

SAME SEX MARRIAGE - NIGERIA VS THE WEST

President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan's decision to sign Nigeria's same sex marriage prohibition act has drawn fierce condemnation from some western countries...

ABUJA, NIGERIA, April 8, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Is the case for acceptance of same sex marriage in Nigeria, an issue of right or wrong or simply a trend?

The recent decision by President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan in signing Nigeria's



same sex marriage prohibition act drew fierce and vocal condemnation from some western countries notably the United States, Britain and Canada. The British Foreign Secretary William Hague said: "We are disappointed that President Jonathan has given his assent to a bill that criminalizes same sex relationships in Nigeria." He argued the bill "directly infringes on fundamental rights of expression and association, which are guaranteed by the Nigerian Constitution and by Nigeria's international treaty obligations." the US Secretary of State John Kerry, also expressed similar concern saying: "It is inconsistent with Nigeria's international legal obligations and undermines the democratic reforms and human rights protections enshrined in its 1999 Constitution.

“

Nigeria's acceptability of same sex marriage will not come from any form of external pressure but from the wishes of the people and only the future can determine when that will happen (if ever)
Ken Uwotu

The European Union (EU) consisting of twenty eight countries has also added its voice in opposition to Nigeria's Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act by stating the EU seeks neither to promote nor discourage same sex marriages, but it opposes discrimination or any form of legislation that seeks to

persecute someone on the basis of sexual orientation.

Same sex marriage has not always been accepted in western nations and according to Harvard Magazine, fifty years ago every state in the US criminalized homosexuals and even the American Civil Liberties Union did not object to criminalizing homosexuals. The US federal government would not hire people, who were openly gay or permit them to serve in the military, police routinely raided gay bars and only a handful of gay-rights organizations existed, and their membership was sparse but today various opinion polls in the US on the subject show majority of Americans now endorse same sex marriage (and association).

A recent poll among those aged 18 to 29 shows support for same sex marriage is as high as 70 percent; on the backdrop of these favourable poll ratings, the US government has now decided to

adopt same sex marriage.

Majority of Nigerians view the practise of same sex marriage (or association) as immoral and alien to their culture and religious beliefs. NOI Polls Limited, a working partner of US-based Gallup Polling conducted a poll among Nigerians on the subject of same sex marriage between 4th and 6th June 2013, the results showed 92% of Nigerians supported the proposed bill to criminalize same-sex marriage. This poll effectively means 9 out of every 10 Nigerians support the same sex marriage prohibition legislature signed into law by the Nigerian President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan.

It is imperative to highlight governments worldwide use poll results to 'test acceptability' of proposed or existing policies. Recent polls on the subject of same sex marriage suggest it is now gaining acceptability in the United States and some Western nations but not in Nigeria, so why is the US, European Union and Canada intent on pressuring Nigeria to adopt a policy which has less than 8% acceptability among 167 million people?.

In a response to Nigeria's legislature against same sex marriage, the United States has threatened to scale down support for critical research work on HIV/AIDS and anti-malaria programmes in Nigeria while the Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper cancelled a previous scheduled presidential visit by Dr Jonathan to Canada.

In an article titled "Nigeria's anti-gay law demands a response from the West", the Washington Post calls on Britain and the United States to use their leverage over Nigeria to get it to repeal the law. Britain delivers hundreds of millions of dollars in development aid to Nigeria, while the United States buys 70% of Nigeria's oil; these leverages referred to by the Washington Post are a reflection of Nigeria's "critical risk exposures" as perceived by the West.

Nigeria must now take concrete and proactive steps to 'systematically' reduce its dependence on Britain for developmental aids. The government must also actively seek buyers of Nigeria's oil from other nations such as China to ensure no country can hold Nigeria to ransom.

The issue of same sex marriage (or association) is not about 'right' or 'wrong' but more about the degree of acceptability in society (which translates into political voice). In the case of the United States, it took fifty years to gain the level of acceptability we see today.

President Jonathan is one of the few Nigerian leaders not tied or associated with Nigeria's independence era; he is young, vibrant and has the ears of millions of youths across the nation. The writer affirms no democratically elected leader of any country should act against the wishes of the majority of its people and Nigeria is no exception.

Nigeria's acceptability of same sex marriage will not come from any form of external pressure but from the wishes of the people and only the future can determine when that will happen (if ever).

This article also features by the [Daily Independent Newspaper](#), Lagos, Nigeria and listed on the [Nigerian Voices](#) Official Website.

Join us Nigerian Voices on [facebook](#) today.

Ken Uwotu
Nigerian Voices, Abuja
+234 (0) 811 409 4555
email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2015 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.