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# Uganda: Türk dismayed at ruling upholding discriminatory anti-gay law

03 April 2024

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GENEVA (3 April 2024) – UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk today expressed his dismay at the decision by Uganda’s Constitutional Court to uphold the discriminatory Anti-Homosexuality Act. He urged the authorities to repeal it in its entirety, together with other discriminatory legislation.

“Close to 600 people are reported to have been subjected to human rights violations and abuses based on their actual or imputed sexual orientation or gender identity since the Anti-Homosexuality Act was enacted in May last year,” said Türk. “It must be repealed in its entirety or unfortunately this number will only rise.”

He continued: “The Ugandan authorities must uphold the rights and dignity of all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Criminalization of and application of the death penalty to consensual same-sex relations are contrary to Uganda’s international human rights treaty obligations.”

Türk called on the Ugandan authorities to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. “Uganda’s own constitution and international human rights treaty obligations demand nothing less than

equal treatment and non-discrimination for all,” the UN Human Rights Chief stressed.

“It is crucial that the authorities also repeal Section 145 of the Penal Code Act, which also imposes criminal penalties for consensual same-sex sexual relations. They should also amend the Equal Opportunities Act to enshrine sexual orientation and gender identity and expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination.”

The High Commissioner also called on the authorities to ensure a conducive environment for all human rights defenders - including LGBTQ rights advocates - to carry out their legitimate human rights work, including by enabling them to obtain registration and to exercise without discrimination their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

### **For more information and media requests, please contact:**

#### **In Geneva**

Liz Throssell: +41 22 917 9296 / [elizabeth.throssell@un.org](mailto:elizabeth.throssell@un.org)

#### **In Nairobi**

Seif Magango: +254 788 343 897 / [seif.magango@un.org](mailto:seif.magango@un.org)

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