



(Photo by NASA)

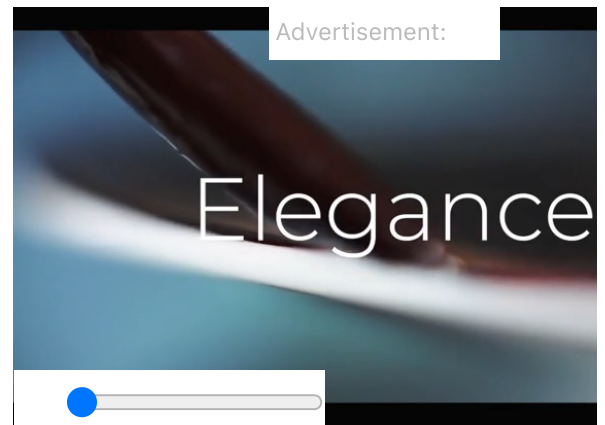


Castration. Banishment. Execution.



This is the fate that a slew of new bills and their proponents in Africa seek for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people: Not only to criminalize adult same-sexual intimacy, but to eradicate sexual and gender diversity—including by executing people. [32 countries in Africa already criminalize consensual same-sex conduct](#). The of laws goes much further, enforcing public silence around LGBTQ people's existence citizens as spies, and making every human rights proponent a potential criminal.

LGBTQ Africans are a fact of life. No law will make them disappear. But by promoting posit queer people's very existence as a problem to be eliminated, and constructing an enemy that could be hiding around any corner, politicians convince the public to acc shockingly repressive legislation.



The ideology underpinning such laws is nothing short of genocidal. Under international law, [genocide](#) is the attempt to destroy a group of people, in whole or in part, including by “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction.” The strict legal definition of genocide only applies to “national, ethnical, racial or religious” groups, but no other term as clearly captures the depravity of legislation that seeks to eliminate people because of their sexuality or gender.

Genocidal ideology underlies Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2023, passed by Parliament on March 21. It attracted international condemnation as possibly the worst anti-LGBTQ law anywhere in the world, imposing the death penalty for some forms of consensual same-sex conduct. That bears repeating: 387 members of Parliament in Uganda voted to subject LGBTQ people to the firing squad for consensual sex. They voted for the death penalty yet again. President Yoweri Museveni [returned the bill](#) to Parliament on April 20, requesting amendments including the removal of the death penalty. The revised bill, passed on April 21, contains only minor changes. Families and landlords will still be forced to turn out LGBTQ people living into the streets. Speaking up for the “normalization” of sexual and gender diversity, or funding work that advances human rights or economic inclusion for LGBTQ people, still leads to a 20-year prison sentence. Prison officials and social welfare agencies will be tasked with “rehabilitating” people convicted under the bill in a form of state-sponsored “conversion therapy” practices. The law maintains a “duty to report” anyone suspected of homosexuality, calling on everyone in Uganda to support the police state by spying on neighbors, family members and coworkers.

Uganda is only the tip of the iceberg. Its brand of virulent homophobia appears to be contagious: In Kenya, [MP](#) George Peter Kaluma submitted the Family Protection Bill to the National Assembly on April 7. The bill was a harsh response to a [Supreme Court](#) v

affirming that the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission had the constitutional right to register and operate as a non-governmental organization. Kenya's proposed bill follows Uganda's example in providing the death penalty for some consensual same-sex acts, prohibiting organizations from "normalizing" homosexuality, and penalizing landlords for renting living quarters to persons in same-sex relationships. It copies and pastes language from Uganda's bill that forces citizens to become thought police: If you "suspect" that someone "intends" to commit an act prohibited by the proposed law and do not report them, you are fined or jailed. It also prohibits "cross-dressing," an attempt to specifically legislate to drive queer people out of existence.

Ghana's Human Sexual Rights and Family Values Act of 2021, currently before Parliament, seems to have provoked less global outrage: It prescribes 3-year prison sentences for same-sex acts rather than life imprisonment or the death penalty. Yet some of its provisions are even more draconian. They criminalize the very existence of diverse identities and orientations: Anyone can be shut behind bars for "holding out" as "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, ally, pansexual and any other diverse sexual or gender identity." Again, an attempt to drive queer people out of existence.

Other proposed anti-homosexuality legislation looms in Francophone countries that have inherited the British colonial heritage of criminalizing so-called unnatural offenses. In Mali, Justice Minister and Keeper of the Seals [Mahamadou Kassogue](#) described homosexuality as an "unnatural relationship," stating that [it would soon be banned](#) and that the Malian "justice system does not accept this practice of homosexuality." In Niger, [President Mohamed Bazoum](#) has made remarks on the intention to introduce a new Penal Code that would criminalize homosexuality.

The tabling of legislation has been accompanied by a barrage of comments from politicians calling for atrocities to be perpetrated against LGBTQ people. [On March 21 during Uganda's Parliamentary Caucus on the Anti-Homosexuality Bill](#), MP Sarah Opendi made a statement stating that the effect that life imprisonment upon conviction for homosexuality is inadequate, and that the most appropriate sentence would be castration. In Tanzania, a senior ruling party member [Mary Chatanda](#) also [called for castration](#) of people in same-sex relationships in March. Like Uganda, Tanzania already has a life sentence on the books for "unnatural offenses" and while no new law is pending, Chatanda's comments were followed by an increase in anti-LGBTQ violence and raised fears that new laws might be tabled. Still within the same month, [Burundi President Evariste Ndayishimiye](#) urged citizens to "curse those who i

homosexuality, because God cannot bear it.” He added that “they must be banished, t pariahs in our country.” Queer people are already denied other fundamental rights in where the [law](#) lists homosexuality as a basis of expelling students from secondary sch thus interfering with the right to access education.

From the death penalty to elimination of safe access to housing, health care and educ calls for castration, banishment and mandatory “conversion therapy” practices, these statements share one characteristic: They seek to destroy LGBTQ lives and livelihood Outright has documented how even before such bills are passed, they contribute to [ir violence](#) by members of the public as well as by law enforcement officials. These bills deadly, and while legislating the elimination of queer people from public existence m legally constitute genocide, it is genocidal thinking. Politicians who call for the execu castration or banishment of queer people should also be aware that they are advocati against humanity. The implementation of such laws could be tantamount to [gender persecution](#) — persecution on the basis of gender as part of a widespread or systemat directed against any civilian population — which is prohibited under the Rome Statut established the International Criminal Court.

Meanwhile, not only queer people but also the general public in countries passing su will see their rights eviscerated through provisions that regulate what opinions they c express, what human rights causes they can support and to whom they can provide go services. Internet users, medical providers, artists, well-wishers, allies and creatives v themselves in conflict with these laws.

Human rights are universal, inherent, inalienable and indivisible. Outright not only recommends that these bills are not affected into law, but also urges all civil society t condemn such moves to curb the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedc name of eliminating LGBTQ existence.

RELATED TOPICS: #AFRICA #BURUNDI #EVARISTE NDAYISHIMIYE #GEORGE PETER KALUMA #GHANA #KI #MAHAMADOU KASSOGUE #MALI #MARY CHATANDA #MOHAMED BAZOUM #NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION #NIGER #OUTRIGHT INTERNATIONAL #SARAH #TANZANIA #UGANDA #YOWERI MUSEVENI