



## **DAWN: UGANDAN GOVERNMENT MUST STOP TRYING TO PASS ANTI-HOMOSEXUALITY BILL!**

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***"In the future, the laws that criminalise so many forms of human love and commitment will look the way apartheid laws do to us now - so obviously wrong."***

(Archbishop Desmond Tutu, The Lancet, [Volume 380, Issue 9839](#), 28 July 2012)

Some Parliamentarians and religious groups in Uganda are once more attempting to push through a dangerous Anti-homosexuality Bill to further criminalise homosexuality. Under this Bill there is potential for increased state and non-state human rights violations and killings of people with diverse and non-heteronormative sexual orientation and gender identity, in a country where homosexuality is already illegal.

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a network of feminist analysts, researchers and advocates from the global South, joins governments and civil society around the world in strongly condemning this discriminatory Bill. The Bill was originally introduced in 2009 and has since then seen massive protest each time it has been introduced, including most recently in 2011.

Despite the protest, the Bill is once more being introduced in the Ugandan Parliament. The exact state of the current text is unknown, as the Bill has only lately moved through confidential parliamentary committees. The Speaker of the House promised in a recent public speech to introduce the Bill before the end of the 2012 session. The latest version is therefore expected to be introduced into the Ugandan Parliament sometime in the next fortnight.

This Anti-Homosexuality Bill is contradictory to the spirit and provisions of international and regional human rights law including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and protocols, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and the Maputo Protocol.

It is also in direct contravention of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda that enshrines key human rights protections including the following:

Article 20: Fundamental rights and freedoms are inherent and not granted by the State

Article 21: Right to Equality and Freedom from discrimination

Article 22: The Right to Life

Article 27: The Right to Privacy

Article 29: Right to freedom of conscience, expression, movement, religion, assembly and association (this includes freedom of speech, Academic freedom and media freedom)

Article 30: Right to Education

Article 32: Affirmative Action in favour of marginalised groups and

Article 36 on the Rights of Minorities

It is also of particular concern to DAWN that much regressive human rights discourse in Africa and elsewhere is now couched in the language of preserving 'traditional values' while actually being heavily funded and directed by neo-conservative and fundamentalist Christian groups from outside, as revealed by a recent groundbreaking report by Political Resource Associates <sup>1</sup>

DAWN also notes that if passed, this law would actually be impossible to regulate. It is also already redirecting national attention from issues of political and public service corruption, electoral reform and freedom of the press, as well as health, human trafficking, food security, land alienation, ecological and climate change.

**DAWN therefore calls on the Uganda Government to end all attempts to pass variations of an Anti-homosexuality Bill.**

**Further, Executive Committee member Noelene Nabulivou said, “DAWN calls on States, feminist and women's rights groups, and wider human rights and social justice movements to provide solidarity and informed support to the civil society coalition led by LGBTQI <sup>2</sup>groups in Uganda.”**

**DAWN requests other States to bring full and immediate diplomatic means to bear on the Ugandan government; and for civil society groups to urgently write to Foreign Ministries demanding immediate representations to the Ugandan government to permanently stop this Bill. Groups and individuals can also write directly or call your national embassy in Kampala, Uganda.**

**Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)**

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1 Rev. Kapyia Kaoma, PRA Project Director. *Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia.* <http://www.publiceye.org/publications/globalizing-the-culture-wars/pdf/africa-full-report.pdf>

2 *LGBTQI: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex*

