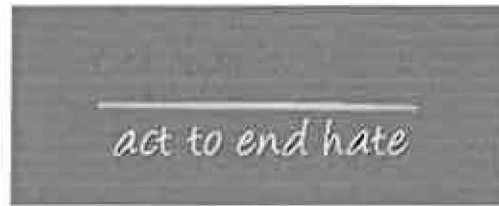


Subject: Media Release: Politicians, Human Rights Defenders & LGBTI Activists Speak-out against Heterosexist Violence

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CAMPAIGN 07-0-7-
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WC END HATE ALLIANCE MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 6th August 2009

Politicians, Human Rights Defenders & LGBTI Activists Speak-out against Heterosexist Violence

Dr Allan Boesak from COPE; Nozizwe Mdlala-Routledge & Lynne Brown from the ANC; Constitutional Law Professor Pierre de Vos from UCT; The Very Rev Dean Rowan Smith from the St Georges Cathedral; and Emily Craven, national coordinator for the Joint Working Group will join activists to raise their collective voices in condemnation and outrage at heterosexist violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Intersexed (LGBTI) persons on Friday, 07 August 2009, 11h00 at St Georges Cathedral, Cape Town, RSA.

A public protest and march has been convened by the WC 07-07-07 End Hate Alliance to raise public consciousness around the high incidence of HATE RAPE and violence against black lesbians in townships and rural communities. The protest further aims to pressurize and hold the WC Departments of Public Prosecution and Justice accountable to monitor and ensure that the Zoliswa Nkonyana trial, currently heard before the Khayelitsha regional court, to proceed without any further undue postponements and delay tactics by the defense attorneys.

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Nine of the 20 men are on trial for allegedly bashing and stabbing the 19 year-old Zoliswa Nkonyana to death meters from her home in Khayelitsha in February 2006. Since their first appearance in December 2006, the case has seen 20 postponements; the trial is yet to commence in earnest; the chief state witness, herself being a survivor of attempted murder by the accused, is yet to be cross-examined by the defense after giving testimony in December 2008. Both the victim and the survivor were attacked after been taunted for being "tomboys and living as out lesbians" in their community.

There is simply no regard for the delayed justice and emotional trauma of the victim's family, nor the emotions of the survivor and her family who have to relive her traumatic experiences each time she is confronted by the accused and their supporters. The personal stories and experiences of black lesbians living in fear are horrific and we are angry at this travesty of social justice in a free and democratic South Africa. We have a progressive constitution and legislation which enshrines the human rights and dignity of all her citizens irrespective of race, gender and sexual orientation. Yet the disparity between paper rights and the daily reality of LGBTI persons is unbelievable for a democratic society. This travesty of justice and disregard for human dignity is allowed to continue without any challenge from political parties; leaders in the faith fraternity; community leaders and the media.

- We appeal for an outright condemnation of homophobic and homo-prejudiced violence in our communities.
- We continue our fight for the end of discrimination and prejudice on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation and health status.
- We advocate for an end to all forms of violence, crimes and acts of hate.
- We demand that current legislation be applied to combat gender-based violence and that the strongest sentences are passed on conviction.
- We demand an end to Hate Rape used to "cure" or "correct" women who love women.

The protest march commences from the Grand Parade in Darling Street at 09h00, up Adderley Street to the Provincial Legislature in Wale Street culminating in a public gathering in the St Georges Cathedral at 11h00.

At the time of going to press, no confirmation was received from either the Office of the Premier to confirm the attendance of Premier Helen Zille, or from the office of the Independent Democrat's Patricia De Lille.

Triangle Project is the provincial secretariat for the WC 07-07-07 End Hate Alliance which is made up of the following partners:

The Commission for Gender Equality; The CT Women's Legal Centre; AIDS Legal Network; Gender Dynamix; Good Hope MCC; The Inner Circle; The Saartjie Baartman

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Centre; Inclusive and Affirming Ministries; Engender; Intersex SA; TAC; WC Network Against Violence Against Women; Human Rights Defenders & Gender Activists.

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