

URGENT ACTION

2013 BELGRADE PRIDE MARCH IN JEOPARDY

There are concerns that the 2013 Belgrade Pride march in Serbia to be held on 28 September may be banned. This would deny the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

The 2013 Belgrade Pride march is scheduled to take place on 28 September. Despite international pressure, including from several EU member states, the 2011 and 2012 Pride marches were cancelled, after Prime Minister Dačić, who is also the Minister of Interior, had claimed that the police did not have the capacity to ensure adequate security conditions in the face of "serious security threats". The Serbian authorities have yet to clarify whether the 2013 Belgrade Pride march will be allowed to go ahead and what security safeguards have been put in place to ensure that it does.

The right to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly of LGBTI activists and individuals in Serbia will be violated if the Belgrade Pride march is banned.

Please write immediately in Serbian or your own language:

- Asking the authorities to ensure that the 2013 Belgrade Pride march takes place on 28 September and that the rights to freedom of expression and assembly of LGBTI individuals and activists are fully respected by providing police protection for the participants and organizers;
- Calling on the Ministry of Interior to take all necessary measures to protect the Pride march and to ensure the cooperation of the relevant authorities with the organizers of the Belgrade Pride to enable the Pride march to take place in 2013 without obstruction or hindrance;
- Urging the Prime Minister to ensure that the government publicly condemns all attacks on, or threats to, the organizers of, or participants in the Pride march, and that all involved are given adequate police protection;
- Demanding that the authorities conduct prompt, impartial and effective investigations into any and all attacks or threats against the Pride march organizers or participants, or any other members of the LGBTI population, and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 SEPTEMBER 2013 TO:

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

Ivica Dačić
Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2
11000
Belgrade
Serbia
Email: info@mup.gov.rs
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

First Deputy Prime Minister

Aleksandar Vučić
Birčaninova 5
11000
Belgrade
Serbia
Fax: +381 11 3006062
Email: info@mod.gov.rs
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Serbian authorities banned the Belgrade Pride march in 2011 and 2012 on account of reported security threats and on the basis of the violent counter-demonstrations during the 2010 Pride march. The Serbian authorities provided adequate protection to Pride participants in 2010, by deploying 5,000 police officers to protect the participants from the 6,000 counter-demonstrators.

Amnesty International had first-hand experience of the Belgrade Pride march in 2010, and is therefore well-aware of the problems faced at that time by the Ministry of Interior in addressing the security challenges posed by the threats and actions of right wing groups. However, of those arrested in 2010, few of those alleged to be responsible for the violence or for issuing threats to the organizers and supporters of the Pride have been brought to justice. Even fewer investigations and prosecutions took place following the banning of the 2011 and 2012 Pride, on the grounds of reported security threats.

Amnesty International acknowledges that Serbia has made some significant improvements in guaranteeing the right to non-discrimination against the LGBTI community over the past year, including by prohibiting hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation and gender identity in the Criminal Code.

However, Amnesty International fears that the Serbian authorities may refuse permission for the planned Pride march or again ban it. Amnesty International considers that the Serbian government cannot reduce respect for freedom of assembly of LGBTI groups and individuals solely to a security issue. This would not only be in violation of international standards to which Serbia is a state party, but would contradict the ruling of the Serbian Constitutional Court earlier this year, that in prohibiting the 2012 Belgrade Pride, the government acted unconstitutionally by denying the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, effective legal remedy, and legal protection to LGBTI people.

Name: Organizers of the Belgrade Pride march

Gender m/f: both

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