



CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice

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Address: 1 Robinson Ville, Belmont, Port of Spain, Trinidad

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12 August 2026

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CAISO: Kwasi Dion Gill's Killing Leaves LGBTQI+ Lives Feeling Very Fragile

CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice is heartbroken by the senseless killing of Kwasi Dion Gill. Kwasi was a pillar of the LGBTQI+ community, known for his outstanding work in various roles with several organisations, over the past 12 years.

A friend and mentor to many, he is remembered as someone who always created space for others to be seen, heard, and supported; someone who showed up when it mattered, especially in times of need, offering his time, care, and presence without hesitation. Through his client-centred support to vulnerable and marginalised communities, Kwasi showed compassion and empathy and developed a nuanced understanding of his clients' intersectional challenges. His work with The King K Initiative (which he founded) and DragBrunch TT, helped empower those most marginalised in our community.

That community is reeling from this enormous loss, and as we join other communities across Trinidad and Tobago who have lost loved ones to violence, we cannot help but feel angry, afraid, anxious, and devastated. Our lives feel very fragile. We need justice and protection! Naturally, we have many questions about what happened. We hope that the TTPS gives this case their best effort and brings those responsible to justice. As the case unfolds, we trust that a duty of care and empathy prevails for all involved, including the TTPS, the media, and the wider public.

We thank the media for their sensitive reporting on this case, thus far, and we hope this continues. We encourage the use of fair, accurate language that avoids victim-blaming, respects privacy, and/or identifies victims accurately (name, pronouns, gender identity). Further, we appeal to the media houses with online platforms to pay extra care to the comment sections. Community members have noted that the comment sections are used as platforms for hate speech and threatening messages, and we urgently ask for their stricter moderation. Otherwise, the comment sections, and social media more broadly, may serve as breeding grounds for homophobia and further harm.

Pervasive negative attitudes towards LGBTQI+ people lead to discrimination and greater vulnerability to violence. Further, the absence of legal recognition or protective laws, as well as the lack of community-sensitive systems for care and redress, foster an environment where perpetrators feel emboldened to act with impunity.

Insights from CAISO's Wholeness & Justice Programme reveal and highlight the persistent precarity experienced by LGBTQI+ people in Trinidad and Tobago. Therefore, CAISO reiterates



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our call to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to recognise, include, and protect human rights for all.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Kwasi's family and loved ones, former colleagues and friends, and all those whose lives he touched. Rest well Kwasi. Your light will be remembered.

***CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice** is a feminist civil society organisation that seeks to mobilise a forward-thinking, visionary, and human rights approach to wholeness, justice, and inclusion for Trinidad and Tobago's LGBTQI+ communities, through developing analysis, alliances, and advocacy. **CAISO: Sex & Gender Justice** is a registered non-profit organisation in Trinidad and Tobago. Founded in June 2009 as Coalition Advocating for the Inclusion of Sexual Orientation, **CAISO changed its name in 2016 to CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice** to align closer with the growth in our areas of focus, namely wholeness, justice, and inclusion. LGBTQI+ persons in Trinidad and Tobago who have experienced a violation, or who need help determining same, may contact the programme for legal and psychosocial support via phone at **868-28-CAISO (282-2476)** or via email at wholenessandjustice@caisott.org.*