



LICENSOR OF EUROPRIDE

**EUROPEAN
PRIDE** ORGANISERS
ASSOCIATION

1 November 2019

Mr Abdülhamit Gül
Minister of Justice
Adalet Bakanligi
06659 ANKARA
Turkey

Dear Minister Gül

Prosecution of participants in METU Pride, May 2019

This year, across Europe, millions of people have participated in peaceful Pride events celebrating diversity, inclusion and human rights. Whilst a very small number have faced counter-protests, in almost all cases these counter-protests have been contained and dealt with by police in order to protect the Pride participants.

We were all shocked to see the way in which police attacked participants at the ninth METU Pride on 10th May 2019, arresting eighteen participants and one academic. It is concerning that all nineteen are to face trial at the Ankara Criminal Court of First Instance No 39 on 12th November 2019, charged with contravening the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations (No. 2911).

It cannot hold that a Council of Europe member state that has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights attempts to restrict its citizens' fundamental human rights in this way. No-one should be prosecuted for lawfully exercising their freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. No ban by a regional court can restrict rights enshrined in the Convention.

International attention is now focused on this case, including from civil society organisations, media, and the diplomatic community. We join with Amnesty International and call on you to drop all charges against the 19 individuals. Furthermore, we urge you to ensure that future Pride events can take place in the peaceful manner that we expect across the whole of Europe.

Yours faithfully

KRISTINE GARINA
President

European Pride Organisers Association aisbl

Rue du Marché au Charbon 42, 1000 Brussels, Belgium | epoa.eu | info@europride.info
Registered in Belgium as an international non-profit association, number 0836.217.697