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## **Presentation of the Asijiki Award for Courage & Initiative to Sir Elton John and the Elton John AIDS Foundation**

Today, the Asijiki Coalition for the Decriminalisation of Sex Work in South Africa presented Sir Elton John and the Elton John AIDS Foundation with the Asijiki Award for Courage & Initiative at the 2016 International AIDS Conference. This award recognizes unwavering and outspoken public advocates for their commitment to sex worker rights.

Asijiki is a broad-based advocacy coalition that brings together sex workers and human rights advocates for agitation on sex worker human rights, and specifically for the decriminalization of sex work. *Asijiki* is the isiZulu term for 'no turning back'!

The Asijiki Award for Courage & Initiative allows us a moment to step back and recognize our allies, show our appreciation for their bold work towards our common cause, and share with others our appreciation of their efforts.

Today we proudly presented this inaugural award to Sir Elton John and the Elton John AIDS Foundation for their enduring public support of sex workers rights. The award is intended to acknowledge those whose peers often take a less brave stance and are overall under-recognized for their advocacy, specifically on issues of sex work. We were particularly inspired by Elton John and the Elton John AIDS Foundation's steadfast and public support of Amnesty International's position on the decriminalisation of sex work, for funding sex worker projects internationally, as well as speaking out against the indifference and hate that fuels the AIDS epidemic.



We are proud to present this award today, and we will continue to move forward fearlessly and vigorously towards our vision of a world where sex worker rights are safeguarded and all sex workers are treated with dignity and respect.

We salute our allies and supporters, and urge them to capitalize on the momentum the AIDS conference has catalysed on the urgent need for the decriminalization of sex work!

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