

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

[media@familywatchinternational.org](mailto:media@familywatchinternational.org)

**January 4, 2019**

## Uganda

FWI president, Sharon Slater, first visited Africa in 2002, while serving concurrently as the president of FWI and as the president of another organization, United Families International (UFI). Mrs. Slater helped UFI develop and promote an abstinence-based HIV/AIDS prevention program called “Stay Alive” (see [StayAlive.org](http://StayAlive.org)) that reached over two million children and their parents in over 14 African countries. At the time, FWI also was supporting this program. Family Watch president, In 2003 Mrs. Slater traveled to Uganda to co-chair a “Family-Based Care for Orphans” conference that was cosponsored by FWI. Years later, Mrs. Slater was put in contact via email with a Ugandan man named Martin Ssempea who was involved in the youth abstinence movement there. Mr. Ssempea agreed to help coordinate FWI efforts to promote abstinence-based education in Africa, so we listed him on the FWI website as a Ugandan contact.

Because Mr. Ssempea later was involved with Uganda’s new law penalizing homosexual conduct, and he was listed on FWI’s website as a Ugandan contact, a number of reporters made the dishonest leap (without ever contacting us for verification) that Family Watch instigated or promoted Uganda’s so called “kill the gays” bill. This is patently false. In fact, FWI had been contacted to comment on a draft of the law early in the legislative process, but we expressed opposition to it because (i) we oppose violence or harassment against anyone based on their sexual orientation or gender identity; (ii) the law would discourage people with unwanted same-sex attraction from getting help, as they would be too afraid to come forward; and (iii) it would have unfairly punished people for not reporting on the sexual activity of homosexuals.

FWI’s policy has always been to promote compassion for individuals regardless of their sexual orientation and to offer support, not punishment, for individuals who deal with unwanted same-sex attraction. FWI also has publicized the well-documented research regarding the negative health outcomes for those who engage in homosexual behavior or promiscuous heterosexual sexual behavior so people can make more informed choices.

In 2015, while en route to Kenya, Mrs. Slater stopped in Uganda for two days to give presentations regarding the ESA Ministerial Commitment on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). The purpose of her presentation was to expose the graphic nature of CSE programs, which promote sexual pleasure as a right to children at all ages and that promote masturbation to preschoolers, among other things. At no time did Mrs. Slater address Uganda’s laws relating to homosexuality, but rather she promoted protections for the rights of parents to guide the education of their children and encouraged Uganda to enact policies that discourage children from engaging in sexual activity. Mrs. Slater also visited Uganda in 2016 and 2018 to brief government officials on the harms of comprehensive sexuality education programs that sexualize children.

In summary, FWI was never involved in the drafting or promotion of Uganda’s law calling for the so called “kill the gays” bill calling for the death penalty for homosexual sexual abuse of children of minor age, and in fact, we opposed the bill from its genesis for the reasons noted above.