



THE HON JULIE BISHOP MP

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr Alex Greenwich
Independent Member for Sydney
58 Oxford Street
PADDINGTON NSW 2021

Dear Mr Greenwich

Thank you for your letter of 21 February 2014 requesting information on the Australian Government response to Uganda's anti-homosexuality law.

I wrote to the Ugandan Foreign Minister, the Hon Sam Kahamba Kutesa, on 26 February to express Australia's concern about the law. This letter is on the public record, having been tabled during Senate Estimates on 27 February. In the letter, I said the law undermines a number of fundamental human rights that are enshrined in international human rights instruments to which Uganda is a signatory and reflected in the Ugandan Constitution. I called on Uganda to reconsider the law and exercise the utmost restraint in its enforcement.

Australia's diplomats have also been expressing the Government's concern and disappointment over the law. On 28 February, our High Commissioner in Nairobi (accredited to Kampala) joined other countries in a public statement to the Ugandan media that called on the Ugandan Government to meet its constitutional and international human rights obligations. On 4 March, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) called in the Ugandan High Commissioner to Australia to express Australia's objection to the law.

Australia spoke out against this law when it was a Bill before the Ugandan parliament. Our statement during Uganda's Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights in Geneva in October 2011 specifically recommended the Ugandan Government remove criminal penalties for offences on the basis of sexual orientation.

DFAT has amended its travel advice for Uganda to reflect the new legislation and completed a mass mail-out to registered Australians in Uganda to inform them of the change to the travel advice.

I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Julie Bishop

18 MAR 2014