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U.S. Christian Leaders' Statement on the "Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2009" Under Consideration by the Parliament of Uganda

Our Christian faith recognizes violence, harassment and unjust treatment of any human being as a betrayal of Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. As followers of the teachings of Christ, we must express profound dismay at a bill currently before the Parliament in Uganda. The "Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2009" would enforce lifetime prison sentences and in some cases the death penalty for homosexual behavior, as well as punish citizens for not reporting their gay and lesbian neighbors to the authorities.

As Americans, some may wonder why we are raising our voices to oppose a measure proposed in a nation so far away from home. We do so to bear witness to our Christian values, and to express our condemnation of an injustice in which groups and leaders within the American Christian community are being implicated. We appeal to all Christian leaders in our own country to speak out against this unjust legislation.

In our efforts to imitate the Good Samaritan, we stand in solidarity with those Ugandans beaten and left abandoned by the side of the road because of hatred, bigotry and fear. Especially during this holy season of Advent, when the global Christian community prepares in hope for the light of Christ to break through the darkness, we pray that they are comforted by God's love.

Regardless of the diverse theological views of our religious traditions regarding the morality of homosexuality, in our churches, communities and families, we seek to embrace our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters as God's children worthy of respect and love. Yet we are painfully aware that in our country gays and lesbians still face hostility and violence. We recognize that such treatment degrades the human family, threatens the common good and defies the teachings of our Lord -- wherever it occurs.

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