior to the break-away sessions, Plenary sessions were held by different regions in which the themes of healing, transformation and leadership were addressed.

REGIONS:
The Regional meetings were intended to discuss what the vision of an LBQ movement looked like in each region. As we attended the Southern African region convening, we documented the different themes which were pervasive in the convening. These issues included:

a. the lack of an intergenerational conversation between feminists
b. The assumption that everybody attending the conference is a womxn
   i. What does it mean to be a womxn?
   ii. Why LBQ and why now?
   iii. What does it mean to identify as LBQ?

   c. Where is the space and training specific to queer sex workers?
   d. Understanding what the term “queer” means in response to the conference

The result of the regional meeting was the formation of a “Black Caucus” meeting. This convening was intended to address issues around the lack of intersectional feminism at the conference. For many black bodies in the caucus, the term intersectionality was appropriated by others while black bodies continued to be marginalized even within the conference.

The sessions which were presented at the Conference included:
Findings:
The Conference had multiple sessions occurring at the same point. This was excellent as there was a variety of issues that were being discussed at every turn. The use of different regions and different speakers had the epistemic value of providing context on the various histories of LBQ existence and LBQ organizing all over the world. The effect of this was the identification of where issues in different regions ran parallel to each other. At the opposite side of the dichotomy is the identification of how oppressions manifest differently in the face of privilege. This was identifiable through class and race as well as the Global North – South dichotomy.

The Conference was excellent as it allowed not only our team but the members and the society at large to access a space with various streams of knowledge. It also highlighted solidarity amongst various bodies from different regions. This solidarity was formed by the similarities in which differently abled persons, trans persons and gender non-conforming persons experience the world within the LBQ space. The difficult questions of ableism and transphobia were addressed particularly in the LBQ community.

The inclusion of Pleasure/ Kink within a feminist framework was enlightening as it destigmatized BDSM/ pleasure and feminism. This was done through the representation of the abovementioned themes by black bodies and also an extensive conversation around consent and care.

The conference was effective in the manner in which it brought different bodies into one space to share common experiences and to shed light on the various issues that affect us differently from the different corners of the world. The most important realization from the conference would be the identifying of intolerance and ignorance within the LBQ community. The issues of ableism, transphobia and xenophobia were addressed in a refreshing manner. This is because isms are often discussed as if it is only the outsiders who are performing these erasures.
The Conference also highlighted the importance of LBQ organizing within the broader LGBTIQ+ movements. The reflection by the collective of black womxn from the Kgalagadi highlighted the existence of patriarchy within the queer community and how womxn continue to be marginalized within the movement. This is also identifiable by the lack of resources intended for LBQ projects as the mainstream issues are MSM and HIV. The positive outcome of the conference was the centering of “womxn” issues and issues pertaining to non-binary persons. These issues not only include violence, marginalization and erasure but also the various ways in which LBQ bodies need to be celebrated.
Rev Jide is popularly known for his activism through a theological practice that is inclusive. Based in the UK, the Nigerian born Deacon has worked towards a Christianity that recognizes all love as love. However, those principles seem to have not permeated through the Church of England which does not support the deacon’s desire to marry his boyfriend. In an interview with the BBC, Rev Jide was quoted stating:

“The church says I can never get married in the church and if I go ahead and marry him, anyway, I won’t be able to keep my job as a clergyman. To me that is a great disservice and discrimination against same-gender-loving individuals.”

Contrary to the fact that homosexuality has been legal in England since 1967 and that the country has allowed same-sex marriage since 2016, The Church remains unsupportive of Rev Jide. In pursuit of safety and freedom, Rev Jide moved to the United Kingdom following the attack of his faith based NGO, House of the Rainbow.
A victory for Transgender identities in Kenya

Audrey Mbugua is a transgender activist from Kenya who recently won the decision in the Court of Appeal to change her academic certificates to reflect her true name and gender marker. Audrey was diagnosed with depression and Gender Identity Disorder in Kenya. She has since embarked on a journey of transitioning and changed her gender marker on official documents.

Audrey initially won the decision in the Kenya High Court against the Kenya National Examinations Board. The court ordered the Council to change her name and remove the existing gender marker as the governing law of the Council did not expressly prohibit the name change on an issued certificate.

In the Appellate decision, the judges noted the necessity of legislative frameworks that would protect minorities in Kenya, with transgender persons being vulnerable. This decision is monumental as it is the first of its kind in Kenya. Additionally, the court has set an important precedent that is instrumental in the recognition of LGBTIQ+ persons in Kenya. Audrey also made headlines this month when the High Court ordered that the authorities register her Organization, Transgender Education and Advocacy.

The court has since granted the National Examinations Council 45 days to comply with its order to amend the name and gender marker on Audrey’s high school exam certificate.
The Initiative for Equal Rights has released a manual on navigating an arrest.

**A GUIDE FOR NAVIGATING ARRESTS**

**WHEN IS IT AN UNLAWFUL ARREST?**
- When there is no probable or reasonable cause.
- When there is no arrest warrant.

**WHEN IS IT NOT AN UNLAWFUL ARREST?**
- If you are suspected of committing a crime because of a complaint.
- During or immediately after the commission of a crime.
- If you are suspected of committing a crime upon investigation by the police.

**WHO CAN ARREST YOU?**
- Police Officers and other Law Enforcement Agencies (e.g. Army officers, Civil Defense, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) etc.)
- Private Individuals carrying out a Citizen Arrest (Only applicable in certain cases)
**WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED**

Do not attempt to physically resist arrest.

Ask for an arrest warrant or the reason you are being arrested or detained. Unless you arrested while allegedly committing a crime, an arrest carried out without a warrant is illegal.

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**WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED**

If the arresting officer(s) are not in uniform, ask them to identify themselves.

Ask the officer what station you are being taken to.

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**WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED**

Once you get to the station, contact your family or friends, and lawyer informing them that you have been arrested, and where you are being detained.

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**WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED**

When the police officer asks to take your statement, you do not have to give a statement as you have a right to silence.

However you may waive this right and opt to give a statement.
WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED

You may write your statement yourself, and sign it; or you may have the officer take down the statement.

If the officer writes the statement, make sure it is read aloud to you before you sign it.

WHAT TO DO WHEN ARRESTED

If you feel that your right to personal liberty, or the right of someone you know has been violated, please contact your lawyer immediately.

To report a human rights violation to you or someone around you based on sexual orientation or gender identity / expression:

Call our toll-free helpline 0800225584377
or
Call our paralegals on
+234 701 147 2241
or
+234 814 633 7128

THE INITIATIVE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY

THE INITIATIVE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS (TIERs)

JUNE, 2019
Zanele Muholi: Faces and Phases ‘13
News from Africa

Malawi

The UN has joined the international calls to release the two LGBTIQ+ activists who were arrested in Malawi. The arrests followed the activists’ participation in the protesting of the country’s general elections which they called “fraudulent.” Initially, the arrests were based on an allegation of mismanagement of UN funds by the activists but the UNAIDS agency has called for the immediate release of the NGO members who were arrested in Malawi.

Cameroon

A trans womxn is in hiding in Cameroon following a transphobic attack. The womxn was attacked in Simbock for her advocacy against transphobia in Cameroon. The attack occurred on a Sunday evening after she had left a friend’s house. The womxn was accosted by seven hooded strangers who robbed her, beat and stripped her and proceeded to leave her for dead. The womxn was able to make her way back to her apartment and call for help. After receiving medical attention, her landlord evicted her on the basis of her gender identity.

Nigeria

The Equality Hub in Nigeria has produced the country’s first lesbian documentary film. The documentary film focuses on the life of Pamela Adie, an out Nigerian lesbian. According to Adie, who was also the director of the film, the project was intended to diversify the conversation around equal rights and acceptance of female sexual minorities in Nigeria.”
General News

- Activist petitions for the right to same-sex marriage in Jamaica.
  [Website](https://www.76crimes.com)

- Russian LGBTIQ+ activist targeted online and then stabbed to death
  [Website](https://www.76crimes.com)

- Prominent model lies about being transgender to cover up transphobic comments
  [Website](https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2019/07/30/carissa-pinkston-transgender-trans/)

- A same-sex family flees Russia following threats to remove children from their care
  [Website](https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/07/24)

- Tinder introduces new feature for LGBTIQ+ travellers

- Man who raped lesbian to “fix her” must serve out life sentence.

We’d love to hear from your country! Send in news from your organisation or country: [admin@panafricailga.org](mailto:admin@panafricailga.org)
For enquiries and any news you want to share with us for our newsletter: admin@panafricanilga.org

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Become a Member

As a member organisation of PAI, your organisation would benefit from news we share via email about:

• calls for papers, local and international conference invites, announcements from donors and other opportunities we share with you;
• capacity-building programmes and training;
• the opportunity to create a network with other organisations across the African continent in order for our movement and the work each organisation does to have maximum impact, and creating a platform for your organisation to make its voice heard; and,
• access to knowledge and experience from our members and ally organisations that will grow your organisation and its influence within your country and the continent.
• As a member organisation you will be able to contribute to the strategic direction of Pan Africa ILGA through being able to vote at the bi-annual AGM for a new PAI Board, the host country for our bi-annual Regional Conference, and on changes to our Constitution.

Pan Africa ILGA is the largest membership based and democratically organised LGBTIQ+ federation in Africa. PAI currently consists of over 184 African organisations and 32 international organisations working on human rights and equality for LGBTIQ+ people.

How to become a member:

Please be aware that only organisations (not individuals) can apply for membership. At its next meeting, the Executive Board of ILGA will review your membership and you will receive communication as to the status of your application.

The membership fee is €60 for two years. Apply for membership.

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