

# URGENT ACTION

## ANTI-HOMOSEXUALITY BILL COULD PASS IMMINENTLY

**The Ugandan Parliament is preparing to debate a bill which entrenches discrimination and hatred against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The bill, known as the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, appeared on the Parliamentary Order of Business on 21 November, and could be scheduled for debate at any time. There are fears that the bill might be passed within days of the debate.**

The Ugandan Penal Code already prohibits consensual sex between individuals of the same sex. However, the Anti Homosexuality Bill goes much further. Earlier drafts of the Bill provided for the death penalty for the offence of "aggravated homosexuality". It is not clear whether the death penalty remains in the Bill, but Amnesty International understands that some provisions may have been amended. In its current draft, life sentences may be imposed for consensual sexual conduct between people of the same sex. However the Bill would also continue to criminalise the "promotion" of homosexuality, attacking the freedom of expression of human rights defenders. Regardless of any amendments made, the Bill would have lasting, harmful effects on any Ugandan believed to have breached its far-reaching provisions, and it would significantly hamper the work of human rights defenders and public health professionals.

If passed, the Bill would violate the principle of non-discrimination and would lead to violations of the human rights to freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, liberty and security of the person, privacy, the highest attainable standard of health, and possibly, the right to life. These rights are guaranteed under Uganda's Constitution and in international and regional treaties to which Uganda is a party. This includes the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

### **Please write immediately in English or your own language:**

- Urging the Ugandan Parliament not to pass the bill in its current or amended form;
- Reminding the Ugandan Parliament that rights guaranteed under Uganda's Constitution and in international and regional treaties to which Uganda is a party would be violated if the Bill were to be passed.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 NOVEMBER 2012 TO:**

Prime Minister and Leader of Government Business in the Parliament of Uganda

Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi  
Office of the Prime Minister  
P.O. Box 341, Kampala, Uganda  
E-mail: opm@imul.com

**Salutation: Honourable Prime Minister**

Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament of Uganda

Hon. Nathan Nandala Mafabi  
Parliament of Uganda  
P.O. Box 7178, Kampala, Uganda  
E-mail: nandala@parliament.go.ug

**Salutation: Honourable Member of Parliament and Leader of the Opposition**

### **And copies to:**

President of the Republic of Uganda

H.E. Kaguta Yoweri Museveni  
Office of the President  
P.O. Box 7168, Kampala, Uganda  
E-mail: secretary@op.go.ug  
Fax: +256 414 235 462

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill was first introduced in October 2009. The Bill was scheduled to be debated in May 2011, but this did not take place before Parliament was formally dissolved.

In October 2011, the Bill was brought back following a motion in Parliament to reintroduce 17 bills, including the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which had been left pending since the last parliament dissolved.

The re-tabling of the Bill comes at a time of reduced space for the right to freedom of expression and association in Uganda. Groups opposed to the government have been banned from holding demonstrations and activists with dissenting views on issues including oil governance, corruption and human rights have faced ongoing intimidation, harassment and surveillance.

Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have documented instances of discrimination, arbitrary arrests, detention, torture and other ill-treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Uganda. These human rights violations have been committed under the pretext of enforcing existing provisions of the Ugandan penal code. LGBT people have also been excluded from government HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and the provision of other health services. This bill has the potential to further perpetuate and institutionalize such discriminatory practices. In addition, if enacted into law, this bill would send a clear message that people who violently attack people solely on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity will not be held accountable for such attacks.

UA: 338/12 Index: AFR 59/008/2012 Issue Date: 26 November 2012

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