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Uganda: President's approval of anti-LGBTI Bill is a grave assault on human rights.

Responding to the news that President Yoweri Museveni assented to Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2023, which criminalizes same-sex sexual acts between consenting adults, Flavia Mwangovya, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director said:

*This is a desperately dark day for LGBTI rights and for Uganda.
Flavia Mwangovya, Deputy Regional Director, Amnesty International, East and Southern Africa*

“This is a desperately dark day for LGBTI rights and for Uganda. The signing of this deeply repressive law is a grave assault on human rights and the Constitution of Uganda and the regional and international human rights instruments to which Uganda is a party. The Anti-Homosexuality Bill, 2023 will do nothing other than enshrine discrimination, hatred and prejudice against LGBTI Ugandans and their allies into law. It's unconscionable that they risk losing their lives, their freedom, their privacy, their freedom of expression and their ability to live free from discrimination.

“Amnesty International has repeatedly called for this egregious legislation to be scrapped.

*We stand in solidarity with Ugandan LGBTI communities, and all Ugandans affected by this hateful legislation
Flavia Mwangovya*

“As we wait for the Bill to come into force, Amnesty International urges the international community to urgently put pressure on the Ugandan government to protect the rights of LGBTI persons in the country. We stand in solidarity with Ugandan LGBTI communities, and all Ugandans affected by this hateful legislation.”

Background

The 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Bill imposes a punishment of life imprisonment for same-sex sexual acts, and up to 10 years behind bars for attempted same-sex sexual acts. It also imposed the death penalty for “aggravated homosexuality” and criminalizes the “promotion” of homosexuality, a provision that encourages homophobia.

The Bill further restricts freedom of association and expression by proposing a punishment of up to 20 years in prison for the “promotion of homosexuality.” It vaguely criminalizes provision of support, whether in kind or financially, to facilitate activities that encourage homosexuality ostensibly targeting individuals, media outlets and organizations working on LGBTI rights.

On 21 March 2023, the Ugandan Parliament passed the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, with 387 out of 389 MPs voting in favour. On 21 April 2023, Uganda's President, Yoweri Museveni refused to sign into law the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, 2023, sending it back to Parliament in Uganda for reconsideration of several clauses. On 2 May, 341 MPs voted for the amended bill and sent it back to President Museveni who assented to it earlier today.