

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Saturday, August 4, 2012 1:25 AM
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Subject: Fw: Trip Clip (Quinn) Reuters - Clinton hails gay rights activists in wary Uganda

From: Nuland, Victoria J
Sent: Saturday, August 04, 2012 12:46 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Reines, Philippe I; Mills, Cheryl D; Carson, Johnnie; Daniel, Joshua J
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From: PA Clips [mailto:paclips@state.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 04:24 PM
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Subject: Trip Clip (Quinn) Reuters - Clinton hails gay rights activists in wary Uganda

Clinton hails gay rights activists in wary Uganda
Reuters
Friday, August 03, 2012 3:19 PM EDT
By Andrew Quinn

- * Clinton calls Uganda gay rights advocates "an inspiration"
- * Drones may one day be used to hunt Joseph Kony
- * Clinton suggests longtime Uganda leader look to his legacy

(Recasts, adds detail)

KAMPALA, Aug 3 (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Friday praised activists who opposed a tough draft law in Uganda targeting gays and lesbians, calling them an inspiration for others struggling to secure equal rights around the world.

Clinton presented a coalition of Ugandan rights groups with the State Department's 2011 Human Rights Defender Award, a signal to African and Islamic nations that Washington will not backtrack in its fight against the legal and political persecution of homosexuals.

"It is critical for all Ugandans - the government and citizens alike - to speak out against discrimination, harassment, and intimidation of anyone. That's true no matter where they come from, what they believe, or whom they love," Clinton said.

Clinton said she raised the issue in talks on Friday with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, whose government has been accused of allowing political and religious leaders to drum up anti-gay feeling in the deeply conservative East African nation.

"You are a model for others and an inspiration for the world," Clinton said to representatives of the group, formed in

2009 to combat draft legislation which proposed the death penalty for anyone convicted of "aggravated homosexuality".

The bill, which spurred a global outcry, stalled in parliament but has been reintroduced in a watered down form by a member of Museveni's party.

The new version dropped the death sentence, but would still outlaw the "promotion" of gay rights and punish anyone who "funds, sponsors or abets homosexuality".

Clinton's strong expression of support for Uganda's beleaguered gay community came as she continued a seven-nation trip across Africa.

She began Friday with a visit to South Sudan, Africa's newest nation, where she urged the new government in Juba to make a deal with their old rulers in Khartoum to resolve a dispute over oil revenues which has driven both countries to economic crisis.

On Saturday, she will continue on to Kenya, before heading south to Malawi and South Africa.

COULD DRONES HUNT KONY?

In Uganda, Clinton visited a military base where Ugandan and U.S. soldiers showed her the U.S.-made "drone" aircraft now patrolling the skies over Somalia, where an African Union force is seeking to crush al Shabaab Islamist insurgents.

Uganda, a strong U.S. security partner, has contributed the bulk of the Somalia force and Clinton said she foresaw a day when drones might help the United States and Uganda with another of their joint military efforts - the hunt for renegade Ugandan warlord Joseph Kony.

"Now we have to figure out how to look through thick vegetation to find Joseph Kony," Clinton said, after inspecting a drone, a small unmanned aircraft no more than a metre (yard) long and mounted with cameras.

The United States last year dispatched about 100 military advisers to help Uganda and other central African nations track down Kony, whose Lord's Resistance Army has been charged with repeated atrocities against civilians.

But Kony is at large in a vast and often heavily-forested part of Africa, making finding him difficult.

U.S. officials stressed that Clinton's visit to Uganda was aimed at thanking it for its strong security assistance in Somalia and elsewhere.

But the visit highlighted lingering tensions between Washington and Museveni, accused by critics of increasingly authoritarian policies and of bending the constitution to prolong his rule.

Before her meeting with the Ugandan leader, Clinton indicated that she would gently press him to think about a day when he might leave the political stage.

"It is important for leaders to make judgments about how they can best support the institutionalisation of democracy," Clinton told reporters. "It's not about strong men, it's about strong institutions."

(Writing by Andrew Quinn and James Macharia; Editing by Andrew Osborn)

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