

We acknowledge the states' invitation to participate in the national consultation of the VNR process and the Peoples Constitutional Commission. **BUT**, participation, remains devoid of commitment to LGBT Belizean!

SO! We remain concerned that the state has relinquished its constitutional obligation to address economic and social disparities between citizens.

AND SO we would like to ask:

1. Will the Government of Belize set a date and time to submit the Equal Opportunities Bill and Hate Crime Legislation back to Parliament in 2024?
2. Will the state commit to developing an equality framework that addresses the concerns of marginalized and vulnerable populations?
3. Will the state invest in LGBTI Data through the Belize Statistical Institute to look at the economic contributions of LGBT Belizeans?

We note our Observations:

1. L.G.B.T Belizeans remain with a tax demand and penalty while the state remains negligent in leaving the population's socio-economic and civil rights concerns in suspended animation.
2. The national VNR consultation's appearance of inclusion, WAS JUST A MARK OF ATTENDANCE.
3. The state has endorsed a portfolio for Religious Affairs, but not one for Equality, further disenfranchising over 6% of the population based on sexual orientation and gender identity, *many of whom have experienced some form of abuse, threat, attack, or conversion therapy.*
4. Our Prime Minister announced in 2023 to advance a social protection strategy in the last VNR statement, but does that include LGBT plus Belizeans.
5. The call for, "international cooperation and development finance to support the adoption of the multidimensional vulnerability" is call that denies LGBT inclusion in the state response by omission at the country level.

The struggle continues!