

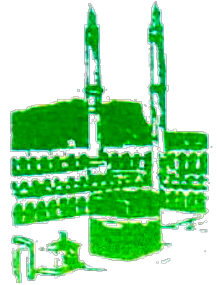
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



FEDERATION OF MUSLIM COUNCILS (GH)

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25th February, 2021

Press Release

For Immediate Release

INTENSIFY ACTION AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY IN GHANA - FEDERATION OF MUSLIM COUNCILS TELLS PRESIDENT AKUFO ADDO

The vehement stance of the Federation of Muslim Councils of Ghana (FMC) against the practice of homosexuality in all its forms is a public record. The FMC's stance is reinforced not by the Quran alone, but also our cultural values as Ghanaians and above all our national laws.

In the last decade, the FMC has had to make no less than five press statements all in condemnation of the abominable practice of homosexuality and its various forms. Other faith-based and civil society organizations have equally done same over the period, anytime homosexuality reared its head. In President Akufo Addo's first term alone, the FMC as an umbrella body of muslim organisations in Ghana, had the occasion of making two Press Statements against homosexuality: the first one was made on the 5th December, 2017, following the infamous "it is something bound to happen" pronouncement by President Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo Addo in response to a question by a journalist during an interview on the Doha-based international news network, *Aljazeera*. The second and last statement was issued on the 12th October, 2019 and carried at page 10 of the Ghanaian Times of Monday, 14th October, 2019. That followed the controversy generated by subtle attempts by the then Minister of Education, Hon. Matthew Opoku-Prempeh, to introduce the satanic Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE) subject at the basic school level in Ghana. That attempt came on the heels of that despicable pronouncement of His Excellency the President to the international community in the said *Aljazeera* interview.

In the ensued heat, and under the weight, of the avalanche of public criticism, His Excellency the President dashed to a church congregation in Kumasi to “denounce” the practice of homosexuality and LGBTQ in Ghana with a pledge not to countenance the practice.

One would have thought that the President would follow up with stringent measures to keep the LGBTQ practitioners and promoters at bay once and for all. The opening of the LGBTQi office in Accra on 31st January, 2021 amidst publicity on social media, therefore, smacks of a lip service paid to the denunciation of homosexuality, an indication that since 2017 no concrete measures were taken by government to address the abominable practice, contrary to the expectations of Ghanaians.

It is generally believed that the President’s pronouncements to the international community on *Aljazeera* is the catalyst that emboldened the hands of the LGBTQi community and their promoters to openly set up an office in Ghana and taunt Ghanaians by sharing photographs of the commissioning of the office on social media. Worse of all is the deafening government’s silence on allegations, albeit scandalous, that some appointees of the President in the Jubilee House are too sympathetic to the LGBTQi fraternity to the extent that government would continue to play a cat-and-mouse approach to the issue for as long it is in power. Indeed, it appears that issuance of press statements by faith-based and other civil society organisations in Ghana in condemnation of issues relating to homosexuality is becoming a funny ritual in Ghana. And it appears the political leadership of the country relishes it.

Respectfully, it is the view of the Federation of Muslim Councils of Ghana that the pronouncements made by President Akufo Addo on *Aljazeera* eroded the gains made by his predecessors to protect our Ghanaian cultural values and societal norms, including eradication of homosexuality in Ghana. It is, indeed, very disappointing watching the video footage of the President’s interview which transcribes as below (for avoidance of doubt):

Aljazeera Journalist: *You said a little earlier on about Freedom of Expression, so I want to ask you what is happening in your country, and homosexuality, for example, which I believe is illegal and it’s punishable. I mean why is homosexuality still illegal in your country?*

President Akufo Addo: *This is the social cultural issue, if you like. I don’t believe that in Ghana so far a sufficiently strong coalition has emerged which is having that impact on public opinion that says ‘change it; let’s have a new paradigm in Ghana’.*

Aljazeera Journalist: *Is there something you would get behind there?*

President Akufo Addo: *I think it is something bound to happen, and when that happens....*

Aljazeera Journalist: What's gonna provoke it? What's gonna make it happen?

President Akufo Addo: Oh..Like elsewhere in the world, the activities of individuals or groups. I grew up in England; I went to school as a young boy in England, and I grew up at a time in England when homosexuality was banned there; it was illegal. And I lived the period when British politicians thought it was an affront to change the law, and suddenly the activities of individuals, of groups – certain awareness; a certain development grew, and grew, and grew stronger and it forced a change in law. I believe that those are the same processes that will bring about changes in our situation.

At the moment I don't feel and I don't see that in Ghana there is that strong current of opinion that [they] say this is something we need [it] to deal with; it is not so far a matter which is on the agenda.

Much as the FMC respect the President's personal right to opine on international relations according to his worldview, the FMC and Ghanaians expected him to emulate and ride on the gains of his immediate predecessors, namely: Ex-President Kufour, late President Professor John Evans Atta-Mills and former President John Dramani Mahama on the issue of homosexuality in Ghana .

Though the FMC considers the directive by the President to close down the LGBTQi office as an attempt to whitewash his image, we expect more of him to demonstrate to Ghanaians his commitment to firmly address homosexuality in Ghana. All the FMC requires of the President is to recant his pronouncements made on Aljazeera in 2017 and enhance measures to eradicate activities of homosexuality, same-sex marriage and LGBTQi in Ghana. That would be his greatest legacy!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hajj Abdulai S. Williams', on a light blue background.

Hajj Abdulai S. Williams

National Coordinator, Federation of Muslim Councils of Ghana