



Statement by UAF-Africa on the murder of Ugandan Rights Activist David Kato

For Immediate Release

Urgent Action Fund-Africa (UAF-Africa), would like to express outrage and dismay at the brutal murder of David Kato that took place in Kampala-Uganda on 26th January, 2011. Kato was a vocal and well known campaigner for the rights of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) individuals in Uganda, and a participant in several convenings UAF-Africa organized in the past.

The possibility that Kato could have been killed because of his sexual orientation has put the lives of other LGBTI individuals at risk in a society that is increasingly intolerant of sexual minorities. We call on the government of Uganda to put in place measures that will guarantee the protection and security of LGBTI individuals and other sexual minorities living in Uganda.

UAF-Africa calls upon the government of Uganda to promptly investigate, arrest, and charge the individuals behind the unfortunate murder of Kato. We note with concern the rising intolerance against LGBTI individuals in Uganda as evidenced by the tabling of the 2009 Anti Homosexuality Bill, the utterances of several religious leaders, and the discriminatory coverage in sections of the Ugandan media, most recently in 2010, by the *Rollingstone* newspaper.

We laud the Supreme Court ruling that noted that the *Rollingstone* newspaper had violated the constitutional right to privacy of LGBTI individuals by publishing their names, photographs and addresses. In view of this, we demand that the Ugandan media exercise great caution and responsibility in their reporting. Responsible journalism is about championing equality, and the rights of all citizens.

The kind of reporting practiced by the *Rollingstone* newspaper creates a climate of virulent homophobia. It is unfortunate and highly regrettable that a newspaper should call on people to be killed because of who they love, how they look, or who they are, and publish their pictures and in some cases their addresses.

Urgent Action Fund-Africa recognizes that sexual orientation and gender identity are integral aspects of our selves and should never lead to discrimination, abuse or murder.

We should not make people live in constant fear of losing their jobs, their families, their livelihoods, their freedom, and their lives because they are seen as different from the rest of us.

UAF-Africa stands in solidarity with all Africans who stand up, raise their voices, and defend the full equality and human rights of all people, including LGBTI people. We call upon all our governments, including the government of Uganda, to be cognizant of their responsibility to promote, protect, and respect the human rights of **all** citizens and other people living in the different countries, and put measures in place that assure everyone of this protection.

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