



Chair
Subcommittee on Human Rights



Co-President
ACP-EU JPA



Co-Presidents
Intergroup on LGBT Rights

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*Joint statement by the Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights,
the Co-President of the Africa Caribbean Pacific Joint Parliamentary Assembly,
and the Co-Presidents of the Intergroup on LGBT Rights in the European Parliament*

Death of David Kato, LGBT activist in Uganda

We are deeply saddened by the murder of David Kato Kisule, yesterday 26 January in Kampala, Uganda. David was a lifelong human rights defender; he will be remembered for his outstandingly brave defense of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people's human rights in Uganda. Our condolences go to David's family and friends.

As Sexual Minorities Uganda's Advocacy Officer, David had come to the European Parliament on several occasions to expose the plight of LGBT people in Uganda, notably in the wake of David Bahati's 'Anti-Homosexuality Bill' (*sic*). Following the publication of lists of presumed homosexual Ugandans by tabloid *Rolling Stone*, and subsequent attacks on LGBT activists, David bravely faced the *Rolling Stone* editors in a lawsuit, obtaining the condemnation of the paper and a strong High Court judgement on the universal right to life and dignity.

The European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights had previously expressed great alarm at the situation for LGBT people in Uganda, and strongly condemned the hateful press in late 2010. The Subcommittee had urged the EU Delegation in Kampala to ensure David's safety upon his return from an official visit to the European Parliament.

In December 2009 and December 2010, the European Parliament also adopted strong resolutions urging Uganda to reconsider hateful draft legislation, and decriminalise homosexuality entirely. It called on EU institutions and Member States to apply all possible pressure on Uganda to decriminalise homosexuality.

Heidi Hautala, Chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, declared: "The Subcommittee on Human Rights was adamant that LGBT human rights defenders in Uganda face grave threats for their lives and dignity. I call on the European External Action Service and Member States in Kampala to provide their unconditional assistance to LGBT human rights defenders, and pressure their Ugandan counterparts to decriminalise homosexuality."

Michael Cashman and Ulrike Lunacek, Co-Presidents of the LGBT Intergroup, said: "David was a brave and courageous man who stood as a giant, together with others, against the homophobes in government, parliament, in the Church and in the media that preached for hatred and persecution of homosexuals. His death is an awful and tragic loss. No words are strong enough for us to urge the Ugandan government to investigate this assassination, and urge the Ugandan parliament to fully decriminalise homosexuality."

Heidi Hautala MEP
Chair
Subcommittee on Human Rights

Louis Michel MEP
Co-President
ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

Ulrike Lunacek MEP
Co-President
LGBT Intergroup

Michael Cashman MEP
Co-President
LGBT Intergroup