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## **GALZ STATEMENT ON PRIME MINISTER TSVANGIRAI'S COMMENTS**

**7 MARCH 2013**

### **“Castigating to stifle peace”**

Statements attributed to Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai in the Herald edition of Thursday 7 March 2013, as well as the online version of the Herald where he is quoted as having said those who want to marry another from the same sex have a problem addressing MDC-T supporters in Glenview are reckless and unfortunate coming from the Prime Minister.

GALZ is of the view that Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's statements fuel public prejudice against LGBTI individuals and contradict the very preamble of a draft constitution that he is seemingly promoting. The Preamble of the draft Constitution states that:

*“United in our **diversity** by our **common desire for freedom, justice and equality**, and our heroic resistance to colonialism, racism and all forms of domination,*

*Reaffirming our commitment to upholding and defending fundamental human rights and freedoms,*

*Cherishing freedom, peace, justice, **tolerance**, prosperity and patriotism in search of new frontiers under a **common destiny**”*

His utterances justify that he has failed to practice and support a very important affirmation of the draft constitution. He also fails to uphold his commitment to human rights and the acceptance of diversity. The Prime Minister has been jolted into castigating violence in Headlands recently however we find him equally guilty of inciting violence and advocating hatred and hate speech on the LGBTI community in Zimbabwe.

We deplore the Prime Minister's statements, coming sadly on the eve of International Women's Day Celebrations and just days before Zimbabweans vote in a referendum.

It is our view that Political leaders in Zimbabwe continue to pander to public prejudices against LGBTI individuals through public statements that justify the

exclusion and abuse of anyone suspected of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex.

GALZ shares the common desire of Zimbabweans for freedom, justice and equality, as promoted in the Preamble of the first draft of the Constitution. GALZ believes that, in recognising the diversity and rights of all people in Zimbabwe, we should also recognise that some Zimbabweans are attracted to people of the same sex. We believe that the Constitution is not the appropriate forum to give effect to the private beliefs held by some that same-sex couples should not be married.

Zimbabwe has come too far in its constitutional reform process to debase this process by showing an outright desire to harm a politically unpopular group without any legitimate government interest. // ENDS