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Canadian Association of Social Workers / Association canadienne des travailleuses et travailleurs sociaux

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Honourable John Baird, P.C., MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

As the President of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW), I applaud your remarks delivered to the Royal Commonwealth Society of London calling for all Commonwealth countries to follow the example of 'progressive countries' like Canada and the United Kingdom, and not 'wilfully ignore' their obligations to protect the rights of citizens regardless of sexual orientation.

As a national voice for Canadian social workers, CASW is very much aware of the irreparable harm caused by perpetuating hate and intolerance. Consequently, CASW has and will continue to strongly condemn the Anti-Homosexuality Bill that as we understand, has again been reintroduced before the Ugandan Parliament. Along with CASW, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has also publicly rejected the position taken by the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU) in support of the bill.

CASW fully supports your expressed position of the Government of Canada that the criminalization of homosexuality is incompatible with the fundamental Commonwealth value of human rights.

CASW expects that the Canadian government will continue to press African and Caribbean countries to live up to their international obligations and uphold their basic responsibility to protect its entire people no matter what their sexual orientation.

Canada has demonstrated leadership in voicing its opinion internationally on this subject and CASW trusts that your government will use its influence to help bring about change in these Commonwealth countries.

Sincerely,

Morel Caissie, MSW, RSW
President