



# A tribute to David Kato

This tribute is done by colleagues and organizations that worked with David as a celebration of his life.

For those who knew, interacted with and shared the life and times of David, he impacted us in a most profound way. We can't help but remember the passion, courage, energy and swiftness with which David executed his work.

David was a true human rights activist bravely calling for an end to intolerance, violence, discrimination and, hate. All persons are entitled to basic human rights. But in any society, it is easy to erode the rights of marginalized or minority groups, be it on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or other status. Commitment to human rights principles is most tested when we are asked to speak out for those at the edges of society. As a member of the global human rights movement, David was such a voice on behalf of members of the gay community in Uganda who are routinely subject to arbitrary arrests, hate speech, torture, vigilante violence, and persecution. David had a vision of a better Uganda. One of tolerance and inclusion, where all people count equally.

David not only displayed a principled commitment, he also displayed energy, enthusiasm and pride in his human rights work. He consistently challenged intolerance and homophobia. His courage allowed him to take risks where others wouldn't venture. He crisscrossed the country following up on arbitrary arrests, and documented cases of discrimination, torture and mistreatment of persons on the basis of their sexuality. For his efforts to uphold human rights, he was targeted, vilified, and threatened.

Fully aware of the risks his work involved, yet undeterred he was always on hand to respond to the never ending crisis situations confronting his community. He was never one to complain of work overload. He was never cowed by the numerous threats to his life and that of his colleagues. Yet in all this he found it in himself to display gentleness, kindness and a sense of humor.

David who generously walked the extra mile to ease the pain of others, he gave his life selflessly so that others may have. His courage in the face of adversity was admirable. He suffered personal attacks, physical harm, yet his determination not to let fear, hostility and hatred deter him was inspirational. Even when he suffered the momentary loss of energy and burnout, he had an amazing ability to re-energise.

We grieve with the family and friends at this sad moment of the demise of David.

We have a lost a fearless, committed, and cheerful human rights defender.

We will feel the emptiness long after you are gone, but renew our resolve to continue David's struggle for a Uganda without hate, violence, and discrimination.

YOU have left a candle whose light will never be blown off,

We can only use it to light our own

We join the voices of all those condemning David's senseless killing and call for a thorough, independent and impartial investigations into this brutal murder.



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