

## **The European Parliament firmly denounces Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill**

The plenary session of the European Parliament today adopted a resolution strongly condemning the Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2009 tabled by David Bahati MP in the Ugandan Parliament.

Joining widespread international outcry from the British, French and Swedish governments as well as the White House, the European Parliament officially calls on Ugandan authorities "not to approve the bill and to review their laws to decriminalize homosexuality".

The resolution reminds the Ugandan government of its legally-binding obligations under international treaties, including the Cotonou Agreement, as well as its inability to withdraw from ratified international human rights treaties. The text further calls on the European Commission and Council to reconsider European aid to Uganda should the text pass in the Parliament (representing USD 275M annually, or 16.6% of Uganda's total official development aid).

Michael Cashman MEP, Co-president of the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights, praised the move: "The European Parliament is committed to promoting democracy and the human rights of *all* citizens in the countries it works with; Uganda is about to dishonour its moral leadership and its people by going against universally-agreed human rights."

Recently returned from a diplomatic mission in Angola and Botswana, he continued: "The Ugandan government must ask David Bahati MP to withdraw the draft bill that will kill, imprison and fine Ugandans, simply for being who they are. This bill is uncivilised and unacceptable to all decent people."

Ulrike Lunacek, Co-president of the European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights, added: "Homosexuality has always existed and will always exist in Africa—as everywhere else. Homosexuality is nothing un-African, as some African leaders wrongly claim. That is why lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people need protection and acceptance, not hate legislation".

In the plenary debate, the European Commission also expressed their "deep concern" regarding recent developments in Uganda.

Anglican, Catholic and Evangelist representatives also recently spoke out against the bill in Uganda, and the criminalisation of homosexuality in general.

### **ENDS**

**Full text of the motion:** <http://tinyurl.com/ep-res-uganda>

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