

July 2018 | Volume 8



# PAN AFRICA ILGA

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LGBTIQ+ News from Africa

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July 2018

# AIDS 2018

22nd International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2018), Amsterdam, Netherlands 23-27 July 2018: "Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges".

PAI's Programme Manager, Anthony Oluoch attended the conference. We'll share his report in next month's newsletter.

The [conference website](#) brings you news, videos and photographs from the conference. For more news, search for #AIDS2018 on Facebook and Twitter.

COC Netherlands/Nederland shared the following updates from the conference:

- ❑ The usual list of celebrities – Charlize Theron, Elton John – **speaking at the Opening and in sessions** that included two members of the Dutch and British royal families.
- ❑ The openly HIV-positive and winner of the Eurovision Songfestival **Conchita Wurst**.
- ❑ **Protest march** to the opening of the conference.
- ❑ **Welcoming speech at the opening by TGEU** co-chair Dinah de Riquet-Bons.
- ❑ **Announcement by Dutch Minister Kaag** for an additional € 10 mio. to HIV-prevention for key populations (named as MSM, PUD, trans people, youth and sex workers).
- ❑ **Trans March** in the Global Village.
- ❑ **Sex workers protest**.
- ❑ **Walkout during speech of UNAIDS** ED Sidibe in response to how a sexual assault case was dealt with.
- ❑ Protesting the **role of pharmaceutical companies**.



AIDS 2018

# From the PAI Team

## On coming out: Full Disclosure by Kevin Mwachiro, journalist and member of the new PAI Board

I was having a conversation with my friend Ndunge, and she said, that many people (more so men) lack courage and she proceeded to describe me as a brave. I've never really thought of myself as brave. I'm just doing me. But I realised just being yourself does make you brave.

This piece has been in my head for a long time and my conversation with Ndunge was a kick in the butt to finally get it done. But in being brave, we have to face our fear straight in the eye and deal with the consequences. There is still fear in me, even as I write this, I'm asking myself, 'why make myself so vulnerable? Why put my s\*\*t out there?'

Well, for starters, I can, and I know stories have power and I have been built and continue being built through, and thanks to, people's stories. After living with silence for many years, I realised that I was not experiencing my true self. Coming out as gay (breaths) wasn't easy. You get the looks, the judging, the weird to almost rude questions or remarks. For instance, 'si, you just get married and do your thing on the side' or 'you are too open for me' or 'aren't you afraid of getting lonely' or ' woi, your poor parents, you don't want to give them grandkids?' or ' you just need a chick and then you'll be sawa'.

But I am sawa. I'm ok with whom I am. That journey to get here has been long, painful and arduous. You face rejection, assault, bullying, and self-hate. I contemplated suicide at one time, but I was too scared and thought the entire process would be too messy. Then I asked myself, 'What was wrong in being me?' After so many years of being in the closet, at that time I was getting to know that feeling of being on top of the world, where your heart feels warmer and your being is alive. That giddy feeling is brilliant isn't it? I got to learn, and are still learning the importance of self-love and self-care. Because, I know, that I'm beautifully and wonderfully made, just like the next person. So, I'm very sawa.

Another interesting thing that I've learnt over the last few years is that my people, aka us, sisi Wakenya, are a lot more comfortable talking about cancer than sexuality. We do like our woiye stories more than 'real' stories. Why do I wonder? Is it because it's easier putting someone with an illness in a box rather than someone who dares to say they love differently or have a different way of expressing their gender identity. Life has too many greys. Black and whites are only for zebras and even on those zebras, those stripes aren't the same. I'm learning that the grey areas force you to question, and hopefully, learn and grow. Though unfortunately, for some people grey areas are uncomfortable and unsafe. That is still a choice too. It takes courage to face the grey.

Telling people that I had been diagnosed with cancer, was like coming out again. There is the uncertainty of how people will react. As you are dealing with guilt, you also have to deal with the prospect of rejection. Rejection is real even within these circles. I know of many survivors who've been shunned by partners, family and friends because 'cancer is expensive, and cancer means death'. So, it's easier to bail than deal. The absence of courage. Hearing those stories hurt but made me all the more grateful for the support that I've received during the course of my battle. Yet, I live with the knowledge that myeloma doesn't really go away and it does strike back. Will the acceptance and support still be there? Will I have the strength to fight? Will the chums (money) be enough? Will I be sawa? Will there be that someone to hold my hand and see me through? Being sick and alone isn't pleasant and it doesn't matter whether you are 'a gay' or 'a straight'. That feeling is universal. But it takes courage to admit that we do get scared and we are afraid of the unknown. That should not stop us from trying, asking for help, being vulnerable, or real.

The closet isn't a wonderful place to be in and you end up living in fear. Worse still, you don't get to experience your true self. Silence, shadows and secrets thrive in the dark. I'm taking a leaf from my friend Nguhi, who says, "We are here for a good time, not a long time." So be brave, it won't always be sawa, but it will always be real. Bon courage.

Health update: I'm still on maintenance treatment (low dose chemotherapy and on my 25th cycle), still in remission. and living and loving the moment.

This article first appeared in [Medium](#).

**Kevin Mwachiro** is a Kenya-based activist journalist, writer, podcaster and cancer fighter. He is the editor of the anthology, *Invisible – Stories from Kenya's Queer Community*.

He was elected to the new PAI Board at the 4th PAI Regional Conference on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June.

He can be found on Twitter: [@kevmwachiro](#).



# Opportunities

## Funding

- ❑ **Rapid Response Fund:** From the International HIV/AIDS Alliance: Pride season is in full swing, but sometimes this can lead to violence. If you/your organization is experiencing threats preventing access to #HIV services for #LGBT people in our 30 eligible countries or you know of any organization facing such situation, [apply for a #RapidResponseFund grant today](#). The Rapid Response Fund helps with urgent situations where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people (LGBT) and men who have sex with men (MSM) are facing stigma, discrimination and threats of violence that impact their access to HIV services.
- ❑ **Regional Empowerment Grants:** Eligible countries – Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria. Are you an organisation ready to break the shackles of exclusion of underrepresented groups within your region? Do you have and/or wish to take to scale home-grown empowerment strategies that raise awareness, build confidence and self-esteem of Voice target groups to claim their rights? Do you see organisations across countries needing the same capacities strengthened? Are you willing to promote a positive image of Voice groups and fight discrimination creating a powerful ripple effect across countries? [Apply now](#). Deadline: 15 August 2018.

## Upcoming conferences

- ❑ [Human Rights Defenders World Summit 2018](#), Paris, France. Deadline 1 September.
- ❑ [ILGA World Conference 2019](#), Wellington, New Zealand. Applications for scholarships and abstract submissions end 18 August 2018.
- ❑ [OutSummit: Advocacy Week and United Nations training mechanisms week](#), New York, 30 November - 9 December 2018, by OutRight Action International. Application process closes: August 12, 2018.
- ❑ 7th **Changing Faces Changing Spaces Conference** and celebration of UHAI's 10th year anniversary will be held from the 19th to the 21st of June 2019 with pre conferences on the 17th and 18th of June 2019. Call for task force applications and submission of abstracts and registration will be shared soon.
- ❑ First **Global Feminist LBQ Women's Conference** will take place from 6-9 July 2019 in South Africa. The conference is being organized by a collective working group of 22 LBQ women\* activists from across all regions of the world. It aims to create a space for activists & advocates to come together, share knowledge, exchange strategies, strengthen connections, mobilize resources, and take the lead in building a global LBQ women's movement with the capacity to influence the world agenda on human rights, health and development. We hope to bring together 500 participants from around the world. Please, find below our call for proposals and the scholarship application form. [Call for Proposals](#). [Scholarship Application Form](#).

## Job/Internship vacancies and volunteer opportunities

- ❑ [Development Associate: Astraea](#)  
Astraea seeks someone with an aptitude for writing to join us as a Development Associate and support with grant writing. Applications are due September 7th.
- ❑ [Paid Communications Intern: Astraea](#)  
Astraea is hiring a PAID communications intern to support us with social media and/or graphic design. Applications are due August 20th.
- ❑ [Full-time Internship Opportunity –UN Programme and Advocacy: ILGA World](#)  
UN Programme & Advocacy (Universal Periodic Review, Human Rights Council and Sustainable Development Goals). Applications close 19 August.
- ❑ [Media and Communications Volunteer: Global Interfaith Network](#)  
Join the GIN Secretariat Team in Johannesburg, South Africa by becoming a Media and Communications volunteer. For more information contact Pierre on +27104461990 or email pierre@gin-ssogie.org
- ❑ [International AIDS Society research scholarship](#) Deadline 20 August.
- ❑ [Social Media Interns: Organisation of African Youth](#) Application Deadline: 3 August. Company Location: Monrovia, Liberia.

# Pride in Africa

We bring you a selection of the Pride events around Africa in the last two months.

## The Kingdom of eSwatini (formerly Swaziland): eSwatini Pride

History made: the [first eSwatini Pride](#). Congratulations to The Rock of Hope, other collaborators and our Swati activist colleagues! Halala, Afrika! Halala!

## Liberia: LIPRIDE

The [2nd pride celebration](#) was held, despite being unable to march due to security concerns and homophobic threats. Congratulations to the organisers for persevering and hosting a successful pride despite the challenges: Liberia Initiative for the Promotion of Rights, Identities, Diversity, and Equality (LIPRIDE), supported by Transgender Network of Liberia, the Lesbian and Gay Association of Liberia, Stop Aids in Liberia, and ActionAid Liberia.

The following statement from Stop Aids in Liberia (SAIL) provides a background to the challenges faced: "In February 2012, Liberia became the latest African country seeking to pass new laws that would punish LGBT people. One bill currently before National Legislature proposed by VP Howard-Taylor would extend the criminal penalty for same-sex conduct by consenting adults to a second-degree felony punishable by up to five years in prison. A second bill proposed by Representative Massasquoi would explicitly prohibit same-sex marriage."

Existing laws in Liberia already makes same-sex conduct a criminal offense. Liberia has rarely enforced its existing anti-LGBT laws, and there is little evidence of people being prosecuted for non-compliance. Nonetheless, the existence of laws criminalizing sexual conduct exposes LGBT people to discrimination by public service providers, such as schools and hospitals, and encourages social stigmatization. These pending legislation would make life more difficult for LGBT people. These bill will reinforce a widespread negative public perception of homosexuality intensifying everyday harassment that includes physical abuse and official discrimination."

## South Africa

Under the theme, "[Keep the Promise to LGBTQI+ People](#)," Durban hosted a successful event.

## Uganda: #TransPrideUganda2018

[First trans pride in Uganda](#). Kim Mukasa, the International Trans Fund's Program Officer and one of the organizers of the event, stated: "Being in a space free and fearless, with genuine love for each other and trauma healing, was deep and humbling."

# News from Africa

## Angola

History made in Angola - **first LGBT human rights group** legally recognised! We'd like to welcome **Associação Íris Angola** to the team of LGBTQIA+ human rights defenders on the African continent.

## Benin

*Les femmes beninoises montent au créneau.* The communication officer of the association Afro Benin describes the plight of women and sexual minorities. [Read more.](#)

## Burundi

Defend Defenders' **new report**, "Headlong rush," examines the government's appalling behaviour as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

## Botswana

"During the third UPR cycle, Botswana received 15 SOGIESC recommendations. In spite of recent positive government and court decisions, we regret that the government decided to note all of them" Video of Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera delivering the ILGA and COC joint statement, prepared in consultation with LeGaBiBo, during the adoption of UPR outcomes of Botswana during the 38th Human Rights Council." [Read more.](#)

## Cameroon

On the night of the 12/13 July, a well-known trans woman working with Genderqueer Cameroon Transigeance Alliance was beaten severely by a group of people in a transphobic attack. The woman has had a history of being subjected to human rights violations – she was arrested in 2011 and spent over a year in prison before being acquitted on appeal. After the attack in July of this month, she went to hospital for care and treatment, but she does not have sufficient money to cover the bill. She lost all during this attack, including her identity card, passport and money, and other personal belongings.

Herewith a statement received from GenderQueer Cameroon Transigeance Action, who stated that they cannot be silent about this atrocity, even at the expense of their own safety:

"The Trans woman who has been attacked, is now suffering. She doesn't have any healthcare access that means, she needs some money to treat herself. She also needs to have a safe place to leave because her family has rejected her because of her expressive gender. You can help our organization help her by sending a little fund to treat her and to benefit of a safe local where we can easily and safely organize our activities so that such attacks don't happen again in the future. We are open, even to do and interview to denunciate all injustices that are made over Trans people in our country because we are overfeed of injustices."

## Egypt

The heartbreaking and heartwarming **story** of one of the Egyptians who raised a rainbow flag at a concert in Egypt in 2017, who was then jailed for 3 months. A story of horror. A story of hope.

## Ghana

- ❑ **UN Expert Spotlights LGBT Poverty in Ghana:** “Conversations I had with numerous LGBT people in Ghana underscored the urgency of legalizing adult consensual same-sex conduct. For example, a 26-year-old lesbian described the frustration she felt when her employer fired her after he found out she was a lesbian. A 28-year-old lesbian echoed these sentiments, saying ‘the problem in Accra is that LGBT people can’t get jobs, nobody wants to hire them, and when family members find out about your sexual orientation, they don’t pay your school fees.”
- ❑ **Survey:** Ghanaians prefer to live in poverty, become jobless, and have poor infrastructure, than recognize gay rights

## Kenya

- ❑ Introducing the **Refugee Coalition of East Africa (RefCEA)**, the only refugee-led organization advocating for LGBTI refugees in East Africa. RefCEA is an umbrella organization consisting of several LGBTI refugee organizations in Kenya and Uganda. Members of RefCEA include the Nature’s Network, Refugee Flag Kakuma, Cosir, Team No Sleep Foundation, Urban Legacy Africa, and Arise Network. To support their work through donations, **[click here](#)**.
- ❑ Obama urges African leaders to stop dismissing gay rights as ‘Western ideas.’ **[Read more](#)**.
- ❑ **[Places where one can access mental health resources in Kenya](#)**.

## Namibia

**HIV/AIDS Statistics, 2016:** “There are about 243 000 people living with HIV in Namibia. According to the document, the ministry has tested close to 80% people to reach the adopted UNAIDS 90:90:90 global fast track programme, which was signed in 2015.”

## Nigeria

Nigeria’s **first LGBT-focused radio talk show**. “Two Nigerians, Chijioke Okoli and Cisi Eze, popularly known as CJ and Cisi, have banded together to launch a radio show that will explore issues relating to homosexuality in Nigeria.”

## South Africa

The Gay and Lesbian Network (GLN) is a registered human rights non-profit organisation based in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and is to close down within two months due to lack of funding. **[Click here to donate](#)**.

## Senegal

A young gay Senegalese man speaks about coming out.

**[Récit du week end:](#)** *Franky\* un jeune gay sénégalais raconte ses premiers pas.*

## Tunisia

Tunisia’s Commission on Individual Freedoms and Equality, in its report published on June 12, 2018, recommended decriminalizing sodomy and ensuring equality between men and women in inheritance, eliminating “morality” laws, and abolishing the death penalty. **[Read more](#)**.

## Uganda

- ❑ Across the board funding addresses inequity in [PEP, PrEP and ARV uptake](#).
- ❑ Icebreakers Uganda introduces [AfroQueer](#) a podcast telling the stories of Queer Africans from across the continent and diaspora. The podcast celebrates queer love, and explores the laws affecting our lives, migration, media, race, class, censorship, family and sex. The first podcast looks at South Africa's pride. The second podcast reflects on [Uganda's pride](#).

## Zimbabwe

Five gay and bi and MSM male health [centres are to open](#). "As a result of the criminalisation of homosexuality, and stigma and discrimination fueled by the notoriously homophobic former Mugabe administration, many MSM have traditionally been fearful of seeking sexual health related services in Zimbabwe.

'We are trying to help the minority community so that they can access medical services after realising that they have been discriminated against,' said NAC Monitoring and Evaluation Director, Amon Mpofu, reported. "Here they will be able to discuss their health related issues, peer education and pick condoms among other issues that affect them daily"

## General

- ❑ What to tell? [Trans people and consent in Africa](#). "Sexual interactions should be based on consent and complete transparency. As transparency informs consent, it should ideally include matters like gender identity. A person's sexual orientation is not a choice and should therefore not be treated as something flexible."
- ❑ [Dispelling the Myth that Homosexuality is Un-African](#). "Whether it is the elite pushing the "gay rights are unAfrican" narrative out of pure ignorance, or whether power-hungry politicians dance to the tune of the people they govern in order to remain popular with the electorate, there is no question that categorising same-sex attraction as a foreign concept and a form of neo-colonialism serves as a major obstacle to LGBTI rights on the continent."
- ❑ [L'homosexualité en Afrique: intrinsèque ou importée?](#)
- ❑ [5 Current and proven facts about Africa's shifting gay dynamic](#).
- ❑ A great starting point for [diversity training](#) that can be used as a framework to be adapted to the African context.
- ❑ The [Yogyakarta Principles](#) leading the way for Pride celebrations and the freedom of assembly.
- ❑ [The bruised silence of queer women](#). Women in abusive relationships with other women.
- ❑ [Human Rights systems under pressure](#): African Human Rights Commission.

## UN SOGIE EXPERT

- ❑ [The third report](#) from the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) has been released.
- ❑ Engaging in UN special procedures: Do you wish to engage with the UN Special Procedures on SOGIESC issues? This is the [9th monthly info note](#) by ILGA on UN Special Procedures and sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).
- ❑ Upcoming country visits: The Independent Expert will be visiting the following African countries: [Cape Verde](#), [Egypt and Morocco](#).

For more news from Africa, and around the World, check out the [LGBulleTIn](#) from ILGA World

Send in news from your organisation or country: [admin@panafricailga.org](mailto:admin@panafricailga.org)



# In case you missed it...

## Interview with Victor Madrigal-Borloz: Video

Monica Tabengwa, PAI's former Executive Director, in an interview with Victor Madrigal-Borloz – Independent Expert on SOGI to the United Nations.

Topics covered include:

- ❑ his mandate, his commitment to the mandate and how he carries out his mandate;
- ❑ Human Rights Mechanisms and the importance of furthering international consensus on the rights of LGBTIQ+ people;
- ❑ the importance of the Conference;
- ❑ his work within individual countries;
- ❑ the importance of the interfaith dialogue at the UN and within the LGBTIQ+ movement, and the inter-relation between religion and politics in determining countries' stances on LGBTIQ+ issues;
- ❑ uniting all spheres of state and non-state actors in working towards the end of violence and discrimination.

[Watch the full interview.](#)



Video: PAI Media Team

In late 2017 the United Nations Human Rights Council appointed Mr. Madrigal-Borloz as UN Independent Expert on Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity for a three years period starting on 1 January 2018. In this capacity, he assesses the implementation of international human rights law, raises awareness, engages in dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, and provides advisory services, technical assistance, capacity-building to help address violence and discrimination against persons on the basis of the sexual orientation or gender identity.

Victor Madrigal-Borloz, a Costa Rican jurist, serves as the Secretary-General of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), a global network of over 150 rehabilitation centres with the vision of full enjoyment of the right to rehabilitation for all victims of torture and ill treatment. A member of the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture from 2013 to 2016, Mr Madrigal-Borloz was Rapporteur on Reprisals and oversaw a draft policy on the torture and ill-treatment of LGBTI persons. Prior to this he led technical work on numerous cases, reports and testimonies as Head of Litigation and Head of the Registry at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and has also worked at the Danish Institute for Human Rights (Copenhagen, Denmark) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (San José, Costa Rica).

Mr Madrigal-Borloz is a founding member of the Costa Rican Association of International Law (ACODI), a founding Board member of the International Justice Resource Centre (IJRC), and a founding Board member of Synergia-IDH.

KEEP IN TOUCH



For enquiries and any news you want to share with us for our newsletter: [admin@panafricailga.org](mailto:admin@panafricailga.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 150 African organisations and 40 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.](#)