

AI Index: PRE 01/374/2013
23 July 2013

Lithuania court gives green light for Baltic Pride march

Lithuania's Supreme Administrative Court today dealt a blow against discrimination by upholding the right of Baltic Pride organizers to hold their third annual march in the centre of the capital Vilnius on 27 July, Amnesty International said.

Rejecting an appeal by Vilnius city authorities – who had attempted to block the event from the city centre – the Court underlined that the right to freedom of assembly must be ensured for minorities, including those with “unpopular” views.

“Lithuania's highest administrative court has spoken and this resounding ruling deals a blow against discrimination by the Vilnius city authorities and upholds the right to freedom of assembly for Lithuania's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community,” said John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Programme Director at Amnesty International.

“Now the Vilnius city authorities must abide by this and the initial court ruling, and allow the third annual Baltic Pride march to take place, without hindrance and with adequate protection.”

City authorities had appealed against the previous ruling of the Vilnius Regional Administrative Court in favour of the Pride organizers, which affirmed that the location of the march in the city centre would ensure a proper balance of individual rights and public interest.