



Coalition For The Defense Of Sexual Rights

Press Release:
Minna, Niger State,
Nigeria.

15th April 2014

SEXUAL RIGHTS COALITION COMMENDS THE PASSAGE OF THE HIV BILL 2013.

The Coalition for the Defense of Sexual Rights (CDSR) wishes to commend the Nigerian Senate on the passage of the HIV Bill 2013 on Thursday 10th April 2014.

The Bill stipulated that every person living HIV and AIDS shall be assured of freedom from unlawful termination of his or her employment by reason of his or her status. Senate President, David Mark, noted that the issue of HIV/AIDS is not something that people should be ashamed of anymore "because we all know that it existed."

He said those affected should make their status known to those concerned in order to get necessary support and assistance. Mark said: "HIV/AIDS is not something that people should be afraid of anymore because we know it does exist, it is better that we take care and look after those who are affected by it rather than discriminate against them."

Dorothy Aken'Ova of INCREASE said, "The Bill is a very important step towards ensuring a better life for people living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria- those who have for many years been faced with the effect of stigma and discrimination on the grounds of their HIV status."

"It is mostly appreciated that the provision of section 4(2c) [*further diversity - including gender diversity in the society based on equal diversity and respect for all people.*], which enables the rights to take affirmative action and comprises of language on diversity"- Joseph Sewedo Akoro, a member of the coalition said.

Thus as a Coalition, we are worried that the Same-Sex Marriage Act [2013], prohibiting freedom of expression and association might produce a counter effect on the implementation of the HIV Bill when and if it becomes law. We link this to the intersectionality of human rights for all groups of person.

Nonetheless, we encourage members of the parliament to expedite the harmonization of the Bills as passed by the House of Representative and the Senate, to enable the President's assent before the 2015 elections.

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Our Rights Are Not Guaranteed Until EVERYONE'S Rights Are!

Signed by:

Organisations

International Centre for Sexual Reproductive Rights (INCREASE)

Changing Attitude for Healthy and Better Living Initiative

African Focus For Youth Development (AFFYD)

People Governed By Sharia Rule (PGSR)

Marps Behavioural Initiative (MBI)

Vision Spring Initiative (VSI)

Social Justice Advocacy Initiative (SIAI)

Total Health Empowerment and Development Initiative (THEDI)

Queer Alliance

Hope Alive Initiative (HAI)

Alliance for Behavioural Change (ABC)

Centre for Healthcare and Economic Empowerment for Women and Youth. (CHEEWY)

Development Aid International

Advocates for Human Rights (AHSUD)

Individuals

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