

Action Aid leads opposition to GMOs, biosafety law, as Ugandan Parliament vote nears

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Civil Society has accused State Minister for Planning for conniving with Monsanto, an international seed company operating in Uganda to push the 'defective' National Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill, 2012 bill enacted.

The bill seeks. . . to facilitate the safe development and application of modern biotechnology. . . It is also to provide mechanisms to regulate research, development and general release of genetically modified organisms and related matters.

“. . .[T]he youth who were at parliament demonstrating to drive the bill past were mobilized by Bahati (. . . State Minister for Planning). We highly suspect that money has exchanged hands. . .” Joint Energy and Environment Project, advocacy and biodiversity officer, Mr. Kentos Thomas Bakyayita said.

. . . .

Caritas Uganda, public relations officer, Betty Aguti the bill fully accords the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNSCT) powers as the competent authority . . . to approve the development, testing and use of GMOs in Uganda. “UNCST however, has a conflict of interest here because they play a key role in the promotion of GMOs through, for instance, research.”

. . . .

[Pelum Uganda, programme manager, Josephine Akiya] . . . called for the bill to be withdrawn from parliament and a new one which addresses their concerns be drafted.

“We want a law that regulates GMOs not the one that promotes GMOs,” she said.

Press statement presented and signed by:

1. Action Aid Uganda (AAIU)
2. Caritas Uganda
3. JEEP
4. CIDI
5. AFIRD
6. Caritas Kampala
7. FRA
8. Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM Uganda)
9. Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI Uganda)
10. Eastern and South African Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF Uganda)

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