

**United Nations Human Right Council 13th Session
Geneva, 15th to 19th March 2010.
UPR Cote d'Ivoire – Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network**

Delivered by Revd Rowland Jide Macaulay

Mr President, distinguished members of the delegation,

I have the honour to present a statement on behalf of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and Pan Africa ILGA.

We wish to address recommendation 99(28) formulated during the interactive dialogue, which enjoyed the support of Côte d'Ivoire, namely: "To take measures to ensure non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity".

We acknowledge and commend the government of Cote D'ivoire for agreeing to take action on the recommended measures to ensure that no-one faces discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The government's acceptance of this recommendation is in keeping with a resolution unanimously adopted at the NGO Forum to the African Commission on Human and People's Rights in November 2009, and will have a positive impact on societal and government official responses to the issues of the LGBT community. It is also an important tool for fostering a sense of inclusion and enhancing access to HIV prevention and education programmes.

We note that Côte d'Ivoire did not take the further step of accepting an additional recommendation to implement awareness-raising programmes on these grounds, although we appreciate the government's affirmation that it does not consider same-sex relations between consenting adults to be criminal and does not penalise or discriminate on this basis.

The government has indicated that awareness-raising programmes on these grounds is therefore not a "current priority", although we encourage the government to consider such programmes in the future, to better foster social understanding, tolerance and inclusion.

Finally, in implementation of the government's agreement to take measures to ensure non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, we express our willingness to work with the government to develop and implement initiatives to achieve these goals.

Thank you very much Mr President.