



54th Human Rights Council session

15 September 2023, 10:00hr

ITEM 3 – Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on Older Persons
Statement by International Lesbian and Gay Association and Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality

Delivered by Juliet Nnedinma Ulanmo

Mr President,

This statement is co-sponsored by COC Nederland and prepared in consultation with Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE).

My name is Juliet Nnedinma Ulanmo.

We celebrate the Independent Expert's recommendations and references to LGBTI Older Persons in Nigeria and Bangladesh. We commend the Special Rapporteur for highlighting the stigma and discrimination experienced by Older People with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity in Nigeria within the healthcare system. We also welcome the Special Rapporteur's call for the repeal of same sex marriage prohibition act and other discriminatory laws against people on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

We do not enjoy access to inclusive and gendered healthcare services. We refer to the documentary 'Bayyanawa' produced by WISE which highlighted the lived realities of SRHR exclusion experienced by older LGBTI persons in Nigeria.¹

We are not only vulnerable and hapless. We face discrimination, stigmatization, physical attacks, torture, arbitrary arrests, and extortions. I refer to the recent arrest of over 69 persons including older LGBTI persons arrested at a part in Warri, Delta State on the 27th of August 2023 by the Nigerian police². They have been dehumanized.

¹ This documentary is not accessible for the general public. For more information contact Women Initiative for Sustainable Empowerment and Equality (WISE)

² [Nigerian police raid alleged gay wedding, arrest 67 people](#). Reuters (2023)

Although there have been recent policy developments that have contributed to the improvement of the lives of older persons, this does not include legislative frameworks and protection especially for older LGBTI persons.

We encourage the Special Rapporteur to continue assessing the situation of older people with diverse SOGIESC and follow closely on the development made in Bangladesh and Nigeria after the visit. Importantly to continue consulting with local LGBTI groups on the implementation of these recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. President.