



Statement of John Abdallah Wambere on being granted asylum in the United States

September 16, 2014

Today I take pleasure in acknowledging my asylum decision by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. I am truly overwhelmed.

The outcome hasn't been the result of a one man battle, but a battle of many allies who stood and fought it with me. It wouldn't have been possible without the support of GLAD, Hema Sarang-Sieminski, the journalists, media houses, and many well-wishers.

Many people supported me through this process spiritually, mentally and financially while I was struggling to come to terms with trauma, with the reality of seeking asylum, and with the fact that I have been unable to work. I must say that it's still going on until I can integrate myself into this new journey in life.

I think also of my community in Uganda. I have sleepless nights because I want to ensure my community back home doesn't lag behind or fail. While seeking asylum, I have still been able to make sure from afar that the LGBTI community in Uganda still has access to health services and emergency support.

With the help of donors here in the United States and abroad, I have been able to ensure the continued funding of Spectrum Uganda Initiatives Inc. and developed a 800 health line for LGBTI people to call with their health concerns. I will continue to work on these endeavors for my community back home.

I am overwhelmed by the great work that so many have done in every way possible. I call upon you all to continue the fight and support LGBTI people around the world. I call for total support of asylum seekers; there are many out there in this country who are waiting for a decision and who don't know if they will be able to eat or sleep since they are not allowed to work.

I must say that I am blessed, but there are so many other stories out there.

Thank you all, and God Bless America.