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# Historic ruling: Judge orders anti-gay Scott Lively to stand trial for crimes against humanity

Extremist anti-gay US pastor is accused of engineering the Uganda 'Kill The Gays' bill, saying LGBT people are the 'new Nazis' and recommending Russia's 'gay propaganda' laws

15 AUGUST 2013 | BY JOE MORGAN

For the first time, a federal US judge has ruled a persecution of LGBT people is a crime against humanity.

This sets a precedent ensuring the fundamental human rights of LGBTI people are protected under international law.

It comes as a Ugandan LGBTI advocacy organization filed a lawsuit against prominent US anti-gay extremist Scott Lively.

Accused of helping to play a part in the persecution, arrest and murder of gay people in Uganda, Lively's lawyers requested to dismiss the lawsuit.

Michael Ponsor, the US District Judge in Springfield, Massachusetts, said: 'Widespread, systematic persecution of LGBTI people constitutes a crime against humanity that unquestionably violates international norms.'

'The history and current existence of discrimination against LGBTI people is precisely what qualifies them as a distinct targeted group eligible for protection under international law.

'The fact that a group continues to be vulnerable to widespread, systematic persecution in some parts of the world simply cannot shield one who commits a crime against humanity from liability.'

The lawsuit states Lively collaborated with key Ugandan government officials and religious leaders that allegedly resulted in the introduction of the 'Kill The Gays' bill.



The founder of Abiding Truth Ministries, Lively has made a career of stirring up anti-gay feelings in the USA and across the world.

He co-authored *The Pink Swastika*, which suggests 'homosexuals were the truth inventors of Nazism and the guiding force behind many Nazi atrocities' and the rainbow flag is a symbol of the 'end times'.

In 2007, Lively also toured 50 cities in Russia where he is accused of recommending a ban on 'gay propaganda'.

Frank Mugisha, director of Sexual Minorities Uganda, said: 'Today's ruling is a significant victory for human rights everywhere but most especially for LGBTI Ugandans who are seeking accountability from those orchestrating our persecution.'

While the court battle is certainly not over, it will allow the Ugandan group to seek justice for what they believe Lively has done.

US law allows foreign citizens to sue for violations of international law in US federal courts under the Alien Tort Statute.