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## **Equality California, SF LGBT Community Center, and Bayard Rustin Coalition to Co-Host Ugandan Bishop's Forum Against "Kill the Gays" Policy in Uganda**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** – On Tuesday, May 25 Equality California, the San Francisco LGBT Community Center, and the Bayard Rustin LGBT Coalition will co-host a special speaking engagement featuring Ugandan Bishop Christopher Senyonjo at the SF LGBT Community Center.

On May 10, 2010, Bishop Senyonjo commenced a U.S. speaking tour to denounce worldwide homophobia and Uganda's "anti-homosexuality bill", which could lead to Senyonjo's arrest for his support of the LGBT community. The tour is principally sponsored by Integrity USA, a 35 year-old LGBT Episcopalian organization.

"Bishop Christopher Senyonjo is an outspoken advocate for human rights, and we are very honored to co-host his visit to San Francisco and the Center," says Rebecca Rolfe, Executive Director of the SF LGBT Center. "He has taken great risks in defense of LGBT people in his country, where lawmakers are considering imposing a death penalty on LGBT people."

"Uganda already allows imprisonment of gay people, but the proposed law would propose more harsh sentencing including the death penalty, life imprisonment, extradition and required reporting by friends and family," reports Dr. Erica Britton, co-chair of the Bayard Rustin LGBT Coalition, an African American LGBT political forum. "This new law was proposed after a series American anti-gay Evangelicals and writers visited Uganda."

Bishop Christopher has paid a high price for his consistent advocacy for LGBT persons. In 2006, he was stripped of all church responsibilities and financial support and he is no longer recognized as a bishop in the Anglican Church of Uganda. Instead of bowing to church intimidation, his courageous response has

been to speak out even more strongly for the human rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people as the tide of persecution in Uganda is rising.

“Bishop Christopher is the Desmond Tutu of Uganda,” says Andrea Shorter, Deputy Director of Marriage and Coalitions at Equality California. “This ‘kill the gays’ policy is an extreme evangelical homophobic driven movement towards genocide. These events place our domestic struggles for LGBT persons’ full equal rights under law into global perspective. The situation in Uganda is literally a matter of life and death for our LGBT brothers and sisters. The Bishop’s urgent call for a human rights response must be heard.”

The co-hosted special speaking engagement with Bishop Christopher Senyonjo will be held at the SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market Street, on Tuesday, May 25, 2010 from 6:30-8pm.

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## **RESOURCES**

Video on Bishop Christopher by Voices of Witness Africa (copies will be available on the tour c/o Rev. Cynthia Black and Integrity USA:

<http://www.voicesofwitness.org/africa/pages/othervoices.html>

“Just Love” exposes the links between homophobic “ex-gay” groups and Uganda:

<http://www.stpaulcathedral.org/just-love-a-statewide-challenge-ex-gay-movement>

Church of Uganda expels Bishop Christopher Senyonjo

<http://www.mask.org.za/article.php?cat=uganda&id=953>

Gay Uganda

<http://gayuganda.blogspot.com/2010/03/bishop-christopher-ssenyonjo.html>

African imports homophobia

<http://www.gbmnews.com/articles/4175/1/African-imports-of-homophobia-from-US-religious-right-increases/Page1.html>

## **SPONSORS**

*Bishop Christopher’s tour is made possible by the generous donations of members of Integrity USA, the Episcopal Dioceses of New Hampshire, Los Angeles and New York; the Domestic Workers Union of America, Equality California, Linda and Rick Miles, Changing Attitude Ireland, Human Rights Campaign and the support of many local organizations and individuals. Donations to the work of Integrity Uganda can be made online to [www.integrityusa](http://www.integrityusa) and directed to The Hopkins Fund.*