

**JOINT WRITTEN STATEMENT: INTERVENTION ON GHANA'S 2022 VNR- delivered by a representative of the LGBTI Stakeholder Group**

Thank you, (vice) President,

We applaud Ghana for its commitment to the VNRs and presenting its second report.

With this 2<sup>nd</sup> VNR Report Ghana has built on its processes in 2019 by adopting both “a whole government” and “a whole society” approach and further aligned the SDGs with Agenda 2063.

However, while steps have been made to include civil society, the process did not sufficiently encourage the participation of CSO in the preparation and development of the Voluntary Local Reviews. This would have brought along local data and specific perspectives on implementation of the SDGs, and follow-up actions from the 2019 VNR Report.

Furthermore, culture is considered in the goal-by-goal analysis, but the processes could have been strengthened by engaging the traditional leaders in the national discourse. As well as addressing individual and collective barriers based on systemic or cultural bias. Including taking into consideration groups historically most at risk of being left behind, such as women and girls, people living in extreme poverty, youth – especially those who are not in formal or informal education or employment-, older persons, people with disabilities, immigrants, prisoners, children and adolescents at risk, and people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, expressions, and sex-characteristics.

These groups, face intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and require government commitments to address and guarantee full access to their rights to ensure no one is left behind.

The Covid-19 pandemic, cast a spotlight on existing inequalities which it exacerbated. Progress made on achieving the 2030 agenda has stagnated or regressed. Those already at risk were disproportionately impacted.

We would like to know how the government is working to ensure that post Covid19 policies aimed at the recovery will be aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework; and how the recovery packages or wider measures will specifically address inequalities and vulnerabilities faced by different groups.