

## **African Alliance statement: Where will they go? Ghana's hateful new anti-queer bill will erode community life**

7 March 2024 — Jobless, disowned, rejected. That's almost certainly what queer Ghanaians will become if a new anti-queer bill is signed into law.

At the African Alliance, we are disgusted by this fresh attack on queer people.

Not only is it a crime to be gay in Ghana, but it could soon be illegal to form and fund LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, according to a bill signed by Ghanaian lawmakers on 28 February 2024. Five years of jail time awaits even those who distribute pro-LGBTQ+ information.

Such a law will not disappear Ghana's queer community, which has always existed, even as it erodes the financial and moral support on which they rely.

What it will do, however, is to make LGBTQ+ lives unlivable. Then again, Ghana's government is well aware that they're condemning a portion of its population to a life in hiding, possibly fearful of being reported by their own family members and friends. They'll lead a life outside of the warmth of ubuntu, robbed of an interconnected community life.

But have these lawmakers considered how this move could impact tourism in its country? What will happen to tourists from the queer community?

Since the news broke last week, many of our colleagues who are involved in LGBTQ+ advocacy have called on Ghana's President, Nana Akufo-Addo, to reject the new bill.

We agree, but we believe that far more radical action will be necessary to buck the growing trend of anti-LGBTQ+ laws in Ghana and in more than [10 other nations on the continent](#).

African Alliance board member Allan Moolman says it's an alarming trend of disregard for human rights. "This could signal the beginning of an erosion of a wide range of freedoms taken for granted in a democracy."

Those working to erase the LGBTQ+ community on the continent have the support of United States lobby groups with deep pockets. It will take all of Africa's leaders and activists to take up this human rights fight on behalf of LGBTQ+ people.

"Everyone deserves to enjoy their human rights regardless of age, race, sexual orientation and gender," says Anna Matendawafa, the Operations Director at the African Alliance.

"All anti-LGBTQ+ bills being passed are a setback to the human rights of the LGBTQ+ community. This has and will form a basis for increased violence against civil society advocates and the LGBTQ+ community.

"We must fight it."

If nothing changes, the queer community in Ghana will be left with few options [but to flee their homes](#) as was the case in Uganda. And where will they go? The shelters that can usually help might already be closed. Leaving the country will be difficult, and two-thirds of African nations have discriminatory anti-LGBTQ+ laws in place anyway.

Queer Ghanaians who can't leave face a dark future too. One in which they flee inwards and lead a life where they can only express a glimpse of their full humanity.

This, we cannot allow.