The Ugandan Homophobic Plague That Has Spread And Infested Ghana!

August 1, 2011 By Angel Mason

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL OUTCRY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA!
(When will the madness ever end?)

“A vicious immoral insanity has invaded Uganda like a biblical plague, and is now eating away at her soul and festering amongst her people like a virulent malignant disease. Moreover, this plague, if not stopped, excised and exorcised from Ugandan culture, will continue to incite more political oppression, more unjustified murders and more unwarranted and illegal imprisonments. This insanity that I refer to is extreme homophobia, which has been tragically and purposely imported into the country by Right wing Christian evangelical leaders, resulting in disastrous consequences for the people of Uganda. This intolerant mindset has been eagerly and cruelly embraced by Ugandan government officials, who have now codified this extreme form of homophobic genocide into their very country’s constitution...”

These prophetic, compelling words grabbed the attention of the entire international community in an article penned by my personal assistant Asim (Editor, Author and Creative Writer) and I, entitled: AN OPEN LETTER TO THE ARCHITECTS OF THE UGANDAN GAY GENOCIDE. Even though we both hoped these words would never come to fruition, and that somehow the human rights violations being committed against same-gender-loving people would at least taper off, if not stop all together, regretfully, they have not! In fact, on July 20, 2011, Paul Evans Aidoo, the Western Region Minister of Ghana, urged “landlords and tenants” to report suspected homosexuals and suggested gays should be rounded-up in an effort “to get rid of these people in the society.” The comments followed the announcement that 8,000 gay men have registered with AIDS charities in the area. Not long after this information was disclosed, Muslims and Christians began staging anti-gay protests and The Christian Council of Ghana called on Ghanaians not to vote for any politician who believes in the rights of homosexuals.

Before I go any further with this article, I want to state that I know for a fact that there are far more than just 8,000 LGBT people living in Ghana because it is a proven fact statistically that same-gender-loving people who live in areas where they are stigmatized and marginalized, that hundreds if not thousands never disclose their sexual preference to anyone! As an author, Civil Rights Activist and AIDS advocate, I can personally attest to receiving countless emails from African same-gender-loving people who reach out to me all the time. I am often overwhelmed by their numerous requests for advice and reading materials, so I know firsthand that 8,000 is only a

drop in the bucket! I can't tell you how many sleepless nights I've spent agonizing over the plight of my brothers and sisters in Africa because they are so severely oppressed, jailed, abused and even put to death simply because they are gay!This heinous mandate (to round up the gays and kill them) bares a chilling resemblance to the recent proposed Ugandan Gay Genocide and the evil mandate issued by Adolph Hitler and his monstrous regime before the Enlightenment, when Jews (like same-gender-loving people) were hated because they were different and refused to assimilate. The word, "GENOCIDE" seems to be the theme of Africa, known also for the horrific Rwandan holocaust, where an estimated 800,000 people in the small African nation of Rwanda were brutally murdered!

You may recall that not long ago, The Obama administration introduced its first statement calling for the United Nations' top human rights body to combat discrimination against gays and lesbians around the world, implementing a U.S. reversal from years of ambiguity on the subject during the presidency of George W. Bush. "We are very concerned that individuals continue to be killed, arrested and harassed around the world because of their sexual orientation or gender identity," said Suzanne Nossel, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations. "This statement sends a strong message from across the globe that such abuse should not be tolerated. Again, I can only applaud the Obama administration for championing equal rights for all same-gender-loving people across the globe, especially in view of the recently proposed gay genocide in Uganda!"

Both Ghana and Uganda and other surrounding countries' inhumane acts of violence and overt discrimination directed at same-gender-loving people have blinded them to truth and compassion which subsequently has clouded their good judgment and sense of self-preservation. It now also threatens to undo 30 years of progress made against the spread of the virus as previously stated in the aforementioned article. We are already seeing signs of these repercussions, since thousands refuse to seek medical care, fearing that doctors, nurses and practitioners will disclose their sexual preference--something mandated by both Ghanaian and Ugandan's Legislators. The daunting reality is that millions more will die, not only in Ghana, but all throughout Africa needlessly because of fear, ignorance and intolerance.

What I find amazing is that the use of laws to arrest, prosecute or imprison individuals for consensual same-sex relations in private or on the basis of their gender identity or expression is a violation of Ghana's international human rights obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The rights enshrined in these international treaties include the rights to privacy, freedom from discrimination, equal treatment under the law, freedom of expression, association and assembly. The Ghanaian government has obligations under these standards to promote, respect and protect the human rights of its population without distinction or discrimination of any kind, including on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Ghana's own constitution recognizes the right to freedom from discrimination in Article 17. Furthermore, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, ratified by Ghana in 1989, affirms

the equality of all people. Article 2 affirms the right to freedom from discrimination, article 3 guarantees equality before the law and article 26 outlines the duty of all individuals not to discriminate, and to “maintain relations aimed at promoting, safeguarding and reinforcing mutual respect and tolerance.”

It is well known globally that many African nations depend heavily on outside support from other countries because of the severe poverty ravaging the continent. This is why the threat of proposed sanctions against the Uganda government was effective and helped to neutralize and dismantle the "Kill the Gays Bill." These distasteful, inhumane acts grieved the international community to such an extent that humanitarian activists united with an unrelenting resolve, driven by the spirit of justice, vowing never to rest until Uganda was forced to eschew, foreswear, and permanently renounce all efforts to imprison gays for life and/or kill them.

Often, international advocates warn that global pressure could be misconstrued and have an adverse effect. However, even though some caution that international sanctions could be seen as an attempt to impose foreign values on a sovereign country, we cannot sit idly by and do nothing lest we also be found just as guilty as the crazed homophobic abusers, who beat, rob, rape, unjustly imprison, and even murder innocent same-gender-loving people in these oppressive nations. There is no doubt in my mind that despite the possibility of a backlash from African countries who may resist global intervention; international pressure is essential, necessary and needful in order to send a message to reactionary African nations that any such type of horrific genocidal legislation will never be tolerated, nor condoned! Moreover, we, the civilized nations of the world community, must send these purveyors and architects of such cruel inhumane bigotry and genocide a clear strong, unambiguous, and resounding message! A message that proclaims such blatant and overt contempt and willful disregard for the rights and safety of its citizens will always be met with moral outrage, international censure, and financial sanctions, without question or hesitation!

It is important to note that even though American Right Wing Evangelicals were not directly responsible for inspiring this travesty of injustice in Ghana, still, they cannot be completely absolved of responsibility for it, since for decades they have infused African people with a spirit of intolerance and homophobia that has even grieved the heart of the very Creator Himself!!! While many discount the accuracy of the Holy Scriptures and multitudes flee legalistic driven houses of worship (and rightfully so) because of narrow-mindedness, homophobia and gay bashing from the pulpit, still I can’t help but wonder (as a proud same-gender-loving believer) if the following particular scriptures have accurately and historically framed this overt insane expression of hatred, when they foretold of a time when men would kill each other in the name of the Messiah, foolishly thinking that they are doing God a service; a time when the love of men would grow cold and men would be fierce despisers of those that are good, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, and extremely brutal? Even so, I am encouraged because I know that these same scriptures declare that perfect love casts out fear, and that the power of love always triumphs over injustice! While the mills of justice may grind slowly, ultimately justice will prevail if you and I will boldly step up to the plate and take aggressive action! We must never forget the words of Edmund Burke who said, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do

nothing.”

In conclusion, we should all turn our attention towards beautiful New York harbor, to Ellis Island, where stands The Statue of Liberty. This icon of Human Rights continues inspiring, illuminating, and enlightening the world. This wonderful gesture of kindness and symbol of freedom was a gift of friendship from the people of France to the people of the United States and is a universal symbol of freedom and democracy. This is why I call on all democratic nations of the world, the United Nations, Congress and President Obama to emulate and duplicate the heroic and compassionate example of The U.K. and likewise offer political asylum to the persecuted same sex community of Ghana and Uganda. Surely, these famous words inscribed upon the Statue of Liberty which I now quote, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” should include them as well!

By Terry Angel Mason, Global Author and Intl. Columnist

This article is featured in my new book: THEY SAY THAT I AM BROKEN

About Global Author Terry Angel Mason

Terry Angel Mason is an internationally renowned author, columnist, keynote speaker, poet, singer, songwriter, minister, and Civil Rights activist who currently resides is Southern California. He is the author of three popular titles, Love Won’t Let Me Be Silent, They Say That I am Broken, and The Dream Keeper, set to be released in 2012. A revered leader and global change agent, Terry Angel Mason’s mission is to inspire, educate and empower millions around the world, and promote love and acceptance for all people. A highly sought after author and activist, Mason has been featured in The NBJC Newsletter, The Advocate, Frontier Magazine, Broadway World, The Windy City Times Newspaper, New Pittsburgh Courier, New England Enquirer, Our Weekly Magazine, Out Impact, The San Diego Gay and Lesbian News, The San Diego Gay and Lesbian Times, The San Diego Union Tribune, ME Magazine, POZ Magazine, The New Civil Rights Online Magazine, A&U Magazine, Religious Tolerance, Marriage Equality International, Homorazzi, BN&S News Commentary, Real Health Magazine, Q Magazine, MSNBC News Vine, ILGA, Out Military Online Magazine, Proud Parenting Web Magazine, Fuse Magazine, Echelon Magazine, and in many other publications.

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