

## Global union federations: “Protect human rights and LGBT advocates”

The global union federations Education International and Public Services International deplore the violent murder of David Kato, on January 26 in Kampala, Uganda. Kato was a lifelong human rights defender, and a vocal opponent of Uganda’s proposed “Anti-Homosexuality Bill.” This bill seeks to criminalize homosexuality and make it punishable by fine and life imprisonment.

EI and PSI jointly call on the Ugandan government to launch an immediate investigation into Kato’s tragic death and to bring those responsible to justice. Further, EI and PSI call on the government to withdraw the anti-homosexuality bill, and to provide education and legal protection to prevent violence and discrimination against Uganda’s human rights activists, and gay, lesbian and transgender activists and their supporters.

There are concerns that Kato’s killing may have been linked to a front-page story in a Ugandan tabloid which included a list of “Top 100 homosexuals” with their photo, addresses under the headline “Hang them.” Kato’s name and picture were listed. Kato bravely faced the editors of the tabloid in a lawsuit, obtaining condemnation of the paper and a strong High Court judgment on the universal right to life and dignity. To no avail.

David Kato was a teacher by training. EI and PSI offer condolences to his family, friends and the local LGBT community. Kato’s life provides us with an important lesson in courage and dignity.

EI and PSI urge their affiliate organizations worldwide to continue to promote the respect of human rights, including sexual orientation and gender identity, because “this is a cause for freedom, dignity, equality and social justice.”

EI and PSI commend governments, including Namibia and South Africa, for supporting the United Nations resolution that came before the General Assembly on December 21, 2010. This resolution condemns extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killings on the grounds of sexual orientation.

EI and PSI reaffirm commitment to achieving the decriminalization of homosexuality in all parts of the world. Global union federations will continue to end all forms of discrimination and violence in trade unions, workplaces and in society.

EI and PSI invite all member organizations to show leadership in addressing these issues, and support union members facing the pressures of discrimination, through participation in the EI-PSI LGBT Forum that will be held prior to the 6<sup>th</sup> Education International Congress, Cape Town, South Africa, July 2011.



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