

Tjenbé Rèd!



*Follow up to the remarks  
made by Benoît Collin,  
publications director  
of the Internet site ReggaeFrance.com,  
in the daily letter  
of the monthly magazine Têtu,  
the 29th of May 2008*

*Paris, Saturday 31 May 2008  
Communication No TR08POL10B*

Dear Benoît,

Could we now continue our exchanges and respond to remarks you made in the daily letter of the magazine *Têtu* [the French most famous lesbian & gay monthly magazine] on Thursday the 29th of May? In particular, you said there (I quote): “*The homosexual groups have gone too far, Sizzla has blown a fuse and has gone back to Jamaica (A). Tjenbé Rèd had unrealistic demands (among them for a financial donation to allow activists to travel to the concerts to make a speech on stage. This was categorically refused). It’s a racket! (B) and anyway such a speech was impossible for security reasons, the fans would have pelted him with bottles (C). They were asking a Jamaican singer to disown the means of his business, and the laws of his country. He thinks homosexuality is a sin and he won’t change his mind (D).*”

Kindly let’s go over this point by point:

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**A - Firstly, you said “*The homosexual groups have gone too far. Sizzla blew a fuse and has gone back to Jamaica...*”**

We now know what it was about. On Tuesday the 27th of May, at Madrid, Sizzla did not blow a fuse. We were just about to finalise an agreement worked out through the mediation of Eddie Brown, his European agent, but he was turned away at the border because his visa was not valid. Not the same thing at all. Easy enough, afterwards, to use human rights groups as scapegoats. That avoids, for example, explaining this story about invalid visa to the concerts organisers. Besides, it is strange that it was almost by chance that we learned - on Thursday the 29th of May, by means of a rather confidential Internet site - about this Madrid story which Sizzla was so keen to avoid making public. Something to hide? We understand that some of the concerts organisers are having difficulty getting back €8,000 advanced per concert to Sizzla or to Eddie Brown. Basically, that would seem to indicate their argument is as follows: “*You have a problem in France. The fault is yours, the French, so sort it out amongst yourselves. As for us, we’re pissed off and we’re keeping the money.*” That sounds for sure better than: “*So, we had an invalid visa? OK, too bad. We can always say it was the associations wot dunnit - and we can keep the dosh!*”

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**B - You go on to say, dear Benoît, “Tjenbé Rèd had unrealistic demands (among them for a financial donation to allow activists to travel to the concerts to make a speech on stage. This was categorically refused). It’s a racket...!”**

We need a detailed chronology to see to what extent this just does not correspond to reality.

Wednesday the 14th of May 2008 at 05:08. *Tjenbé Rèd* and sixteen other signatories sent an open letter to the mayors and those responsible for the concert halls involved in the Sizzla French tour (the letter was sent by email, and dated 13th of May 2008)

Tuesday the 20th of May. Jean-Pierre Albouy, programme manager at the *Havana Café*, Ramonville-Saint-Agne, near Toulouse, asked us to deal with Eddie Brown. Tuesday the 20th of May at 12:24 we sent him an email, to be forwarded to the latter (with whom we were not yet in contact), offering to negotiate. “Dear Sir, / A - I think we can make them an offer to negotiate on the basis of the following points. / 1 - A public, written reaffirmation by Sizzla of his respect for the RCA (Reggae Compassionate Act); / 2 - A commitment never again to perform in Europe, Jamaica or elsewhere songs such as, in particular, "Nah Apologize", "To The Point" or "Boom Boom"; / 3 - An agreement to sign the commitment in public in front of the press, at the same table as the representatives of the LGBT groups; / 4 - An agreement to make space in the entry areas of the concert halls in his tour available to the LGBT groups, so that they can distribute condoms and information on homophobia; / 5 - They would meet the travel and subsistence costs of the LGBT activists who would be running these preventative activities; / What do you think?”

Friday the 23rd of May. While we were still awaiting a response from Mr Brown (the time passed and nothing came...) a certain Monsieur Simon, the organiser of the concert scheduled for Saturday the 31st of May at Lille, telephoned us and urged us to stop calling for the cancellation of the concerts, stressing the shaky nature of his own personal finances, as well as the children he needed to support and a car recently involved in an accident. We said we would have like to do so but that we couldn't as we were still waiting for the outcome of talks with Eddie Brown, facilitated by Jean-Pierre Albouy. In passing, we are surprised not to have been contacted yet by Mr Brown. The first concert is on Thursday the 29th of May at Ramonville. A coordinated, intergroup campaign could not be stopped like that so easily. We would need to present the outcomes of the discussions to our partner associations, sound them out, convince them that they were good outcomes... We would need to get back to the Prefectures and Mayors to tell them that things were finally sorted out... A campaign takes time to start up and takes time to bring to an end. More reason to get on with it, especially within a few days of the first concert. But, no, three long days have gone by since we sent off our first offer of discussions and there has been no telephone call, no email in response. On Friday the 23rd of May at 13:44 I sent this email to Monsieur Simon. “Dear Mr Simon / I well understand your delicate position and I assure you of my complete support. / Please find below the offer of discussions we submitted to Sizzla through M Jean-Pierre Albouy, the guy in charge of the *Havana Café* near Toulouse. / You will also find attached the Reggae Compassionate Act signed by Sizzla on the 15th of April 2007 (who broke this agreement on the 13th of June) + our letter of the 13th of May to the mayors and those in charge of the halls + ad document of the Stop Murder Music Campaign launched by the British group *Outrage!* in 2004/ Sizzla now holds the key. Thanks for keeping us up to speed, and good luck”. A few hours later (at last some response!) Monsieur Simon called us back, brought in Mr Brown and we

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had all three a teleconference. It was a very friendly teleconference, conducted with courtesy and where we agreed on the need for it all to stop and to get out of this crisis as quickly as possible. Mr Brown in particular said that he was sure we could find agreement. Friday the 23rd of May at 14:51. We sent him an English translation of the offer sent on Tuesday the 20th to Monsieur Albouy: *«Dear Mister Eddie, / Please find here the points we would like to talk about (sorry for the English) :/ 1 - We would like Mister Sizzla to confirm, by public statement, his commitment to respect RCA (he signed it April the 15th of 2007 but broke it June the 13th and after, so he has to say again his commitment to respect it);/ 2 - We also would like him to specify he won't sing anymore "Nah Apologize", "To Da Point" or "Boom Boom" (or any song like those) in Europe, Africa, Jamaica or somewhere else (a clear statement seems to be required, not smthg unclear as his 2005 statment - see attached - when he told: "I know that in the past some of my material may have seemed to incite violence towards others"... The "may have seemed" seems to us too unclear, regarding what kind of very clear lyrics we'r talking about);/ 3 - We would like him to sign such a statment in a press conference, at the same table as LGBT associations;/ 4 - We would like him to let a space (as a table) for LGBT associations, by his concert halls, in order to allow them to make HIV or homophobia prevention;/ 5 - We would like also him to refund these associations from expenses connected to this issue (as rail ticket if there is); we also think a donation to a French association fighting against homophobia would be a clear and strong act showing his commitment (for instance, a moderate and low percent of his concert in France). Let me know what u'r thinking about those proposals: as I said, we'r talking... but please, quick: we'r close to the date of the next French concerts and we can't stop our campain that easily./ Best regards»*. You can see that this offer contains five points “which we would like to talk about”. You can see that the tone was not one “demands” but rather of negotiation and conciliation. I have read and re-read this email, dear Benoît. I cannot see how we can be, as you say, “going too far”. I cannot see any “demands” which you call “unrealistic”. To tell the truth, I cannot see any “demand”, as the email insists from start to finish, at the risk of repeating itself, that this was about discussion, negotiations etc. which had not yet reached the point of a firm, definite commitment. (In proof of this you can see the use of the verb “to talk”, the conditional phrase “we would like” and phrases like “we think”.) Can you see any “demands” in that? Nor can I see any “racket” (a word that does not help dialogue) in us mentioning, tentatively, reimbursement for some train tickets and some photocopying, or a “moderate and low” [“modest and reasonable”] donation to an anti-hompophobia group. The words have their meaning and I don't need to teach you them. Concerning that, Mr Brown told me he would chat to Sizzla and would call me back the following moring (that is, Saturday the 24th of May, in the morning - my birthday, by the way).

Saturday the 24th May at noon - no phone call. I call Eddie (at my expence, he is in Englang). I must have misunderstood, as I need to wait until Monday morning (that is the 26th of May). We could see he was not in a hurry, that he was not much interested in the issue. The Ramonville and Montpellier concerts were scheduled for Thursday 29th May and Sunday 1st of June respectively, so they were imminent. I had told him clearly that the campaign would be hard to stop and that he needed to tackle the issue as soon as possible. And he takes his time and the whole weekend. It is not very professional. For my part, I would really liked to have sorted out this problem, I would have got stuck in and called Sizzla within an hour - as Simon had done with Eddie - with a reply by the evening of Friday 23 May! But oh, no, nothing seemed pressing to Eddie. In short, the time kept passing and passing.

Monday the 26th of May, in the morning, we got together again by phone (I think I was paying). He agreed with point 1 and promised me a written declaration from Sizzla by the afternoon. He agreed with point 2, which to tell the truth was redundant, being covered by point 1. He turned down point 3 and said point 4 did not concern him. We would need to see the concert organisers about that. He turned down point 5. I replied that I could give up points 3 and 5 if we could get satisfaction concerning points

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1, 2 and 4 and if, in addition, we could get our associations to be allowed to address the audiences before the concerts from the stage. I even proposed to negotiate the content of these speeches with him (by which was understood, with Sizzla). He gave me the same response as for point 4 - he had no problem with it may that was up to the concert organisers, not him nor the artist. We were therefore in agreement on four points, on the basis of which Eddie could go to Sizzla with a view to finalising the agreement. I am annoyed at the lack of reaction from Eddie but the telephone conversations were marked by great friendliness and by warm, humane and deeply felt exchanges. At this stage I had the impression that the negotiations were going well and that giving up points 3 and 5 of the original offer were well worth the guarantees more or less obtained on points 1, 2 and 4, as well as on the new point (let's call it point 6 - the speech from the stage). Eddie never ceased to tell me that he was very satisfied, that he thought we were making progress and everything was going well. According to him, Sizzla's ratification of the four points would be no problem.

Tuesday the 27th of May 15:35. I put a very optimistic summary of how the negotiations are going into an email to the British group Outrage! «*Eddie Brown was OK on: / I - Relase a statment of Sizzla reaffirming his commitment to respect RCA; / II - Allow us to have a table somewhere in the hall entrance of the concert hall to give general informations against homophobia and condoms to audience; / III - Allow us to make a short speech before the concert, on the stage; / IV - And, of course, not perform anymore homophobic or racist songs anywhere in the world (France, Jamaica, Africa...)*». At that moment (Tuesday the 27th of May at 15:35) I was still awaiting the announcement Eddie had promised for Monday the 26th in the evening. I had nothing tangible I could use to ask the associations who had co-signed the letter of the 13th of May to call off the campaign in progress, and so, naturally, it continued. I had however insisted several times to Eddie that he needed to get a move on, but yet again he did not seem in a hurry. We had been negotiating for a week, really negotiation for four days, but nothing concrete had emerged. Less than an hour later (Tuesday the 27th of May at 16:13) I got a reply from Outrage! who had been able to talk with Eddie, who had clearly confirmed the substance of my picture of the facts. «*Thanks, David. / As I mentioned and as you acknowledged in our phone call of a few moments ago, Eddie is not in a position to provide for points II and III and we all that recognise this is up to the venue owners. / Eddie has confirmed that he will send you Sizzla's statement as soon as possible. / Kind regards*». It was explained to me on the telephone that Eddie Brown could not send Sizzla's declaration right away because he had been held up at Madrid airport. It was not told me anything more. I was not worried - I suspected it was something to do with visa, a simple hold-up that had gone on a little too long. I suggest to Eddie, on the offchance, that perhaps I could help get things moving, as I knew the French Foreign Minister: «*Dear Keith and Eddie, / I'm fully agree with ur email and confirm u the venue owners in Montpellier and Ramonville are fully agree with points II and III (my goal was just to make sure that Sizzla has no problem with that). / By the way, Eddie: is everything OK in Spain? Could we be in any way useful? / Best regards*» (Tuesday the 27th May at 16:36). I still do not know that Sizzla is at this time had been detained at Madrid airport since 9 o'clock in the morning (local time) and that he had been barred from the Schengen Area. (I would not find this out until the following Thursday at 19:55, that's two days later.) But I can say that between 15:35 and 16:36, on Tuesday 27th May, Eddie Brown had confirmed that everything was going fine and that the agreement was so-to-speak sealed.

Suddenly...

Tuesday the 27th of May at 22:35 I got the most cryptic and confused of emails in which Eddie tells me that our requests are unacceptable, that they have been turned down, that Sizzla had decided to stop his tour. He explained nonetheless that Sizzla admitted he had made "mistakes" since he signed the RCA. "OK

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*he admits to making mistakes since it was signed*” (we had not even dared propose that he admit explicitly that he had made mistakes). He also explained that Sizzla still considered himself bound by the RCA - (*«but overall he is stuck to its principals as can be verified by the authorities in the Paris show and the Dutch shows the Vienna shows etc.»*). This could, with a great deal of good will, and we have that, be considered a declaration which satisfied points 1 and 2 previously agreed by Eddie. What stands out from this email is a strong impression of confusion. On the one hand, some advances (points 1 and 2 more or less satisfied) and a door left open (the email ends with a question which leaves room for hope - *«Now where do we go?»*). On the other hand an apparently flat refusal. The first sentence is itself an illustration of this ambiguity: *“It is with a very heavy heart that I write this mail as it seems that all our work to get artist to be on side with the general principal of the RCA “may” have broken down, not from our side but from the side of what it seems to be right wing elements within the gay community”*. On one side regrets and phrases that leave you to think you could still save the situation, on the other side intemperate accusations, not to say threats, which leave you thinking that dialogue has become impossible. Further on he says: *“A very angry young artist will return to Jamaica to his people and his community and I do not want to think anything negative but I am concerned. I think you should all think long and hard about what’s going on and the consequences of your actions... What is happening here is serious and if the German and French gay community is responsible this will not be the last of it”*. Then Eddie says: *“We sent Sizzla the request from David (in France) and he quite rightly as decided that it seems that some people want him crucified or guillotined in public and he must pay for their transport to witness it”*. And here I begin to wonder. What is he on about? In the four points which were finally to be put to Sizzla, where is the guillotine, where the crucifix? Where was the reimbursement of expenses incurred by LGBT groups because of this affair (the famous point 5 which had been given up on Monday the 26th and no longer figured in my summary to Outrage! on Tuesday 27 May at 15:35 of the negotiations)? I ask myself. Since points 1 (the declaration) and 2 (the commitment never again to perform the disputed lyrics) were *de facto* accepted by Sizzla as he had admitted his mistakes and placed himself within the scope of the RCA, could it therefore be points 4 (the table/stand) and 6 (the speech from the stage) which were the problem - even though Eddie had told me they were not his problem - and point 5, which however no longer formed part of the negotiations? In that case, why not talk about these points? Why not reopen negotiations on points 4 and 6 (we could have discussed things) and on point 5 (already abandoned once and could well be abandoned a second time)? No, instead of making a counter proposal, instead of negotiating (and I’m not the one to teach Eddie, a singer’s agent, what negotiation is all about), the door is slammed shut. Just like that. Not totally, however, since Eddie points out that *“Sizzla as decided that he will not continue with this tour”*, and finishes his email with a hopeful phrase, which leads one to hope that Sizzla has not yet left (to take the decision to leave, is not to leave, *“has decided he will not continue”* is not *“won’t continue”*). On this slender hope, because I think negotiations are worth pursuing, because I remain committed to the possibility of agreement which was still in sight six hours earlier, I made a very generous reading of this email and I thought it left a place for negotiation, for dialogue.

Wednesday the 28th of May at 10:27 (we still did not know what had happened at Madrid). We sent the following email to Eddie: *“Good Morning Everyone (it’s 9 AM in France), / I slept (quite well, thank you), and I have very clear ideas (at least, more than yesterday evening). / Dear Eddie, I don’t wish right now to answer your last email point by point. Please don’t see it as an outrage: I just think it will going anywhere to say to you right now how much I’m surprised and disappointed by this unfair vision of our dialog, which was deep and where I felt respect and honesty from both sides. / Right now, I have a message for Sizzla, because I think we have to dialog with him, even if it’s so difficult. / MESSAGE TO SIZZLA/ Dear Mister Sizzla, / Firstable please excuse my English: I don’t speak English very good (actually, because I hated so much my English teacher when I was young !) and maybe some*

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of my words are not the more precise or seem irrelevant because of that. / It seems You're afraid to be unrespected in France. But not to respect You is not one of our goals. Our goal is to be respected. And respect is like a circle, like a cycle: if someone doesn't provide respect to someone else, he will certainly not get respect in return. Our point is to find a way to respect You and to be respected by You in the same time. But what does "respect" means in this issue? / According to us, "respect" means at least not to be injured and not to be insulted. You have to tell us what "respect" means to You. According to Eddie, You don't want to be "guillotined" or "crucified": it's not our intention at all (actually, fight against homophobia never killed anyone - except gay people). You should also know that to guillotine someone is now forbidden in France (since 1981) - and West Roman Empire, where crucifixion was a daily practice, disappeared in 476 CE. / We're ready to fairly wellcome You in France (see below points #II and III of the final agreement with Eddie). According to Eddie in his last email, "You admit You made mistakes since the RCA was signed but that overall You stuck to its principals". **THIS STATEMENT IS ENOUGH FOR US.** A direct and clearer statement would have been a stronger statement, but let's say this statement is enough. We asked a statement : we got it - maybe not the one we expected, but a statement anyway. Then we can consider points #I and IV of our final requests are reached (and there was no other point in our final requests). / We're ready to publish a press release about that, and we're ready to deal with You (or Eddie) about the words of such a press release. / Your fans are waiting for You in France, and they didn't deserve to be victims of our problems to talk. Christine Isaac, chairman of Guard Kulcha, the french association who organized the concert in Ramonville near Toulouse, is defending caribbean culture since years, and she make all her efforts to make You come in south of France. In Lille, north of France, Simon Paris also organized a concert and is about to loose huge amount of money, jeopardizing his family life and children future. Please, don't deceive them and all Your fans in France. / It would be a pity to stop this way all our dialog, precisely when we're about to have a good enough for both of us deal. / Best regards". The sense is clear, save what we can. Be positive. At 11:02, at last some reaction, but unfortunately too late and too bad. This time Eddie Brown gives us a an absolutely clear and flat refusal where he uses such temperate words such as "**THIS IS WHAT MANY PEOPLE LIKE YOU HAVE TRIED TO STOP AND AS RESULTED IN WAR IN MANY COUNTRIES**" (the capitals are in the original, representing someone shouting, according to Internet's rules of order). He even says to us "you even tries to result in money demands". This is an outrageous piece of bad faith because he is the best placed to know that the requests for financial help made on the 20th and 23rd of May had disappeared, along with the notorious point 5, by the morning of the 26th at the end of our discussions. We still don't know he was desperately looking for pretexts to shift public attention away from the business of the invalid visa. (We would not hear of this business until the following evening and he made sure we did not learn it from him.) For the time being, not having this information, we simply noted that he was, for reasons we could not understand, in an uncontrollable rage so we decided to take no notice of his email, trusting to the old saying that every which is excessive is not worth bothering about. We even went as far as to believe it was a tactical manoeuvre to keep the pressure on us so that we would make sure the scheduled concerts went ahead. As far as that is concerned, we thought that the preliminary agreement endorsed by Eddie on Tuesday the 27th of May between 15:35 and 16:13 was still in force and were continuing our efforts at conciliation as if nothing had happened.

Wednesday the 28th of May at 13:41. *Tjenbé Rèd* published a brave press release giving assurances (on good grounds, as we have seen) that Sizzla would reaffirm his commitment to respect the RCA and asking, on that basis, the authorities and associations involved to let the concerts in Ramonville and Montpellier to go ahead. (Lille had meanwhile disappeared. The hall had cancelled on the intervention of the mayor. Monsieur Simon complained on the telephone about the money lost, which he would never get back from Sizzla... I am trying to understand. Normally, an advance payment ought to be reimbursed in the event of a cancellation which was outside the control of the parties. I asked him what

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in fact was the contract he had with Sizzla. He did not understand, did not trust me, refused to read the clauses which allowed Sizzla to keep an advance payment for a concert cancelled because of reasons beyond the control of the organiser... I tried to help him out. I offered to get some lawyer friends to study the possibility of redress, but he was in a panic, angry, and did not seem really to understand what I was saying to him. Finally, he refused to continue talking to me - he was worn down.) Our press release was brave because it was risky. The authorities and associations concerned could ask us for the complete email sent by Eddie the night before at 22:35. They would be able to see themselves how optimistic our reading of it had been. We carried on this path, anxious to give dialogue a chance.

On Thursday the 29th May at 04:32 in the morning we tried, against advice a local human rights organisation, to get the mayor of Montpellier and the Prefecture of Hérault not to ban the concert in Montpellier. *“Madame Mayoress/ Monsieur Prefect/ We have just been advised that the cancellation of the Sizzla’s concert in Montpellier has been demanded. Our association Tjenbé Rèd was among the first in the organisation of civic groups and others concerned about Sizzla’s French tour. We have been following this singer since 2005. We therefore have a certain experience of the case and perhaps we can usefully tell you about latest developments, before you begin to think about such a measure./ We do not ask for cancellation for cancellation’s sake but to help the singer move develop and have him return to a respect for the “Reggae Compassionate Act” - a sort of moral contract which he signed on the 15th April 2007, but which he subsequently contravened. Following several cancellations in France, the cards were on the table. Sizzla has just committed himself to come back within the scope of that document. We have besides obtained from the Monsieur Jean-Pierre Albouy, the producer of the concerts in Montpellier and Toulouse (Ramonville), permission to address the audiences before these two concerts./ We had already, in the early afternoon of Wednesday 28 May, sent you the press release which announced this step forward. You can find it again attached to this piece. We suggest it would be unfortunate not to take account of this progress and it could be, for example, possible to announce that the concert would be halted immediately at the least slide into racism or homophobia (besides, this has been up to now what M Albouy has said he would do)./ This way of proceeding would allow us both to take account of the renewed commitment of Sizzla, while setting out clearly our common vigilance for republican values. Still more importantly, it would allow us to work together to educate - in a novel way - Sizzla’s audiences. The members of these audiences are not just onlookers, but essential agents in our relationship with Reggae singers and more widely our fellow citizens. This way of proceeding will also be looked at closely in both the English- and the French-speaking West Indies where it could serve as a model, or at least a reference point, in a peculiarly difficult context for lesbian, gay, bi- and trans-sexual people./ Cancellation for cancellation’s sake is like confrontation for confrontation’s sake, and that is not part of the philosophy of Tjenbé Rèd, which looks for dialogue in all cases, and only resorts to conflict as a last resort. In the present case, there has been conflict, which allowed some dialogue, which is about to come to fruition, and it would be regrettable not to give this dialogue a chance./ Sincerely”.* To the very end, we did everything to make dialogue possible. In vain - but did Sizzla really want dialogue? We now know, this was nothing more than a pretence. When he wrote to us on Tuesday the 27th of May at 22:35, Eddie Brown or Sizzla were furious, not about requests that posed no problem six hours earlier or which had already been withdrawn, but about seeing himself barred from the Schengen Area for having an invalid visa. This they made sure we did not hear from them.

Thursday the 29th May at 12:50 we had to publish a press release to announce that Sizzla was not coming. We are still not up to speed on what actually happened on that day of 27th of May in Madrid. Sizzla let it be known that he took the “*decision*” to cancel his tour. We speak about an “*incomprehensible*” decision since all the indications were that the preliminary agreement negotiated with Eddie were going to be confirmed or had been already. We still do not know if this so-called “*decision*” is a simple lie

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designed to avoid the question of Sizzla's responsibility or, perhaps, Eddie Brown's responsibility with regard to Sizzla.

Friday the 30th of May at 02:45 in the morning, and we have finally learned the truth. After several hours spent gathering information, we can denounce the lied in a second press release dated Thursday 29. No "unrealistic demands", no "racket", contrary to what you say. (There is a conspiracy theory beginning to spread on Internet forums, showing clearly that the work of disinformation carried out by Sizzla or Eddie Brown is in full swing.) No, there is just lots of incompetence, bad faith and a refusal to face up to responsibilities - but not on our part.

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**C - Dear Benoît, you also say: "Such a speech [the precise point 6 of our preliminary agreement with Eddie] was impossible for security reasons. The audience would have pelted them with bottles".**

That risk exists, it is true, but we have already had discussions with lovers of Dancehall and the experience shows that such an occasion is not one of physical violence. All in all, contact with Sizzla's audience at Montreuil were among the most fruitful - perhaps too much in Sizzla's eyes? Besides, we would have been protected by the security guards, or if not by the police. Moreover, Eddie, having said on 27 May between 15:35 and 16:13, that this issue caused him no problem, it is surprising that it became problematic on the 27th May at 22:35. Besides, if this point really did suddenly pose a problem, why not reopen negotiations on the subject? Why slam the door when we have always been open to negotiation? There again, you could ask yourself if Sizzla really wanted negotiations. We know now that he was looking for any reason whatsoever to deflect attention from his visa problem, which he tried hard to conceal.

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**D - Dear Benoît, you say finally: "[The LGBT groups] ask a Jamaican singer to disown the means of his business and the laws of his country. He thinks homosexuality is a sin and he will not change his mind".**

I have never heard it so crudely put that certain singers use hatred for commercial gain. But the issue is not to know what Sizzla believes; we do not want a thought police. The question is to know whether he calls or does not call for the murder or hatred of this or that minority, in contradiction of the RCA, which he signed on the 15th of April 2007 and for which he restated his respect on the 27th of May 2008 at 22:35.

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These, dear Benoît, are the details it seemed important to us to explain following your interview to the daily letter of the magazine *Têtu*, published on Thursday the 29th of May at 14:23. *Tjenbé Rêd* obviously remains at your service, and that of *ReggaeFrance.com*, for any further information and in particular we renew our offer of Saturday the 24th of May at 13:09 of a public debate.

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Sincèrement,

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*For Tjenbé Rèd*  
*Civic movement for action and discussion*  
*on Black, People of Colour & LGBT People Issues*  
*in Mainland and Overseas France*  
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ANNEXES :

[1B] De : PRIDE MUSIC INFO [mailto:...@pridemusic.co.uk]/ Envoyé : mercredi 28 mai 2008 11:02/ À : [contact@tjenbered.fr](mailto:contact@tjenbered.fr); 'Peter Tatchell'; ...@lsvd.de/ Cc : ...@havanaproduction.com; ...@mairie-ramonville.fr; 'Simon Paris'; [bamba.prod@...](mailto:bamba.prod@...); 'kwame afrifa'; 'Julian - Roots & Vibes'; 'Carlos Mata'; 'Klaus Maack'; ...@egale.ca; 'CCH MTP'/ Objet : Re: URGENT - SIZZLA/ *Mr David, / You can do and say what you like, the fact is you and your German colleagues are not willing to give anyone a chance despite what you say or try to dress up, you even tried to result in money demands. / Sizzla as been in Europe and if you contact the police in the places that he as already played including Germany, Paris, Holland, Budapest, Poland, Vienna, Zurich, you will see that he as performed in the best possible light and kept to the spirit of the RCA. / NOW Sir because you want to make you and your organisation world leaders and control what people are allowed to say or think, you keep pushing and pushing. the fact is it is you and your colleagues that have denied genuine fans from seeing the artist for which there are thousands, Sizzla as moved on but you still want his head. / THIS IS WHAT MANY PEOPLE LIKE YOU HAVE TRIED TO STOP AND AS RESULTED IN WAR IN MANY COUNTRIES:-/ Freedom of speech is being able to speak freely without censorship. The right to freedom of speech is guaranteed under international law through numerous human-rights instruments, notably under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, although implementation remains lacking in many countries. The synonymous term freedom of expression is sometimes preferred, since the right is not confined to verbal speech but is understood to protect any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used. / WE DO NOT BELIEVE IN KILLING ANYONE EVEN IF WE DO NOT LIKE THEM. BUT NOW YOU TAKE FOOD FROM PEOPLE WHO NEED IT FOR HIS COMMUNITY, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?/ The artist will not be pushed anymore enjoy your victory but also except to consequences as there will be many. / Feel free to publish what you like. / Eddie Brown*

[1A] De : PRIDE MUSIC INFO [mailto:...@pridemusic.co.uk]/ Envoyé : mardi 27 mai 2008 22:35/ À : [contact@tjenbered.fr](mailto:contact@tjenbered.fr); 'Peter Tatchell'; ...@lsvd.de/ Cc : ...@havanaproduction.com; ...@mairie-ramonville.fr; Simon Paris; [bamba.prod@...](mailto:bamba.prod@...); kwame afrifa; Julian - Roots & Vibes; Carlos Mata; Klaus Maack/ Objet : Re: URGENT - SIZZLA/ *Good Day All, / It is with a very heavy heart that I write this mail as*

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English translation of a French original text. French original available on demand. In the event of any differences between the English translation and the French original, the French text shall prevail. Translated by T. E. |

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it seems that all our work to get artist to be on side with the general principal of the RCA "may" have broken down, not from our side but from the side of what it seems to be right wing elements within the gay community. / Where we were hoping to issue a statement this evening that is no longer possible. / Sizzla as decided that he will not continue with this tour as a direct result of what is happening in Germany and in France, we sent him the request from David (in France) and he quite rightly as decided that it seems that some people want him crucified or guillotined in public and he must pay for their transport to witness it. he as signed an agreement already that was used against him in public, world media and most embassingly in his home, OK he admits to making mistakes since it was signed but overall he as stuck to its principals as can be verified by the authorities in the Paris show and the Dutch shows the Vienna shows etc. / Sizzla feeds many people in his community and send many to school, provides housing and money also from them, when this is taken from them because people want their pound of flesh, I personally am afraid of the result. A very angry young artist is will return to Jamaica to his people and his community and I do not want to think anything negative but I am concerned. I think you should all think long and hard about what's going on and the consequences of your actions, / WE HAVE MADE REAL PROGRESS IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO AND NOW THIS IS A SERIOUS SETBACK/ What is happening here is serious and if the German and French gay community is responsible this will not be the last of it. / We will not issue any more statements nor sign them, you are free to do as you like and call it a victory for the gay community against freedom speech and a very popular art form attended by thousands. / Now where do we go?/ Eddie Brown/ European agent for Sizzla

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[2C] LSVd / FACT SHEET/ Sizzla: Breaking the RCA both in Europe and Jamaica  
[http://www.lsvd.de/fileadmin/pics/Dokumente/Homosexualitaet/Sizzla\\_FactSheet.pdf](http://www.lsvd.de/fileadmin/pics/Dokumente/Homosexualitaet/Sizzla_FactSheet.pdf)  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080331-99.pdf>

[2B] Signature du «Reggae Compassionate Act» par Sizzla, le 15 avril 2007  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2007/20070415-99.jpg>

[2A] OutRage!/ Stop Murder Music/ Dancehall Dossier  
<http://www.petertatchell.net/popmusic/Dancehall-Dossier-FINAL.pdf>  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2004/20041231-99.pdf>

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[3J] 29 May 2008 - Excluded from the Schengen Area, Sizzla announces that he has "decided" to cancel his French tour - Press Release No TR08POL10A [en]  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080529-11.pdf>

[3I] 29 May 2008 - Sizzla decides to cancel the remaining part of his French tour (Tjenbé Rèd had nevertheless just found some common ground with him) - Press Release No TR08POL10 [en]  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080529-01.pdf>

[3H] 28 May 2008 - Sizzla seems to re-affirm his intention to abide by the Reggae Compassionate Act (The main obstacle to his return to France could thus be removed) - Press Release No TR08POL09 [en]  
<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080528-01.pdf>

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[3G] 18 mai 2008 - *Deux autres concerts du chanteur raciste et homophobe Sizzla sont annulés (La mobilisation doit s'intensifier à Ramonville et à Montpellier où la FNAC continue à tirer profit de son commerce de mort)* - Communiqué de presse n°TR08POL08 [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080518-00.html>

[3F] 17 mai 2008 - *Lettre à Rama Yade, secrétaire d'Etat chargée des Affaires étrangères et des Droits de l'Homme, au sujet de la tournée du chanteur Sizzla* - Communication n°TR08POL07 [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080517-00.html>

[3E] 16 mai 2008 - *Les concerts de Sizzla à Mulhouse et Villeurbanne sont annulés mais ce chanteur raciste et homophobe reste attendu aux Pays-Bas, en Allemagne et en France malgré une interdiction d'entrer dans l'espace Schengen (Tjenbé Rèd et la LSVD, deux associations européennes de défense des droits humains, lancent un appel à mobilisation autour des valeurs européennes)* - Communiqué de presse n°TR08POL06 [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080516-00.html>

[3D] 14 mai 2008 - *Sizzla entame sa tournée à Montreuil : alors que la Journée mondiale contre l'homophobie arrive, cette tournée sera l'occasion de contrer l'homophobie sur le terrain* - Communiqué de presse n°TR08POL05 [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080514-00.html>

[3C] 13 mai 2008 - *Scandale Sizzla : seize organisations écrivent aux maires et aux responsables de salles (Par ailleurs, Tjenbé Rèd appelle à un rassemblement pacifique ce mercredi soir à Montreuil et demande l'interdiction de la tournée pour trouble à l'ordre public)* - Communiqué de presse n°TR08POL04A [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080513-00.html>

[3B] 13 mai 2008 - *Lettre ouverte aux maires et aux responsables de salles de concerts accueillant la tournée de Sizzla en France* - Communication n°TR08POL04B [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080513-01.html>

[3A] 9 mai 2008 - *Alerte homophobie ! Buju Banton et Sizzla, deux chanteurs homophobes, en tournée en France ! (Sizzla, le «butteur de pédés», est à Montreuil ce mercredi 14 mai)* - Communiqué de presse n°TR08POL03 [fr]

<http://www.tjenbered.fr/2008/20080509-00.html>

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[4C] <http://www.tjenbered.fr/forum.html>

[4B] <http://www.jahsound.net/viewtopic.php?t=9436>

[4A] [http://www.reggae-france.com/comment\\_view.php?all=1&id=1089&type=news](http://www.reggae-france.com/comment_view.php?all=1&id=1089&type=news)

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