IPPF Africa Condemns Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act as a Violation of Human Rights and Reproductive Rights

Nairobi, Kenya: 30 May 2023 – The International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Region (IPPFAR) is appalled and deeply disturbed by the recent enactment of the anti-homosexuality act 2023 by President Museveni of Uganda. This regressive law represents a grave violation of human rights and sexual reproductive rights, affecting not only the LGBTIQ+ community but all Ugandans.

The draconian and abhorrent provisions of this law criminalize same-sex relationships and any promotion of homosexuality, subjecting individuals to severe penalties, including life imprisonment. Its implementation will have dire consequences, fostering a climate of homophobia, hatred, and hate crimes. The law instills fear not only among those directly targeted but also among health workers providing essential Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services in Uganda.

IPPFAR is extremely concerned about the blatant violation of numerous international human rights that this law entails. The right to life and dignity, freedom of expression and association, protection from discrimination, the right to a fair trial, protection against arbitrary arrest, and access to health services are all undermined, compromising the full realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

"The IPPF Africa region vehemently condemns the anti-homosexuality act 2023, which targets the LGBTIQ+ community and their allies in Uganda. This law marks a sorrowful day for Uganda and its people," stated Marie-Evelyne Petrus-Barry, IPPF Africa Regional Director. "Targeting a community based solely on their shared characteristics is extremely dangerous and an undeniable violation of human rights. Instead, we should strive to empower all members of our society to be positive contributors, rather than driving them into hiding and marginalization," Petrus-Barry added.

Since March 2023, IPPF has witnessed a surge in physical attacks against the LGBTIQ+ community, threats to the safety of civil society organizations, and an alarming increase in hate speech targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals and their allies.

The anti-homosexuality act 2023 is discriminatory and flagrantly violates the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Uganda constitution. By isolating itself from the international community, Uganda risks alienating potential collaborators and donors. Already, USAID has expressed intentions to withdraw support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and Global Fund funding, potentially jeopardizing the progress made in the fight against the HIV pandemic in Uganda.

As the foremost provider of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services in Africa, IPPFAR is immensely concerned that this law will deter individuals from seeking vital SRH services due to fear of being targeted. This will inevitably hinder access to life-saving services, including HIV/AIDS testing and treatment, provision of antiretroviral therapy, contraceptive services, and accurate SRH information. Moreover, the law obstructs healthcare professionals from fulfilling their duties and providing high-quality care in a safe and confidential environment.
IPPFAR joins the chorus of condemnation against this harmful and regressive law. The safety, health, and dignity of all Ugandans must remain paramount. IPPF stands resolutely with the LGBTIQ+ community and their allies in Uganda and worldwide during this challenging time.

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ABOUT IPPF AFRICA REGION (IPPFAR)

The International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Region (IPPFAR) is one of the leading sexual and reproductive health (SRH) service delivery organization in Africa, and a leading sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) advocacy voice in the region. Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the overarching goal of IPPFAR is to increase access to SRHR services to the most vulnerable youth, men and women in sub-Saharan Africa.

Supported by thousands of volunteers, IPPFAR tackles the continent’s growing SRHR challenges through a network of Member Associations (MAs) in 40 countries. We do this by developing our MAs into efficient entities with the capacity to deliver and sustain high quality, youth focused and gender sensitive services. We work with Governments, the African Union, Regional Economic Commissions, the Pan-African Parliament, United Nations bodies among others to expand political and financial commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa.

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