

CONTRALESA's view on Sexual Offences and Related Matters Bill

We do not support the bill which seeks to encourage sex between children. Our view is that sex is meant for adults who are married couples. From the traditional and cultural point of view, we uphold the view that it is not acceptable or will it be acceptable to justify sexual engagement of children. In our culture, we do not determine the age of engaging in sexual activities by years. We allow that situation to happen when, from the boy's side, have graduated from the initiation school. From the girl's side, it is when their male counterparts have graduated, esiXhoseni ude uve intombi isithi andiyontombi yamakhwenkwe or when adults in the family can agree that she has reached that stage, which is purely an aspect of parenting. But because of cultural diversity, this approach cannot be the same in our communities. The emphasis here is that we cannot be dictated by children's naughty behaviour and instead of addressing it correctly, we endorse it as if all is well.

We are currently battling with moral degeneration in our society, we have lost moral compass, how much more xa kuzakuthiwa mababe sebeyekwa baqhubekeke, siqhwabizandla, hayi bo! Sodom ne Gomorrah. At that stage, we should encourage our kids in African indigenous games such as iinketho, ugquphu neminye imidlalo kumantombazana and to the boys, umrabaraba, ukodada, ukuzingela neminye ke imidlalo. These games will ensure that our children will grow up well focussed into a bright future. The definite outcome here is that the victim will be a black African child if this bill can be given thumbs up. As the custodians of morals being Africans, living in Africa, we must try to encourage ourselves to do things in an African way. If really the majority of us are Christians in country and the rest of rural areas are under traditional leadership, this shouldn't be an issue that can take us so far in addressing it:

Prince Manene Tabane

Contralesa chairperson