

# URGENT ACTION

## ANTI-LGBTI MARCH THREATENS MORE VIOLENCE

**A further march has been called by religious groups for Tuesday 6 August in the city of Les Cayes. Two demonstrations against homosexuality have taken place in Haiti since 19 July.**

More than a thousand people demonstrated against homosexuality and same-sex marriage at two different marches in Haiti. The first demonstration took place in the capital, Port-au-Prince, on 19 July. The demonstration was organised by the Coalition of Religious and Moral Organizations (*Coalition haïtienne des organisations religieuses et morales*). A second one was held in the city of Jacmel, in the south of the country, on 28 July.

Local human rights organisations have stated that during and after the first march on 19 July, acts of violence and aggression against persons perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI) were reported (see UAs AMR 36/014/2013 and AMR 36/015/2013). In a statement published on 30 July, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights referred to 47 cases of violence and aggression [against] LGTBI persons or perceived as such, including attacks with knives, machetes, cement blocks, rocks, and sticks between 17 and 24 July.

Haitian LGBTI rights activists have reported that a new march has now been called by religious leaders to take place in the city of Les Cayes, in the south of the country, on 6 August. Even though no acts of violence against those perceived as LGBTI were reported following the 28 July march, risks for the safety of LGBTI people remain, especially considering that many fled the capital Port-au-Prince for the countryside in fear for their safety after the first march.

### **Please write immediately in Haitian Creole, French or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to order an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into all the recent allegations of homophobic violence, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Welcoming the government's public stance, and reminding them that although everyone has the right to free speech and freedom to demonstrate, these rights must be exercised peacefully;
- Urging the authorities to take immediate steps to fully provide appropriate protection for LGBTI people, or those who might be perceived as LGBTI, around the march planned for 6 August in Les Cayes;
- Reminding them that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 06 AUGUST 2013 TO:**

#### General Director of the Haitian Police

Godson Orélus  
Directeur Général de la PNH  
Police Nationale d'Haiti  
Port-au-Prince, Haïti  
Email: godore68@hotmail.com

**Salutation: Monsieur le directeur/**

**Dear Director**

#### Minister of Justice and Public security

Jean Renel Sanon  
Ministre de la Justice et de la Sécurité  
publique  
18, avenue Charles Summer  
Port-au-Prince, Haïti

Email: secretariat.mjsp@yahoo.com

**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/  
Dear Minister**

#### **And copies to:**

NGO  
Kouraj:  
info@kouraj.org

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 186/13. Further information: [www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/015/2013/en](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR36/015/2013/en)

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

*Kouraj* (Haitian creole for “courage”) formed in 2009 as *Amis-Amis* (“Friends-Friends”) and became *Kouraj* in December 2011. They are activists “working for the promotion of the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people” in Haiti (known in Haitian Creole as persons M for *Masisi*, *Madivin*, *Makomer* or *Mix*) and aim to raise public awareness of the situation of discrimination and stigma towards their community. Activists of *Kouraj* told Amnesty International how the situation of LGBTI people has worsened since the 12 January 2010 earthquake, especially with the substantial arrival of religious groups from North America, many of whom have accused homosexuality in Haiti of being one of the reasons for the earthquake and the source of the country’s problems.

Following the 2010 earthquake, 2.3 million Haitians were left homeless with no alternative but to make their own shelters wherever they could. According to *Kouraj* LGBTI people or those perceived as being LGBTI were often victims of discrimination in the displacement camps and many had to flee for even more precarious living conditions.

Following the call on 26 June for the march of 19 July, *Kouraj* activists have been receiving threats via phone, Facebook, and at their office in Port-au-Prince. They decided to close it because of the threats. Charlot Jeudy, president of *Kouraj*, has been targeted in some of the threats. One of the leaflets left at *Kouraj*’s premises stated “If Charlot doesn’t shut his mouth, we’ll shut it for him” (“*si Charlot ne ferme pas sa gueule, on va lui fermer*” [sic]).

Demonstrators led by religious leaders protested on 19 and 28 July against the adoption of any legislation authorizing same-sex marriage in Haiti, although there is no such project in the country. During the 19 July march the correspondent of Radio France Internationale (RFI) reported having been verbally assaulted by demonstrators while covering the event.

Name: LGBTI persons or those perceived being LGBTI

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 186/13 Index: AMR 36/016/2013 Issue Date: 02 August 2013