

Open Letter To President Barack Obama Re: Repeal of Nigerian Anti-Gay Law

Dear President Barack Obama,

Imagine living in a country where you can be tortured or killed for being gay. While the United States is making great leaps for marriage equality for all, Nigeria recently passed the harshest anti-gay law in Africa - punishing my community with 14 years in prison, simply for loving who you love. This is the reason why with me, equality lovers all over the world are [petitioning the new Nigerian president, urging him to repeal the anti-gay law.](#)

Growing up gay in Nigeria was a horrific experience. I was constantly told that people like me were sinful, shameful and evil. When I finally summoned the courage to be myself, I was arrested, tortured and extorted by the Nigerian police.

While I am now seeking asylum in the UK, things have not gotten better for my community in Nigeria. Last year the country passed the "Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Bill" which punishes same-sex marriage with up to 14 years in prison, 10 years for same-sex "amorous relationships" and 10 years for membership in LGBT equality organizations.

Nigeria's new president, Muhammadu Buhari can choose to repeal this homophobic and unconstitutional law. **Next week, President Buhari will be in the United States to meet with you, President Obama. Please intervene just as is contained in the [words of Linda Thomas-Greenfield](#), American Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs that:**

"As a government, it is one the highest priorities and strongest values that discrimination against anyone based on their sexual orientation and gender identity is wrong. We believe human rights should be available to everybody. As a policy, we will continue to press the government of Nigeria, as well as other governments who have provided legislation that discriminate against the LGBT community. This is very much a work in progress, but I think you will agree with me that the law in Nigeria really went far in discriminating against this community but also people who associate with them. So, we will continue to press the government, to press legislature to change these laws and provide human rights for all Nigerian people regardless of their sexual orientation".

President Buhari is seeking U.S. resources to help combat the terrorists of Boko Haram, but his government is allowing anti-LGBT mob attacks, mass arrests, public whippings, evictions and harassment. I therefore urge you, President Obama to please make it clear that the U.S. will not support a regime that allows this treatment of the gay community.

Thanking you for your anticipated engagement in this matter.



Aderonke Apata Founder [African Rainbow Family.](#)