



May 2, 2014

As you may have read, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah—who is the absolute ruler of Brunei and one of the world’s wealthiest people—has decreed that a new series of draconian penal code reforms will be implemented in Brunei over the next several months. This includes introducing such horrific punishments as amputation, flogging, and worse for a variety of so-called “offenses.” Beginning in late 2015, members of the LGBT community could be stoned to death for engaging in relations with one another. In addition, the so-called “offenses” of adultery and out-of-wedlock pregnancy, which would primarily be used against women in the country, make women convicted of these crimes eligible for fines, imprisonment, and stoning.

Following this announcement, the Human Rights Campaign condemned these actions in the strongest possible terms. LGBT citizens in many countries around the world remain persistent targets of harassment, arrest, and violence. In addition, it has long been the case that LGBT Bruneians and LGBT travelers to Brunei are considered criminals for simply being who they are. But this decision means that Brunei will soon become the eighth nation that includes the death penalty as an option for “punishing” LGBT people.

There are a number of hotels and venues in the Los Angeles area that aren’t owned by foreign governments and leaders that allow for the execution of its LGBT citizens. We’re encouraging members of the LGBT community and our allies to consider those options instead of the Beverly Hills Hotel and the Hotel Bel-Air—which are part of the Sultan’s Dorchester Collection. In addition, we’re calling on organizations that have upcoming events scheduled at these hotels to move them to other locations.

I have attended various events at both hotels over the past several years. But given the extreme nature of these developments, I feel strongly that we in the LGBT community and our allies should take our business elsewhere.

I write to ask that you reconsider your decision to host an event at either of these hotels, and join other prominent organization—including Gill Action and the Feminist Majority Foundation, among others—who have found alternative venues.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me or my colleagues at the Human Rights Campaign if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chad Griffin