

February 2018
Volume 4

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Pan Africa ILGA 4th Regional Conference

Empowering LGBTI Youth: Uniting for an Inclusive Future

Gaborone, Botswana, 2018

Deadline for registration, scholarship applications and abstract
submissions: **28th February**

INVITATION



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



PAN AFRICA ILGA 4TH REGIONAL CONFERENCE GABORONE, BOTSWANA

31st May to 04th June 2018

EMPOWERING LGBTI YOUTH:
UNITING FOR AN INCLUSIVE
FUTURE

Pan Africa ILGA (PAI) is the largest membership-based and democratically-organised LGBTI organisation in Africa. We currently have 146 member organisations across Africa, working on human rights and for LGBTI equality. Our secretariat is based in Johannesburg, South Africa where we are registered as a Non-Profit Organisation since 2015.

Following the 3rd Regional Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2016, where a total of 184 delegates from 34 countries participated, it was decided that the 4th Regional Conference would be co-hosted together with our Botswana partner, LEGABIBO (Lesbians Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana) from 31st May to 4th June 2018.

RATIONALE FOR CONFERENCE

The African LGBTI movement increasingly finds itself at the crossroads of change. Where significant progress is being made in some countries, deterioration of human rights of LGBTI people can be witnessed in others. The speed with which progress and wins come vary considerably.

Whether change comes overnight or only after years, change has one important common denominator: it can only be achieved through visionary leadership, endurance and strong partnerships. It is with this in mind that we chose the theme: 'Empowering LGBTI Youth: Uniting for an Inclusive Future', specifically targeting young LGBTI persons and organisations to build sustainability in LGBTI movements and LGBTI participation.

AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

- Engage on common regional strategies to achieve change in policies that discriminate against people on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics;
- Develop strategies to build the capacity of LGBTI youth across the continent through capacity-building workshops;
- Create a forum to exchange ideas on best practices, while sharing successes and opportunities;
- Share ideas for effective advocacy in Africa;
- Receive advocacy training in relation to relevant regional and international bodies, including the ACHPR and the UN; and
- Confirm the mandate of the PAI Board in taking LGBTI rights forward on the continent.

THEMATIC FOCUS

We are seeking abstracts on the following themes:

- Youth Enlightenment through Education
What is the state of availability and access to education for young LGBTI individuals. How does this affect socio/economic well-being?
- Out of the Closet
How does our outward presentation, coming out, self-identification and non-identification and causes we fight for affect the relationship we have with the rest of society?
- Intersectionality of Struggles
How is the LGBTI struggle affected by the struggles of other demographics? Are these struggles linked in any way? How can working together improve the end goals of the struggles?
- LGBTI Health
What innovative methods and activist approaches of improving the community's health (sexual, reproductive, mental) exist? What are the challenges and what are the opportunities?
- Technology in Our Community
How has technology brought the community together? How has it improved the lives of our community? How has it risked the lives of individuals? How can we best harness the power of technology to better our society?
- ARTivism: Art as a Tool for Change
How can we use art as a tool for change? What is the best way to use different forms of art to influence positive change in the society?

PRE-CONFERENCES

We will host 6 pre-conferences prior to the main conference, held over two days (31st May and 1st of June) before the main PAI conference:

- Trans Pre-Conference
- Inter-Faith Pre-Conference
- LBQ Women Pre-Conference
- MSM Health and Wellbeing Pre-Conference
- Youth Pre-Conference
- Human Rights Mechanisms Pre-Conference

BY EMPOWERING LGBTI YOUTH WE ARE ENSURING CHANGE!

TO REGISTER

1. Visit our conference website - www.paiconference.org
2. Fill in the registration form if you or your organisation wish to attend.
3. Apply for a scholarship if you or your organisation need funding to attend the conference.
4. Submit an abstract if you or your organisation would like to present a paper at the conference.
5. The deadline for all registrations, scholarship applications and abstract submissions is the 28th of February.

Editorial

By PAI Programme Manager, Anthony Oluoch

Violence against LGBTI people should not be happening in this day and age, but yet it still does. And it is such a shame that people will exert their energy to cause pain and harm on another person just because the other person is different. In a perfect world, everyone accepts, understands and respects diversity. In this world, we all know that we will never all be the same. We all know that there will be differences in dress, race, thought, religion, sexual orientation and gender, among a myriad of other things that make us human. In this world, these differences should be seen as the source of beauty and not a reason to attack each other. A world where these things do not happen is the world which activists around the continent are working towards

One of the ways in which we do this is by attempting to understand those who are not willing to accept diversity. The banning of a film because of cultural differences. The arrests in Egypt because of apparent “debauchery”. The rape and murder of innocent lesbian women in South Africa. What goes on inside their minds? Why cause harm on another human being who has not wronged them one bit? Is it maybe because they are so insecure about their own existence that they get offended by another person living their truth? Is it perhaps because they experience joy in watching another person suffer so they take their phone out to record the incident instead of assisting the person? Could it be because their hearts are just filled with hate? Why do thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Africa have to live in constant fear of violence? Why we have to constantly hide our true selves from those who would be offended by our existence?

But Martin Luther King Jr said something that has played out in our minds lately. He said,

“If we are arrested every day, if we are exploited every day, if we are trampled over every day, don’t ever let anyone pull you so low as to hate them. We must use the weapon of love. We must have the compassion and understanding for those who hate us. We must realize so many people are taught to hate us that they are not totally responsible for their hate. But we stand in life at midnight, we are always on the threshold of a new dawn.”

It is midnight right now. We are on the threshold of a new dawn. And we are hopeful. We really are.

South Africa: Gay film banned as “pornography”

“Inxeba” (The Wound), a film about love between two men set against the backdrop of Xhosa initiation rites, has been effectively banned by the South African Film and Publication Board (FPB). With its release, it was rated 16LS (language and sex) and has now been rated X18 after pressure from cultural traditionalists. This ban is nothing more than a homophobic backlash as there are no grounds for this excessive rating.

“The film’s producers argue that Inxeba does not reveal anything not previously exposed, that they researched and consulted extensively with communities and that homophobia is at the heart of the protests.”

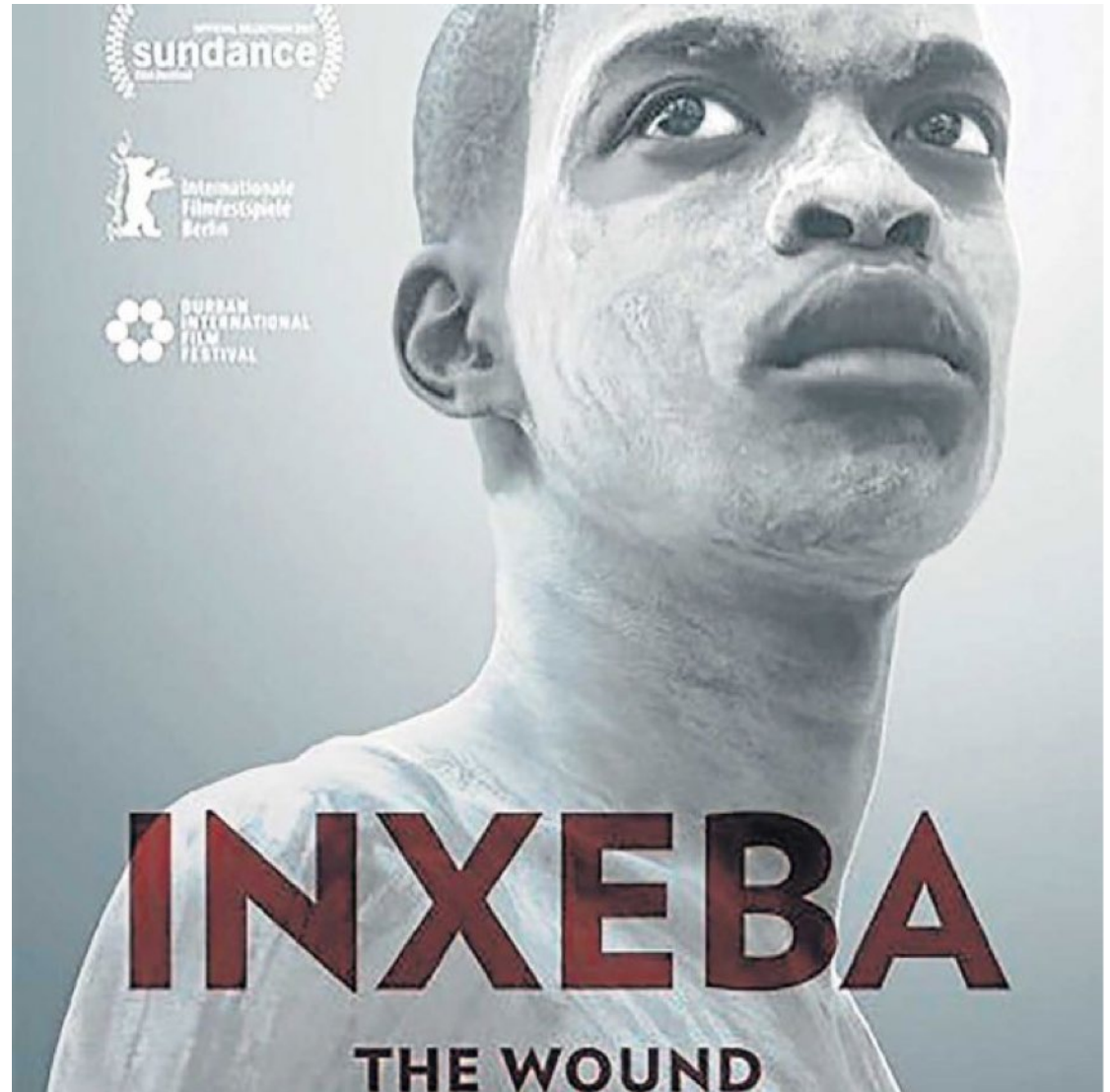
[Read more.](#)

Egypt: Police arrest organisers of gay concert

A student was arrested in Giza on the charge of ‘debauchery’ after organising a concert for the gay community. The student and the owner of the land were arrested and questioned on these charges and the charge of organising an event without a permit.

This follows on the September 2017 government crackdown when numerous people were arrested for waving a rainbow flag at a Mashrou Leila concert in Cairo. The openly gay singer was also banned from performing in Egypt.

[Read more.](#)



Kenya: Successful workplace diversity conference

Hivos, Workplace Pride and Sullivan Marketing organised a one-day workshop focusing on the importance of workplace diversity and inclusion. Issues discussed included good practices and challenges on inclusive workplaces. The United Nations' Global Standards for Business were also presented, highlight LGBTI discrimination.

Kenyan Justice, Monica Mbaru said that the Kenyan constitution “should be interpreted in a way that is fundamental in enabling equality at the workplace”, as “all human rights are due to every person and should be enjoyed freely without discrimination.

Read more about [the conference](#) and the [UN Global Standards for Business](#).

Tunisia: LGBTI human rights protest disrupted by police



A protest organised by Association des Lebres Penseurs and other LGBTI rights organisations under the hashtag #Sayeb-ni (Let me go) was organised outside the tourism ministry to demand the abolishment of outdated laws and laws that criminalised sexual freedom and discriminated against women.

Policeman informed the protesters the day before the protest that it had been banned. When some of the protesters ignored this and convened outside the ministry, holding a rainbow flag, they were violently disrupted by the police. A ministry spokesperson argued that they acted “for their own safety and to preserve public order”.

[Read more.](#)

Kenya: Case before court to decriminalise same-sex relations

The High Court in Kenya is currently hearing the case to decriminalise same-sex relations between consenting adults. Brought by the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (NGLHRC), the argument is that sections 162, 163 and 165 of the Penal Code are in breach of the Kenyan constitution. Same-sex activity is punishable by up to 14 years in jail.

Njeri Gateru, acting Executive Director of the NGLHRC says that, “These colonial laws undermine LGBT people’s fundamental rights as enshrined by our Constitution and ostracise them from society, causing misery and isolation, and devastating their lives. We believe that this wrong must be put right”. The first hearing was held last week and the case has been adjourned until the 1st of March.

[Read more.](#)

South Africa: 8 Arrested for the rape and murder of lesbian couple

The rape and murder of a lesbian couple, Joey and Anisha van Niekerk, as reported in [last month's newsletter](#) has seen progress as 8 have been arrested for the hate crime. The men face charges of murder, rape, kidnapping, robbery, unlawful possession of a firearm and obstruction of justice.

[Read more.](#)

Democratic Republic of Congo: “Bundere” – Lists revealing the homosexuals of Bukavu

The “Bundere”, as they are called locally, comprises up to 20 lists naming homosexuals, lesbians, cuckolds, mistresses and gigolos in Bukavu, often accompanied by compromising photos and videos of the accused. Written in Kiswahili, the details are enough to circulate in order to identify those suspected of activities and identities reviled by the community.

These lists are compiled by people in the community, leading to hate crimes including the beating of people and the destruction of homes. The National Press Union of the Congo (UNPC) has messages circulating on radio and television asking people not to circulate these lists or believe the information contained in them.

[Read more.](#)

Uganda: Violent Break in at Human Rights group offices

On the night of February 8, 2018, the Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF) offices suffered a violent break in. As yet unidentified suspects broke in, disabled the security system and attacked two guards with machetes.

This break in is part of a series of burglaries and attacks on offices of NGO groups in Uganda, including a previous attack on HRAPF in May 2016, where a security guard was beaten to death and files were stolen. HRAPF works to protect the rights of marginalised groups including LGBTI people and sex workers.

According to a Kampala-based regional human rights organisation, DefendDefenders, more than 30 organisations have been targeted in the same way since 2012, with no arrests by police. Maria Burnett, East Africa Director at Human Rights Watch says that, “In failing to effectively investigate attacks on nongovernmental groups, the Uganda police send a clear message that human rights defenders are on their own, and cannot count on the authorities for basic protection.”

[Read more.](#)

Read the [full report](#) from HRAPF.



Africa: African Commission launches new HIV report

With contributions from UNAIDS, civil society and other partners, the African Commission launched their new report: “HIV, the law and human rights in the African human rights system – Key challenges and opportunities for rights-based responses.”

UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé notes that, “This report makes the basic point that we must place people, rights and communities at the centre of the response to HIV. It is great to see the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights speak so boldly on zero discrimination and the right to health through this report.”

[Read more.](#)

NEWS SNIPPETS

Botswana: [Interview](#) with the trans man successful in amending his ID

South Africa: [Move](#) to end same-sex discrimination by Home Affairs

[Find out more](#) about the PAI
4th Regional Conference.

Registrations close 28th of
February.



Become a Member



Pan Africa ILGA is the largest membership based and democratically organised LGBTI federation in Africa. PAI currently consists of 146 African organisations and 40 international organisations working on human rights and equality for LGBTI people.

How to become a member:

Please be aware that only organisations (not individuals) can apply for membership. At its next meeting the Executive Board of ILGA will review your membership and you will receive communication as to the status of your application.

To apply, click [here](#). The membership fee is €60 for two years.

KEEP IN TOUCH



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