

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

30 April 2013

Ukraine: Amnesty International ready to support first LGBTI Kyiv Pride March

Amnesty International said today that it is ready to support Ukraine's first LGBTI Pride March, following an announcement by the "KyivPride2013" organizing committee that the event will take place in the centre of Kyiv on 25 May this year.

The organization called on the Ukrainian authorities to guarantee that the event is allowed to take place without hindrance and with adequate police protection, in line with its obligations to guarantee the right to freedom of expression and assembly under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

"Ukraine's obligation to protect freedom of assembly extends beyond simply allowing the march to take place somewhere in Kyiv. The authorities must ensure the safety of the demonstrators, who must be allowed to march in a central location as requested by the organisers" said Tanya Mazur, Director of Amnesty International Ukraine.

A Pride March planned last year in Kyiv was cancelled after city authorities put pressure on the organizers to hold the march in a remote location on the bank of the river Dnipro, and did not provide adequate police protection in the face of violent counter-demonstrators.

Following the Pride organisers' press conference explaining the reasons to cancel the march, some activists were pepper-sprayed and assaulted by violent counter-demonstrators. This year LGBTI activists face the same threat of violence.

"The authorities must allow Kyiv Pride participants to peacefully demonstrate without discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.", said Mazur

Amnesty International conducts a European campaign against discrimination in Europe and supports LGBTI prides worldwide namely in countries where they face threats of violence or are banned by the authorities.