



## **EDUCATION CS SHOULD REFRAIN FROM TARGETED HOMOPHOBIC SPEECH**

**Nairobi, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

In Kisumu County, On December 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 Education Cabinet Secretary said “children who are homosexual and lesbian ... must go to day schools close to their homes.” The CS stated that this move would be to “protect the greater majority of learners.” These remarks by a member of the government are highly concerning considering their intensely discriminatory and homophobic nature.

The Education CS is a trained health professional with a wealth of information at his disposal and should be aware that sexual orientation is innate and cannot be changed. Further, as a member of the government he should be aware of the letter and spirit of the constitution that speaks against discrimination. In addition to several international treaties and declarations to which Kenya is a signatory. With his utterances the CS proves that government players instigate homophobia which then creates an environment that allows for Violence against members of the LGBTIQ+ community. The statements made by the Minister further illuminate what LGBTIQ+ serving organisations have been saying for years, that stigma, discrimination, and violence against the LGBTIQ+ community begins at a very early age fueling a myriad of long-term issues including deteriorating mental health.

LGBTIQ+ Kenyans have hopes and aspirations just like other wanainchi. Just like other Kenyans they have the right to accessing government assured rights and priviledges. Socio-economic progress cannot be made in Kenya if one group is continuously marginalised. If the government intends to meet its 2030 goals, make progress on the Big 4, and reach its Sustainable Development Goals landmarks, discrimination and exclusion of LGBTIQ+ persons both systemic and otherwise needs to come to an end. To our LGBTIQ+ siblings in school who have been the subject of this attack, we recognize that these utterances have brought you much distress and ask that you steele yourselves and prepare for the term ahead to the best of your ability.

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