



April 12, 2019

REJOINDER

Ref: Graphic Communications Group

LGBT+ Rights Ghana, an entity creating a safe and inclusive space for LGBT person living in Ghana, write this rejoinder in response to an article published in The Mirror newspaper on 6th of April, 2019 by HadizaNuhhu-Billa Quansah with the caption: Sex in the open; Chorkor suffocates under gays, lesbians' affair – an article intended to target, ridicule and incite homophobia among the masses with no just cause.

The said reporter clearly has an agenda against the LGBTQI+ community; a community which has been misunderstood, marginalized and undermined for the longest; a community which has been greyed-out to the convenience of a heteronormative society. The continual targeting of LGBT+ persons living in Ghana only highlights the bias, instability and unreliability of our human right laws as a country. In reviewing this article, it came to our notice that the said reporter, gathering from social media posts (with evidence enclosed in this rejoinder), is a classic homophobic.

With demeaning statements, negative comparisons and name-calling pertaining to LGBT+ persons on her social media handles, we would like to point out the unprofessional and unethical approach to journalism on the side of this reporter. The article is biased, highly polarized and does not inform objectively because the reporter placed premium on insults and exaggerations. Without being hypocritical, sex in the open is no news and most definitely not exclusive to the LGBTQI+ community. Putting things in context, there are some communities in Ghana which are underserved and therefore, levels of poverty are on the high, and the consequence of that situation on LGBT+ residents require perspective and not judgement.

LGBT+ Rights Ghana does not endorse the openness of sexual acts in public, however, the pressures of victimization have compelled some LGBT+ persons who are homeless for obvious reasons, to indulge in such acts. In addition, we debunk the branding of Chorkor as a notorious community. Associating vices to an underserved community without taking into account, the everyday life of residents who might lack basic amenities on so many levels is rather insensitive and somewhat inhumane. Effeminacy has always been a part of every society; it is not an act nor is it a choice, it is a human reality.

The far-reaching responsibility of a journalist is to be the mouthpiece of the abused and stigmatized in a society. A rightful interview with any of the agencies promoting human rights in Ghana would have given much clarity to the greyness of the subject in a more objective fashion. The article is nothing short of a targeted assault and discrimination of LGBT+ persons on the basis of their sexual orientation, which paramountly conflicts human right laws. LGBT+ Rights Ghana calls for a more critical analysis rather than a distant conclusion and possibly a revised version of the article on the backdrop of groundbreaking interviews and research.

Thank you.

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Director - LGBT+ Rights Ghana

