



## PRESS STATEMENT

Kampala, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024

### *Commemoration of International Human Rights Day 2024*

Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF) joins the world to commemorate International Human Rights Day 2024 under the theme “*Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now.*” This theme serves as a reminder that the full realisation of human rights is not just a future goal but a present necessity. It calls upon individuals, governments, and organisations to actively protect and promote the rights of all people today to secure a just and equitable future for generations to come.

This year’s Human Rights Day also marks the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a landmark document that has inspired societies to embrace equality, dignity, and justice. As we celebrate this milestone, it is crucial to recognise that the UDHR remains a living blueprint for human rights protection, and its principles must be vigorously upheld in the face of emerging challenges. The UDHR guarantees the rights of **ALL** individuals, without discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any other status. However, in Uganda, these fundamental principles are increasingly under threat, especially for marginalised groups such as key populations.

This year’s theme “*Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now*” calls upon us to act swiftly and decisively to defend the rights of all Ugandans, especially those most vulnerable to exclusion and violence. On this occasion of the International Human Rights Day, HRAPF is particularly concerned about the continued criminalisation of sexual and gender minorities in Uganda through the infamous Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA), of 2023. The AHA 2023 has continued to facilitate an environment of extreme violence against individuals on the basis of their real or presumed sexual orientation/ gender identity. In the 18 months since the AHA first came into force, HRAPF has documented a total of 742 cases in which individuals have been targeted for negative treatment based on their real or presumed sexual orientation or gender identity, affecting 944 individuals. Of these, 397 incidents affecting 504 persons have been registered as of November 2024. These acts include evictions from rented premises, acts of physical and sexual violence, threats of violence and arrests for sexuality-related reasons. These actions do not only violate individual rights but also endanger public health, as criminalised populations are forced into the shadows, unable to access essential HIV prevention, treatment, and care services.

As we reflect on the 76 years since the UDHR's adoption, HRAPF reaffirms its commitment to creating a future where human rights are not a privilege for some but a reality for all. Now more than ever, we must prioritise human rights as the cornerstone of peace, development, and social justice in order to build a society where every individual enjoys the highest attainable standard of health, freedom from discrimination, and the protection of the law.

We call upon the government of Uganda, civil society, and all stakeholders to uphold and protect the human rights of all individuals regardless of their identity or background by repealing discriminatory laws, ensuring access to healthcare and justice for marginalised populations including key populations affected by HIV and strengthening human rights education and advocacy to empower individuals to understand, claim, and defend their rights.

*Taking human rights to all*

**Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF) Plot 1 Nsubuga Road, Off  
Ntinda-Kiwatule Road, Ntinda,  
P.O. Box 25603, Kampala - Uganda Tel: +256-414-530683 or +256-312-530683  
Email: [info@hrapf.org](mailto:info@hrapf.org)  
Website: [www.hrapf.org](http://www.hrapf.org)**