

**Statement by Speciosa Wandira-Kazibwe,
Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Africa,
on the signing into law of the Anti-Homosexuality Act in Uganda**

KAMPALA, Uganda/NEW YORK, 10 March 2014—Since I was appointed the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa in August 2013, I have as my top priority linked human rights and the AIDS response. In recent months, I have engaged with governments, public officials and civil society leaders in Africa, where we are seeing a dangerous resurgence of discrimination and homophobia in some countries.

In Uganda, I highlighted to President Museveni that the criminalization of homosexuality only serves to fuel stigma and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons and risks undermining the national AIDS response, which is otherwise making significant progress. In my meetings with members of Parliament, I expressed extreme caution that the passage of the Anti-Homosexuality Act would have negative public health implications and serious consequences for Uganda's international reputation and support from donors. While the most odious provisions of the original bill prohibiting the "promotion" of gay rights and the death penalty provision were dropped, it is with deep regret that, despite my efforts, the President of Uganda recently signed the Anti-Homosexuality Act into law.

I stand in full support of the Secretary-General's leadership and UNAIDS' position and engagement on this issue. In my capacity as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, I am working with the Ministry of Health to ensure that the Act is subjected to a regulatory impact assessment, and the Minister of Health of Uganda has also made public assurances that the Act will not undermine the Government's policy of non-discrimination in the delivery of health services.

I am in full solidarity with the LGBT community and I will continue to defend their rights in Uganda and across Africa. Rest assured of my unwavering support and action for the realization of the rights for every human being, which has been my struggle since childhood. I will not reverse my path.

I will continue to engage with the Government of Uganda and civil society organizations on this important matter, and I continue to urge the Government of Uganda to revise or repeal the Anti-Homosexuality Act at the earliest opportunity.

I look forward to briefing the Secretary-General in person on this important matter during my mission to New York.

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