



The Anglican Church of Canada



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada

November 3, 2021

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

In recent days the government of Ghana has introduced draft legislation that not only criminalizes homosexual activity but also criminalizes identification as gay, lesbian, transgender or queer including any advocacy on behalf of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community. If passed, the legislation would impose prison terms of between five and ten years for sexual activity, LGBTQ2SIA+ identity or participation in advocacy and activism.

This is deeply troubling in light of international standards for human rights that Canada has supported in its own legislation and actions. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms opposes discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. There are already reports of increased intimidation and persecution of LGBTQ2SIA+ people and advocates in Ghana even before the legislation has been debated.

We ask that you and your Government communicate to the Government of Ghana to express Canada's dismay at the proposed legislation and its negative effects on the human rights of LGBTQ2SIA+ people and advocates in Ghana.

Recognizing Canada's long-standing and strong relationship with Ghana, including significant investment in development aid, our country is in a good position to send the message that projects to develop food security and sustainable living go hand in hand with respect for human rights. This includes basic human rights for people based on sexual orientation. Indeed, it is critical that we work together to achieve human rights for all, to work together towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) highlights human dignity over and over as fundamental to us moving forward as a global community, leaving no one behind.

In 2016 the communique of the Primates of the Anglican Communion stated:

The Primates condemned homophobic prejudice and violence and resolved to work together to offer pastoral care and loving service irrespective of sexual orientation. This conviction arises out of our discipleship of Jesus Christ. The Primates reaffirmed their rejection of criminal sanctions against same-sex attracted people.

The Anglican Church of Canada
80 Hayden Street, Toronto ON M4Y 3G2
416-924-9192
primate@national.anglican.ca

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
600-177 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 0W5
204-984-9173
sjohnson@elcic.ca


In 2011, National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) committed to engaging in practices that more fully enable all people, regardless of sexual orientation, to participate in the life of the church and the world.

In 1997 the House of Bishops (Anglican Church of Canada) had already stated: *As Christians we believe that homosexual persons are created in the image and likeness of God and have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, concern and care of the church. As an expression of this love and care, the gospel of Jesus Christ compels Christians to oppose all forms of human injustice ...*

The Government of Canada has indicated that advocating for and supporting the rights of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community is a priority in international relations and that our overseas development funding defends and achieve human rights for all, including those most vulnerable, most marginalized. Please communicate to the Government of Ghana the importance of withdrawing this proposed legislation that violates the human rights of LGBTQ2SIA+ people and advocates in Ghana.

Canadians are committed to defending human rights around the globe. This is a matter that requires urgent attention.

Sincerely,



The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls
Archbishop and Primate
Anglican Church of Canada



Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Cc:

The Honourable Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P. Minister of Foreign Affairs
Melanie.Joly@international.gc.ca, Melanie.Joly@parl.gc.ca

Conservative Party of Canada

The Hon. Erin O'Toole, Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition
Erin.Otoole@parl.gc.ca

New Democratic Party of Canada

Jagmeet Singh, Jagmeet.Singh@parl.gc.ca

Bloc Quebecois

Yves-Francois Blanchet, Yves-Francois.Blanchet@parl.gc.ca

The Hon. Marco Mendicino, P.C., M.P., Minister of Public Safety
Marco.Mendicino@parl.gc.ca

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primate@national.anglican.ca

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204-984-9173
sjohnson@elcic.ca

The Hon. Michael Chong, Conservative Party of Canada
Michael.Chong@parl.gc.ca

Sai Rajagopal, Green Party of Canada
Sai.rajagopal@greenparty.ca

Stéphane Bergeron, Bloc Québécois
Stéphane.Bergeron@parl.gc.ca

Vincent Garneau, Chief of Staff, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada
Vincent.Garneau@international.gc.ca

Rob Oliphant, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Rob.Oliphant@parl.gc.ca

Heather Macpherson, New Democratic Party
Heather.Macpherson@parl.gc.ca

Marcel Lebleu, Director General, West and Central Africa Bureau
Marcel.Lebleu@international.gc.ca

Her Excellency Kati Csaba, Canada High Commissioner to Ghana
Kati.Csaba@international.gc.ca

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