Marriage Vows

February 1, 2000 By Christopher Maletsky

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA,
October 30, 1999—Ultrika Alexandrine Uiras looked as nervous as any bride as she prepared to enter the Evangelic Lutheran Church for her wedding to Hans Kharuchab. But her case of jitters was unique—this bride and groom are the first openly HIV positive couple to tie the knot in this southern Africa country, where an estimated 20 percent of 1.7 million residents have HIV, though only a handful have discussed their status publicly. For the two 30-year-old history-makers, who dubbed their nuptials a “wedding with a difference,” it was a long trip to the altar. Uiras tested positive in 1997, when Kharuchab (her longtime boyfriend) was in prison. After his release, “I thought my family would chase me away when Ultrika told them about our status,” the groom said. But they didn’t, and the highly publicized nuptials drew reps from all major Namibian media outlets, in addition to a documentary-film company. The newlyweds have two children each from earlier relationships and plan to adopt an AIDS orphan, in part to show how Namibians should care for others. “Hans and I decided that we want to be with each other for the rest of our lives,” said the bride. “Why not? Isn’t it everyone’s dream to be married someday?”

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Marriage-Vows-10514-1228