

Our Manifesto

This Manifesto is the founding document of our movement: KOURAJ, the first LGBT rights-based organization in Haiti. This text – written by masisi in Haiti – envisions a radical shift in discourse about masisi as determined by the masisi community itself. KOURAJ seeks to disseminate this text throughout our local community, our country, and the international community.

The Masisi Manifesto

We, your fellow citizens, your friends, your sons, your daughters, your grandchildren, your cousins, your brothers, your sisters, your companions, your neighbors, your classmates, your professors, your directors, your employees, your employers, your domestic workers, your colleagues, your merchants, your artisans, your entrepreneurs, your journalists, your doctors, your lawyers, your engineers, your artists, as well as many others declare:

- *We were born masisi.*
- *We will always be masisi.*
- *We did not choose our sexual orientation, but we choose to not be ashamed by it.*
- *We are proud to not be ashamed of who we are.*
- *We have lived and survived in Haiti.*
- *We will always live and survive in Haiti.*
- *We are everywhere.*
- *We are many.*
- *We are all different.*
- *We did not invent homosexuality.*
- *We did not buy our homosexuality.*
- *We are part of this society and contribute to its progress.*
- *We are the sons and daughters of Jean-Jacques Dessalines.*
- *We demand respect of our human dignity.*
- *Sexual orientation is acquired at birth.*
- *Gender is a social construct.*
- *Gender identity is at the same time innate and particular to each human being.*
- *Diversity is the essence of humanity.*
- *Sexual and gender diversity are essential to humanity's diversity and to its progress.*
- *A masisi is a human being that was, is, or will be potentially or actually discriminated against or stigmatized due to his or her sexual orientation and/or gender identity. As a human being, a masisi has the right to the respect of his human dignity and to the fulfilled universal joy of human rights, such as the right to life, security, liberty, and respect.*

We, Masisi, sons and daughters of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, commit to a fraternal bond with all Haitians in solidarity with the mission to a dignified Haiti from the heritage of our slave ancestors who died for the respect of human rights and to end discrimination in Haiti. Yesterday we were Black, today we are Masisi, and tomorrow we will be Human Beings!