

Pastor Faces Day in Court Over 'Crimes Against Humanity'

On Monday, Liberty Counsel will represent the Rev. Scott Lively, an evangelical pastor who was sued by the foreign group called Sexual Minorities of Uganda (SMUG). The suit heard by the U.S. District Court in Springfield, Mass., alleges that Lively committed "crimes against humanity" in violation of "international law," simply by sharing his biblical views on **homosexuality** during a 2009 visit to Uganda.

The suit is a direct attempt to silence Lively and intimidate other pastors against teaching the biblical position on homosexuality. Mathew Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, said, "This lawsuit against Rev. Scott Lively is a gross attempt to use a vague international law to silence, and eventually criminalize, speech by U.S. citizens on homosexuality and moral issues. This suit should cause everyone to be concerned, because it a direct threat against freedom of speech."

Represented by a George Soros-funded, "civil rights" group, SMUG attempts to sue Lively under the Alien Tort Statute (ATS), which allows certain aliens to sue in the United States for torts committed against them in the United States.

"ATS is not a blanket delegation of lawmaking to the democratically unaccountable international community," Staver said. "Like all American citizens, Rev. Lively enjoys a fundamental **First Amendment** right to engage in nonviolent political discourse anywhere in the world.

"What SMUG cavalierly labels as 'crimes against humanity'—the most heinous of all crimes—is actually nothing more than civil, peaceful, political discourse in the public square on a

subject of great public concern," he continued.

"When SMUG sued Rev. Lively in a Massachusetts federal court, it launched a direct assault on the supremacy of the United States Constitution. Rev. Lively did not check his First Amendment rights at the airport before departing for Uganda," Staver concluded.