



Prime Minister of Latvia
Mrs. Laimdota Straujuma
36 Brīvības Boulevard
Riga, LV-1520, Latvia

Oslo, 18 March 2015

Regarding EuroPride Riga 2015

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee would like to express our concern about the attempts of the association Antiglobālisti to prevent EuroPride 2015 from taking place in Riga.

Our partner organization and organizer of the event, Association of LGBT and their friends MOZAIKA, have made us aware that this group tries to exploit administrative procedures regarding registering events to claim the venue in question, while also attempting to paint a picture of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans- and intersex persons(LGBTI) as posing a threat to family values.

It is of crucial importance that Latvian authorities ensure that EuroPride 2015 can safely take place in Riga without any obstacles, and take this opportunity to demonstrate a fierce stand on the right to freedom of expression and assembly. We encourage you to express the Government's full commitment to protect the human rights of all citizens regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, and to *EuroPride Riga 2015*.

Holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Latvia does not only carry a responsibility towards its own citizens. Protection of the rights of LGBTI persons within the European Union is far from satisfactory, and it should be no question as to whether the high standards of protection to which all member states have to comply with is indisputable.

Being the hosting city of EuroPride 2014, the citizens of Oslo had a unique experience of seeing their city being a place for celebrating diversity and human rights, and during the events there was also a great deal of enthusiasm about the fact that Latvia would host the next parade. We are also confident of the capacities of MOZAIKA to prepare an equally successful event for the city of Riga.

Sincere regards,

Bjørn Engesland
General Secretary

Mina Skouen
Advisor LGBTI

Csilla Czimbalmos
Project manager EEA Grants NGO funds