

October 2016
Statement in Support of FOKAL

It is with tremendous sadness and frustration that we learned of the recent threats made to FOKAL, Fondasyon Konesans Ak Libète [Foundation for Knowledge and Liberty], in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. FOKAL has been a space of exchange for people in Haiti—especially youth—to disseminate ideas and share knowledge on different topics, ranging from art to politics, in a safe environment.

We are joining our voices with our colleagues all over the world to counteract fearmongering and violence in the name of “Christianity.” This intolerance of difference must stop. Christian fundamentalists—much like Pat Robertson, who claimed that the January 2010 earthquake that took countless lives occurred because Haiti supposedly “swore a pact to the devil” (<https://www.onfaith.co/onfaith/2010/01/13/haiti-the-devil-and-pat-roberton/2342/> and <http://www.newsweek.com/miller-haiti-and-theology-suffering-71231>)—are now trying to destroy Haiti’s spirit of liberty and freedom. Haiti spent over a decade fighting for its freedom from the French for ALL Haitians, not just for Haitians who are “Christians,” or male, or economically well-off, or heterosexual. The Haitian constitution grants freedom to ALL Haitians regardless of their sexual orientation. Article 35-2 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination based on someone’s sex, beliefs, opinions or marital status (1986).

Any act of violence against those in the LGBTQ community, and those who support them, must be denounced.

We join with organizations such as KOURAJ and SEROVie to stand with FOKAL and say NO to attacks in any form—physical, verbal, political, economic—against persons who do not identify as strictly heterosexual. We say NO to injustice, intolerance, discrimination and oppression! Yesterday, fundamentalists attacked the Vodou religion; today they are attacking the LGBTQ community; whom will these proponents of violence attack tomorrow? We hope that other individuals, in Haiti and worldwide, will have the courage to stand by the Haitian LGBTQ community and speak out against these insidious attacks wherever they see them. As Martin Luther King, Jr. reminded us decades ago, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere!”

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