



Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals & Gays
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STATEMENT

"J-FLAG continues to support the Stop Murder Music Campaign"

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Over the past 6 years, the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-sexuals and Gays has been engaged with the Stop Murder Music Campaign (SMMC), a network of activists in Europe, the United States and Canada, who speak out against the performance of lyrics that promote violence against gays and lesbians in Jamaica. J-FLAG has recognised the SMMC as an important partnership in the fight against anti-gay violence and discrimination.

Against this background, J-FLAG supports the efforts of LSVD and other such groups in the Campaign to ensure that artists who promote hate and violence through their anti-gay lyrics be held accountable for this incitement of violence and hatred. As well these artistes should not be allowed to perform these lyrics internationally as this level of hatred should not be allowed to influence other cultures. The rewarding relationship held with the partners in this campaign is encouraging and J-FLAG is hopeful this kind of signal to artists will encourage the dancehall fraternity to seriously think about the responsibility that these artistes have to a developing society and that hatred and violence should not be the promoted or glamourised.

J-FLAG continues to take this position mindful of the fact that the threat as well as the reality of homophobic violence hangs over the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community in Jamaica. Indeed, violence has claimed the lives of too many members of the Jamaican GLBT community. J-FLAG remains convinced that this situation is fuelled, among other things, by the anti-gay lyrics of performers within the dancehall genre. If steps are not taken to address the threat posed by such lyrics, many more members of the Jamaican GLBT community will suffer.

We are conscious of the fact that the respect for the human rights of the GLBT community in many parts of Europe and North America has been won after a long struggle, and depended largely on governments and societies taking a stand against anti-gay violence. We therefore appreciate the seriousness of the issue for those who believe that allowing entertainers to call for the murder of GLBT persons represents a threat to the hard won respect for their humanity.

J-FLAG reiterates its respect for the sanctity of life and applauds the contributions of SMMC towards the safety of all GLBT persons.