

## **LEGABIBO Registration Court of Appeal Judgment Press Statement - #LEGABIBOregistration**

On the 15 January 2016, five judges sat for the Court of Appeal hearing of the LEGABIBO registration case; *Thuto Rammogwe and 20 others Vs. The State* represented by Mr. Dick Bayford of Bayford and Associates and Ms Lesego Nchunga of Dow and Associates.

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016, we received notification from the Court of appeal that the judgment date for the Appeal is set for the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at the Court of Appeal in Gaborone.

On 16 February 2012, 20 litigants –who are the Respondents, applied for the registration of the Lesbians Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana - LEGABIBO in terms of the Societies Act. On 12 March 2012, the Director of the Department of Civil and National Registration rejected their application for registration on the basis that the Botswana Constitution does not recognise homosexuals and that the objectives of the organisation are contrary to section 7(2) of the Societies Act. The Respondents appealed against this decision to the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs. The appeal was rejected on 12 November 2012. On 12 March 2013, the Respondents filed a case before the High Court of Botswana, asking the court to review the decision to refuse to register LEGABIBO.

On 14 November 2014, the High Court, per Rannowane J, declared that the decision of the Minister to refuse registration of LEGABIBO contravened sections 3, 12 and 13 of the Botswana Constitution and declared further that the Respondents were entitled to have the group Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana (LEGABIBO) registered as a society. The Attorney General appealed this decision, which now forms the subject of the appeal before the Court of Appeal.

It is against this background therefore that BONELA and the LGBT community invite the local, regional and international media to join us on the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at the Botswana Court of Appeal at 0930 for the ruling.

We invite all individuals, partners, LGBT community and local, regional and international media to use the #LEGABIBOregistration when live tweeting on the case and initiatives.

In the next 3 days, pre-judgment day, the following initiatives will be conducted:

1. We will conduct a press conference on the 14<sup>th</sup> March at 11am at BONELA offices
2. We will hold an awareness raising march on the date of the Court of Appeal Judgment 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 from 0600 – 0830am from The Three Dikgosi monument towards Masa center then back to High Court.
3. We will hold press briefing on the 16<sup>th</sup> after the march and post-judgment

The case is supported by the Southern Africa Litigation Centre (@SALC) and the Botswana Network of Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS – BONELA (@BONELA)

For further information, please contact:

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