



When culture is distorted

Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality

In line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgendered and intersexed people (LGBTI) have the same rights just like everyone else. The continual depiction of irrational homophobic behaviour by some citizens towards the LGBTI community violates the very core of our constitution that we claim to uphold. Respecting the rights and dignity of others irrespective of their sexual orientation is what strengthens ordinary citizen's belief in the spirit and rule of law in Society. United Nations (UN) in article two strongly condemns the perpetration of all forms of violence and abuse towards persons based on their sexual orientation or sexual identity and these horrendous acts of "Hate Crimes" are discriminatory in its very nature.

The continued exploitation of LGBTI in the name of culture distorts whatever our forbearers stood for as well as future society we hope to build. Whatever might have been the myth around LGBTI people it certainly does not validate or legitimize cruel acts such as "Corrective Rape" being perpetrated against ordinary citizens of this Country as it serves only to fuel certain misguided practices and cultural beliefs. For years The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) along with other Chapter 9 (C9s) institutions and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), have collaborated in an attempt to address and advance the course of LGBTI people. It is our understanding that the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development should come to the party to ensure that the quandary of LGBTI people are taken seriously. It is not only a question of Gay and Lesbian Rights, but basic Human Rights which is afforded to all citizens regardless of race, religion, socio-economic status, gender or culture, as entrenched within Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights.

The Commission for Gender Equality is concerned at the alarming rate at which people particularly women and girl-children are being raped and sexually violated in the name of corrective practice, assuming that the general belief is that homosexuality is Un-African and immoral. The CGE calls for all affected parties and citizens of this Country to rally behind and support LGBTI people in which ever way they possibly can and to show that humanity, compassion and the embracing spirit of Ubuntu is still alive and well within South Africa.

Our plea is for the society that we service, to join hands with the CGE to push Government to acknowledge that this growing phenomenon is in fact the reality of many women in South Africa and to implement legislation that will criminalize the practice of "Corrective Rape" and violence against the LGBTI Community

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The Commission for Gender Equality is established in terms of Section 187 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in order to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality.