



Press Release: November 16, 2010

[Go to Press Releases](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Ruth Abusch-Magder or Diane Tobin

V. 415.386.2604

info@bechollashon.org

www.bechollashon.org

Native-born Rabbi Running for National Parliament in Uganda



San Francisco, November 16, 2010 Rabbi **Gershom Sizomu** is running for National Parliament in Uganda. If elected to parliament Rabbi Sizomu would not only be the first Jew elected to national office in Uganda, but also the first rabbi to be seated in nationally elected government outside of Israel.

Candidate Sizomu sees his political mission as directly connected to his religious vision. As he explains, "It is important that local and national government officials be tolerant and foster a climate of understanding between religious groups." He is running for office with the endorsements of Christian clergy and prominent Ugandan politicians, including The Honorable **Nathan Nandala Mafabi**, Member of Parliament. The campaign of this traditional Jew is being managed by a local Muslim leader.

With the help of Be'chol Lashon, an American based NGO committed to strengthening the Jewish people worldwide, Sizomu came to the US to train as a rabbi. In conjunction with Be'chol Lashon he has been working to provide clean water, mosquito nets and provide medical care with the building of a new health center in Mbale. He is improving life for everyone in his region regardless of religious affiliation or economic means.

Candidate Sizomu's expansive vision of religious tolerance runs counter to the discrimination he experienced growing up during the rule of Idi Amin Dada. Under Amin, Judaism was banned and the native Jewish community, called the Abayudaya, was persecuted.

Having already secured the official endorsement of the Forum for Democratic Change party, Rabbi Sizomu is waiting until November 25th to have his papers officially endorsed by the National Electoral Commission. The election will be held in February 18, 2011.

###