

30th Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 6
UPR – Jamaica
Statement by the International Lesbian and Gay Association

delivered by Jaevion Nelson

Mr. President,

This statement is delivered in consultation with J-FLAG, a Jamaican LGBT rights organization.

We commend the government on its efforts and acceptance of recommendations to protect and promote human rights, including for LGBT people.

We are deeply concerned several recommendations do not enjoy its full support or at all. We understand some recommendations such as amending “the buggery law” or legalizing abortion are particularly sensitive. We urge the government to conduct a legal audit on the impact several pieces of legislation has on vulnerable groups such as people living with HIV, LGBT people, women and girls and people with disabilities.

Mr. President,

We are encouraged by the prioritization of the needs of vulnerable groups as expressed by the Minister of Justice during the UPR. We urge the government to review its social protection strategy with human rights organizations to ensure LGBT people, people living with HIV, street children, and other vulnerable groups can better access to available services.

The inclusion of human rights education in the school curricula is commendable. This be mandatory in all schools and include sessions on the rights of vulnerable groups and avenues for redress where rights are violated.

We are deeply concerned about homelessness among LGBT people, especially adolescents as a result of discrimination and violence. The government’s response to homelessness is generally woefully insufficient. We urge that the government considers increasing the number of spaces available at existing shelters and make them more accessible to LGBT people. We recommend that parenting and community interventions include efforts to reduce the number of children and youth who are being kicked out of their homes.

Finally, Mr. President,

We welcome the efforts to establish the NHRI. We urge that it be structured to address the multi-layered way in which vulnerable groups, including LGBT persons, experience discrimination and violence and that it be empowered to make complaints to both the government and international human rights bodies.

Thank you Mr. President