

The Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition calls for the immediate withdrawal of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda

4 December 2012

The Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRD IC) condemns the repeated efforts to introduce the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda's Parliament. We join Ugandan activists in urging that the Bill is immediately withdrawn and ensure that human rights for all are protected and respected.

After repeated attempts to pass the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda, it has now been upgraded to Item No. 1 on the Order of Business to Follow of the Ugandan Parliament which means it could be tabled at any time. If passed, the Bill would represent a grave assault on the human rights of all Ugandans, and would further sanction violence and discrimination against those who are, or who are believed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTI), their family, friends, and supporters.

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill seeks to introduce some severe provisions punishing consensual private same-sex relations, reinforcing Uganda's existing prohibitions. Earlier drafts of the Bill, which was first tabled in 2009, provided for the death penalty for the offence of 'aggravated homosexuality'. The death penalty may remain in the Bill in its current form. We know that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals, as well as those thought to engage in same-sex relations in Uganda, have already faced numerous instances of discrimination, arbitrary arrests, detention, torture, and other ill-treatment because of their sexual orientation and gender identity.¹ We condemn the Bill, as well as all the existing measures which punish people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill not only violates multiple protections guaranteed by the Constitution of Uganda, but also contravenes the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) (ICCPR), and other international human rights treaties to which Uganda is a party. The bill also seriously contradicts the strong call made in the [Joint Statement to the UN Human Rights Council](#) in March 2011, signed by 84 member states (including Nigeria, the

¹ [Global Report on the Situation of Women Human Rights Defenders](#), p. 78

Central African Republic, South Africa, and Rwanda), which called for states to take steps to end acts of violence, criminal sanctions, and related human rights violations against individuals because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The WHRD International Coalition stands in solidarity with the LGBTI people and human rights defenders of Uganda and their friends, families and supporters.

We call on the government of Uganda to respect and guarantee the fundamental rights and freedoms of all individuals, in line with the guarantees in the Ugandan Constitution and the international human rights treaties to which it is party, and to immediately withdraw the Anti-Homosexuality Bill.

For more information and to take action:

[Read the statement by the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law – Uganda on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2009, submitted to the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee of Uganda's parliament on 9th May 2011](#)

[Read an analysis of the Bill by the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law – Uganda](#)

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/appeals-for-action/uganda-anti-homosexuality-bill>