

Meeting Between Heads of Media and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Community from Washington, DC and US Embassy Representatives (held May 22, 2015)

Guests:

- Randy Berry (US DOS, Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBT Persons)
- Todd Larson (USAID, Senior LGBT Coordinator)
- Denise Herbol (USAID, Mission Director)
- Robert Piehel (US Embassy, Political/Human Rights Officer)
- Joshua Polacheck (US Embassy, Public Diplomacy Officer)

The Representatives advised that they requested the meeting to build dialogue with members of the civil society and national government with respect to human rights in the LGBT community. They were focussing on challenges and opportunities. They have been building international partnerships so they could address matters such as equality in the workplace and they have also been discussing general equality of citizenship concerns since the issue had been a hostile environment internationally.

They said that a remarkable cultural change in Jamaica was noted and there has been progress. It was noted that countries were still in the process of acceptance and there were

negative voices on both sides.

They suggested that it would be productive and useful for media to continue to give human rights activists voice and space to tell their stories. Also media could continue giving a fair and balanced account of the situation and the developments that transpired. Change in mindset and legislation was required. Nevertheless, it was unfortunate that some human rights activists had the perception that they could get their rights by doing harm to persons who had different views.