

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

14 May 2021

Senator the Hon. Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
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Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

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Dear Minister Payne

RE: UGANDAN MAN DIES AFTER HOMOPHOBIC ATTACK IN KENYAN REFUGEE CAMP

An international effort must be rallied to respond to the ongoing series of homophobic attacks against Ugandan refugees in Kenyan refugee camps.

Chriton “Trinidad” Atuhwera died at Kenyatta National Hospital on 12 April 2021, succumbing to the injuries he sustained after a homophobic attack on Kakuma Refugee Camp almost a month earlier. Chriton Atuhwera was a 22 year old Ugandan man who had fled Kenya after facing homophobic violence, stigma, and discrimination in his home country. Forced to abandon his degree in Business Administration in Uganda after being targeted because of his sexuality, Chriton established himself as a valued leader among queer refugees housed at the Kakuma Refugee Camp.

The death of Chriton Atuhwera serves as a tragic reminder of the significant threat faced by refugees fleeing homophobic violence. In light of this very real threat, it is vital that there are adequate safety measures put in place to protect the rights of all refugees, and accountability measures implemented to ensure consequences for those responsible for homophobic attacks on refugee individuals and communities.

The safety of residents at the Kakuma Refugee Camp is under the responsibility of the camp’s co-managers, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Kenyan government, and the Kenyan Department of Refugee Affairs.

Officials from the UN Refugee Agency have urged Kenyan authorities “to accelerate their investigation into the alleged attack and hold those responsible to account.”

We invite you to join Amnesty International and the UN Refugee Agency in this plea for transparent accountability.

Law enforcement agencies must accelerate their investigations into the events of 15 March 2021, when the LGBTQIA+ community at Kakuma refugee camp were targeted in a fire-bombing that eventually claimed Chriton Atuhwera's life.

We also call for an independent review of the current and proposed UN Refugee Agency's and Refugee Affair Secretariat protection and safety measures accorded to all refugees, especially LGBTQIA+ people. The lapse in safety procedures that left several refugees, including Atuhwera and his partner, Jordan Ayesigye, critically injured must be addressed in a court of law, and camp security measures must improve.

We urge you to **pass on our concerns to the Kenyan and Ugandan authorities.**

The primary goal must remain to eliminate the homophobic legislation and procedures that encourage the continued acts of violence and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community Uganda. We salute the commitment of Kenya to providing a safe haven for all refugees regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity. This commitment allowed Chriton Atuhwera to flee the violence of his home country and form a new community in Kenya.

However, the ongoing acts of violence suffered by the LGBTQIA+ community in Kenyan refugee camps must be addressed, and those responsible must be held accountable.

In short, we urge your government to:

1. Demand an accelerated investigation into the attack on Kakuma Refugee Camp by Kenyan authorities,
2. Call for an independent review into current and proposed UN protection and safety measures accorded to all refugees.

For further information, or to discuss and organise a meeting, please contact Joel MacKay at joel.mackay@amnesty.org.au or 0424 242 112.

Yours sincerely,

Tim O'Connor
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