

I am writing you as a constituent at this time to request your support and help with a very concerning issue.

On Monday 29th November 2011, the Nigerian Senate voted the Same-sex Marriage Prohibition Bill through the third reading. The bill will now be sent to the lower house to be voted upon and ratified, after which it will go to the President of Nigeria to be signed into law.

If this bill becomes law, it effectively doubles the criminalization of homosexuality in Nigeria, which are already quite extreme. The proposed law stipulates 14year imprisonment for offenders and 10 years for witnesses or supporters. The bill goes further to ban Human Rights organisations from defending Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people. It also bans gay clubs and societies, further suppressing freedom of expression.

Already, many LGBT people in Nigeria live in constant danger of serious homophobic violence, unjust dismissal at work, and denial of healthcare. This is unacceptable for and our country cannot afford to look on. This issue will grow to be one of domestic import as our government continues diplomatic relations with Nigeria while remaining silent on this vital human rights issue.

The above situations will affect both gay citizens of Nigeria and foreigners including tourists, expatriates and diplomats either through direct [mob] attack, threats, police extortion and State-sponsored homophobia via prosecution of same sex adults who share a room including in hotels. UK citizens who travel to Nigeria for work or other businesses may not escape this fate.

Also, I am concerned because gay Nigerians will not find it easy to travel to their country due to fear of violence, arrest or even death.

I am therefore asking you as my representative in the Parliament to raise this issue with the Prime Minister, asking him to use all diplomatic channels available to persuade the Nigeria President to halt this oppressive bill.

As a constituent and tax payer, I call on you to make sure that UK strongly oppose this law at every level, and where necessary, use sanctions such as banning key Nigerian government officers, law-makers and their families from obtaining visas to the UK.

Only such robust action will send the right message that the UK is not looking the other way in light of such oppression.

I hope that you will take these forward to all necessary levels and I look forward to hearing from you with assurance.