

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, November 25, 2012 11:13 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: A/S Carson mtg w/ museveni - AHB

----- Original Message -----

From: Carson, Johnnie
Sent: Sunday, November 25, 2012 10:28 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Sullivan, Jacob J; Sherman, Wendy R; Posner, Michael H
Cc: Baer, Daniel B; Yamamoto, Donald Y; Sampson, Aaron B; Hoover, John F; Ashraf, Madeeha S; Herrup, Andrew R; Brigety, Reuben; Teitelbaum, Donald
Subject: A/S Carson mtg w/ museveni - AHB

Cheryl, Wendy and Jake: Following is a full write-up of my Sunday morning conversation with President Museveni about the Bahati Bill that would criminalize homosexual behavior. I laid out our concerns and my British and French colleagues provided strong support. Museveni said that he would not support any legislation that criminalized homosexual activities and that he would not condone any law that led to the persecution, prosecution, marginalization, harassment or killing of LGBT members. His focus was on how to deal with what he called the promotion of LGBT activities. We are not out of the woods, but Museveni said he would manage this issue. I also met with members of the LGBT community -- which praised our embassy and the support they receive from Washington they preferred quiet diplomacy -- not public statements. I made a couple of suggestions for Washington follow-up activities which they supported. I met later with the Speaker of Parliament and outlined our concerns. I also conveyed U/S Sherman's message about her conversation with Canadian officials. Speaker Kadiga appreciated Wendy's message. A full report on that meeting will be sent later. Our embassy is on top of this issue and our actions should be guided by Amb DeLisi and his team. Johnnie

----- Original Message -----

From: Sampson, Aaron B
Sent: Sunday, November 25, 2012 09:19 AM
To: Carson, Johnnie
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Ambassador - we split up the readouts. This one is museveni on bahat bill and the coalition mtg.

On the margins of a November 25 meeting with President Museveni, ForMin Kutesa and DefMin Kiyonga, A/S Carson, along with UK Africa Director Nick Kay and France's Africa Director Elisabeth Barbier, raised the status of the pending Anti homosexuality Bill in Ugandan Parliament.

Accompanied by their respective Ambassadors, all three Africa Directors expressed grave concern about the legislation. A/S Carson began this portion of the meeting urging President Museveni to do all he can "prevent any legislation that criminalizes homosexual acts, punishes members of the LGBT community for private acts, or criminalizes neighbors or friends for not turning in members of the LGBT community." Carson sympathised with the desire by many Ugandans to protect children, and suggested the best way forward would be to focus on strengthening child protection laws which do not focus on sexual orientation. No one should solicit any child under 18 for a sexual act, he said. Carson added that the US Government has focused our dialogue in government-to-government avenues, the GOU should expect enormous pressure in the U.S. If the legislation is forwarded.

Museveni responded that the international community should not consider this "a big issue" and that he will "take care of it." When pressed, Museveni asserted that in Uganda there will be no prosecution of LGBT community members, no persecution, no death penalty, and no marginalization. He and FM Kutesa stressed, however, that they support legislation criminalizing so-called "promotion" and "recruitment."

UK Africa Director Kay commented that a core element of the issue stemmed from a question of equality, and pushed Museveni to consider the questions at hand were cultural, not legal, and therefore would not be well served to be encapsulated in legal process. Perhaps we need to consider a law on public decency, Museveni mused, which would apply to everyone and ensure the issue of flaunting and public displays of affection are minimized to a culturally acceptable standard.

A/S agreed that part of the discussion revolved around cross cultural conflicts, and again urged Museveni to use his Leadership to steer a neutral path forward which would not be discriminatory.

A/S Carson and Ambassador Dellsi subsequently met with four members of civil society, including Frank Mugisha of Sexual Minorities Uganda, Livingston Sewanyana of Foundation of Human Rights Initiative, and Jeff Ogwaro and Clare Byarugaba, both from the Civil Society Coalition on Human Rights and Constitutional Law.

During the meeting, the A/S summarized some of his discussions with Museveni and described efforts made across the USG to reach out appropriately at all levels to communicate U.S. stance on human rights and the proposed bill. During the discussion, civil society members urged the A/S and Ambassador to continue the focused quiet diplomacy efforts, welcomed the idea of high level personal outreach to the Speaker -- to include the possibility of former Speaker Pelosi and S contacting her by phone or letter in coming days -- and seeking contact between the Congressional Black Caucus and select Ugandan Parliamentarians.