



Official Statement 15 May 2014

On the 17th of May 2014, The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) is being held in more than 120 countries around the world, Transgender and Intersex Africa (TIA) joins many other organisations in the country in commemorating the day. The day seeks to raise awareness on the continuous homophobia and transphobia against LGBTI individuals by communities, states and service providers. On the day we will pay homage to those who lost their lives to hate crimes, injustice, rejection, exclusion and discrimination and raise awareness on LGBTI rights. The IDAHOT 2014 global theme is “freedom of expression”.

We encourage all transgender people in South Africa to ensure that their voice is also heard and to stand proud against all forms of injustice. The South African government has set aside 2014 as a year not only to celebrate 20 years of democracy but a year to reflect on the victories and challenges of the past 20 years. We do not deny that South Africa has the most progressive legislation in terms of LGBTI rights on the continent, but transgender people have faced more set-backs than victories in the last 20 years of democracy.

Ever since Act 49 of 2003 was introduced, an Act which allows transgender and intersex people to change their sex description on their identity documents, only a limited and small number of transgender and intersex people have had the privilege to enjoy the provisions made available by Act 49. The Department of Home Affairs still has difficulty in properly implementing this law, this has led to many transgender people going through their daily lives without an identity document, a document which is critical for access to services in South Africa.

Transgender and Intersex Africa
Registration number: 098-528-NPO
Contact: (012) 7972612
Toll free : 0800282842
Email: transgender.intersex101@gmail.com
Physical add: 2249 Block F, Soshanguve 0152



Transphobia is still prevalent in healthcare facilities, health service providers still display outdated understanding of gender identity and expression, no knowledge of transgender healthcare and there is a lack of sensitisation for service providers that deal with transgender patients. The concentration of transgender specific health services to only three major tertiary hospitals in South Africa has also created a long waiting list which will ensure that the majority of transgender people will not have access to transition related services in their life time. Transgender health care is still not prioritised in South Africa.

We still live in communities that are not tolerant of gender diverse people, hate crimes are still prevalent and transgender people still have to endure living without any form of shelter after they are disowned by their families.

We urge the Government of South Africa to take a lead and speak out against the human rights abuses that are taking place in Africa against LGBT people; the creation of inhumane laws that have been passed in Uganda and Nigeria against LGBT people and are currently being discussed for implementation in other African countries such as Ethiopia. As a country which has taken an exemplary role in implementing pro-LGBTI laws, it should also take the lead in speaking out against anti-LGBTI laws on the continent.

TIA would like to bring attention to a significant but still invincible community of people within the LGBTI umbrella; intersex people. Non-consensual, unnecessary and irreversible surgeries on intersex children are still taking place in our hospitals; this continues to be a topic that is not spoken about. These surgeries often take place because of heteronormative and pro-sex binary related reasoning. Parents are not given the correct information regarding their intersex infants so as to make decisions that are truly in the best interests of the child and respect the bodily autonomy and integrity of the child. Intersex people are still not free to live their lives without shame, fear or prejudice in our communities.

“In all walks of life we are all part of a bigger picture. We are linked to every individual, one way or the other. Hating someone because they view their life differently doesn’t make them any less of who they are. We are all humans conceived in the same manner, to paint the picture of life with one’s own personal choice of colour. Live and let live” -
Olebogeng Nkoliswa, Programs Officer, TIA

“As South Africa celebrates 20 years of democracy, we should reflect on the challenges that transgender and intersex people face. We cannot be truly free as a country when there are inequalities and violations against minority groups. Even though legislation in our country is progressive, we still live in a country where communities are not tolerant of gender diverse people, discrimination is still prevalent in health care facilities and transgender people still struggle to access employment and educational opportunities. We should also celebrate our resilience for life in these challenging times; we should challenge policy makers and involve ourselves more in the movement”- Nthabiseng Mokoena, Advocacy Coordinator, TIA

“Save, Help, Appreciate, and Recognise transgender and intersex people. Together we can shape a better future for us all, which is built on the fundamentals of love, acceptance and peace”. –Mosa Mahlangu, Outreach officer, TIA

“I voice out my frustration in regards to transphobia within the minority groups of LGB people themselves. Even though we are now privileged enough to speak up for the human rights as citizens of this country and fight on the same battle ground against homophobia and transphobia, we constantly find ourselves acting judiciously against one another. My plea is that our cisgender gay brothers and lesbian sisters should respect and accept the Trans identity. We can no longer ignore the fact that homosexuals contribute to transphobia. This is our battle let us fight it together, protect one another and most importantly love each other. We must be a remarkable example of what a united community stands for. Homophobia and transphobia add to the world crises which we already face today. We cannot allow hate and discrimination against LGBTI people to continue. We should all be free to express our identity and our being.”- Tebogo Nkoana, Founder and Director, TIA

Transgender and Intersex Africa
Registration number: 098-528-NPO
Contact: (012) 7972612
Toll free : 0800282842
Email: transgender.intersex101@gmail.com
Physical add: 2249 Block F, Soshanguve 0152

