

Dear Minister Mr Efkan Ala and Governor Mr Vasip Şahin,

We hereby address you in order to express our strong and explicit support for the 24th Istanbul Pride announced to take place on 26th of June. We strongly regret the decision taken by the Governorate of Istanbul on the 17th of June to ban this year's Istanbul Trans Pride March on June 19th and Istanbul LGBTI March on June 26th.

The right to freedom of assembly is a constitutional right granted to all citizens of Turkey. We therefore call on the Turkish authorities to respect and protect the right to freedom of assembly by revoking the decision to ban this year's pride parades and to ensure the safety of all participants.

Ms Terry Reintke and Mr Daniele Viotti, Members of the European Parliament, among many other Members of Parliament from Europe as well as other politicians, will be in Istanbul to support LGBTI activists.

We are deeply concerned about the fundamental rights of citizens of Turkey with regards to their right to freedom of assembly as well as their wellbeing and safety. We consider the yearly Pride March as a core element for the protection and defence of human rights and dignity.

Yours sincerely,