

For Immediate Release

From Uganda With Love

African LGBTQ Activist Comes to the U.S. for the Crimes Against Humanity Case Against American Evangelical

San Francisco, CA- October 5, 2016 – A chief witness in the case against an anti-gay American pastor for committing crimes against humanity will be visiting the San Francisco Bay Area immediately before an upcoming hearing in the trial.

Ugandan LGBTQ Activist and filmmaker Richard Lusimbo will be in the San Francisco Bay Area from November 12-21 to meet with community activists and solicit support for his cause.

Lusimbo, who like other Ugandan lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) leaders lives under constant threat of violence in his home country, will be meeting with LGBTQ leaders and will speak at *From Uganda With Love*, an event co-hosted by LGBTQ international aid agency Rainbow World Fund and the National Center for Lesbian Rights. The event will be held on November 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the GLBT History Museum, at 4127 18th St, San Francisco.

In November, Lusimbo will travel to Massachusetts for a hearing in the first-of-its-kind crimes against humanity lawsuit “Sexual Minorities Uganda v. Scott Lively” in U.S. Federal court. The lawsuit alleges that Lively's actions, in collaboration with Ugandan government officials and religious leaders, are responsible for depriving LGBT Ugandans of their fundamental human rights based solely on their identity. The case, if it succeeds, will affirm that persecution based on LGBTQ identity is a crime against humanity under U.S. and international law.

At *From Uganda With Love*, Lusimbo will speak about his experiences as an out gay man living in Uganda, the case against Lively, the terror the minister and his colleagues unleashed against LGBTQ Ugandans, and the role American evangelical churches continue to play in the persecution of LGBTQ Ugandans.

In 2013, Lusimbo and other LGBTQ leaders were outed in Ugandan tabloids and in social media as the result of a campaign by anti-gay activists. Lusimbo had to leave his home and later leave the country. He returned to Uganda and continued his work at the country's leading LGBTQ organization, Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG). SMUG later succeeded in nullifying the worst aspects of the infamous "kill the gays" anti-homosexuality bill, which was enacted in December 2013.

In 2010, David Kato, SMUG's Advocacy Officer, was murdered shortly after winning a

lawsuit against a magazine that had similarly published his name and photograph identifying him as gay and calling for him to be executed. Kato's death came months after Lively and his colleagues held rallies and workshops in Uganda equating homosexuality with pedophilia, discussing how to turn gay people straight, and how "the gay movement is an evil institution" intended to "defeat the marriage-based society."

Lusimbo was outed for a second time in 2014, after the Anti-Homosexuality Act was signed into law by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. Lusimbo's picture appeared on the cover of a tabloid with the headline "Top Gays Speak Out: How I Became Homosexual." Lusimbo received many threats and hate messages forcing him into hiding again.

Lusimbo currently serves as a Research and Documentation Officer for Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), where he documents human rights abuses experienced by the LGBTQ community. He also serves as the Chair of the African Research Team for Envisioning Global LGBT Human Rights.

Lawsuit by Sexual Minorities Uganda v Scott Lively

On March 14, 2012, the Center for Constitutional Rights filed a federal lawsuit against Lively on behalf of Sexual Minorities Uganda, under the Alien Tort Statute. The lawsuit accuses Lively of violating international law by conspiring to persecute the Ugandan LGBT community.

Lively called for the criminalization of "the public advocacy of homosexuality" as far back as 2007. In March 2009, Lively, along with evangelical activists Don Schmierer and Caleb Lee Brundidge, arrived in Kampala to give a series of talks. Thousands of Ugandans, including police officers, teachers and national politicians reportedly attended their meetings. The agenda was anti-LGBTQ; Lively and his colleagues portrayed the gay movement as an anti-Christian institution that was aimed at undermining Ugandan society and the traditional African family. The American speakers presented themselves as experts on human sexuality.

Meeting topics included how to make gay people straight and how the homosexual agenda was to attack heterosexual marriage and replace it with a culture of sexual promiscuity. LGBT people were portrayed as pedophiles and they were blamed for the Rwanda genocide. These meetings and other actions by the American evangelicals and their Uganda co-conspirators are alleged to have inspired an upsurge in violence and discrimination against LGBT people. They also are said to have resulted in the introduction of the Anti-Homosexual bill which Lively allegedly helped engineer.

This first-of-its-kind lawsuit alleges that Lively's actions, in collaboration with some Ugandan government officials and Ugandan religious leaders, are responsible for depriving LGBT Ugandans of their fundamental human rights based solely on their

identity, which the lawsuit argues meets the definition of persecution under international law and is a crime against humanity.

Lively has called the claims “ridiculous” and stated “I’ve never done anything in Uganda except preach the Gospel and speak my opinion about the homosexual issue.” Lively’s most recent petition to have the case dismissed was rejected on December 4, 2014. The summary judgment hearing before Judge Ponsor is scheduled for November 9, 2016 at 11:00am EST in Hampden Courtroom in Springfield, MA.

SMUG is represented by Center for Constitutional Rights and Jeena Shah of the International Human Rights Clinic at Rutgers Law School in Newark, the law firm of Dorsey & Whitney, LLP, Christopher Betke, Luke Ryan, and Judith Chomsky. Learn more about the case here: <https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/sexual-minorities-uganda-v-scott-lively>

Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) is non-profit umbrella organization for LGBTQ advocacy groups in Uganda. SMUG was founded in 2004, and the network currently comprises 18 organizations in Uganda offering counseling, health, and other services to the LGBTQ community. SMUG also works closely with international human rights organizations to bring attention to the persecution of LGBTQ people in Uganda. Learn more about SMUG here: <https://sexualminoritiesuganda.com/>

Richard Lusimbo is SMUG’s Research and Documentation Officer. In that role he documents human rights abuses experienced by the LGBTQ community in Uganda and advocates for action by civil society and the state to ensure the health and rights of LGBTQ persons. In 2015, Lusimbo premiered his documentary Film, “And Still We Rise,” about the resistance and resilience of Ugandan LGBTQ persons living with a rising level of intolerance and anti-gay violence in the country.

Rainbow World Fund (RWF) is the world's first and only all-volunteer, LGBTQ-based humanitarian aid organization. RWF works to help people affected by natural disasters, hunger, poverty, disease, oppression and war by raising awareness within and funds from the LGBT community to support relief efforts around the world. RWF provides a united voice, a visible presence both in the United States and abroad, and a proven structure to deliver LGBT charitable assistance to the larger world community. Learn more at www.rainbowfund.org

The **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)** has been advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education since it was founded in 1977. Learn more at <http://www.nclrights.org/>

NOTE TO EDITORS: Lusimbo is available for media interviews while he is in the Bay Area. Contact Peter Teague at 212-564-9927

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FACEBOOK EVENT RSVP: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1149522455139285/>

CALENDAR LISTINGS: Events/ Benefits

WHAT: Rainbow World Fund and the National Center for Lesbian Rights present...

FROM UGANDA WITH LOVE - At *From Uganda With Love*, LGBTQ activist Richard Lusimbo will discuss the case against Scott Lively, the anti-gay American pastor charged with crimes against humanity, the terror the minister and his colleagues unleashed against LGBTQI Ugandans, Lusimbo's experiences as an out gay man living in Uganda, and the role American evangelical churches continue to play in the persecution of LGBTQI Ugandans.

WHEN: Thursday, November 17, 2016 from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

WHERE: The GLBT History Museum, 4127 18th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Tel. [415-621-1107](tel:415-621-1107)

Event Details: Remarks by Rainbow World Fund Executive Director Jeff Cotter ● Human Rights Activist and Founder of the Names Project Cleve Jones ● Ugandan LGBTQ Activist Richard Lusimbo will be interviewed on stage by Peter Teague ● Q&A with audience ● other special guests to be announced.

FACEBOOK EVENT RSVP: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1149522455139285/>

Hosts: Jeff Cotter, RWF, Kate Kendell, NCLR