

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE POSITION OF LGBTIQ POPULATION IN SERBIA FOR 2009

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Belgrade, 2010*

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Belgrade, 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE POSITION OF LGBTIQ POPULATION IN SERBIA FOR 2009

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Pride March 2009 "It's Time for Equality" - Crhology of events</i>	5
<i>Media</i>	10
<i>Institutions</i>	13
<i>Discrimination and violence</i>	14
<i>Other Activities of Labris in 2009</i>	15
<i>Info centre</i>	15
<i>Education and lobbying</i>	16
<i>Legal Counseling</i>	17
<i>Activities folloqing the banning of the Pride March</i>	17
<i>Conclusions and Recommendations</i>	17

APPENDICES

<i>Appendix 1: "STOP the subversion of the Anti-discrimination Law"</i>	19
<i>Appendix 2: Press release by the Coalition against Discrimination regarding the death threats directed at the State Secretary Marko Karadžić</i>	21
<i>Appendix 3: Declaration Let there be the Pride Parade, signed by 89 organisations</i>	22
<i>Appendix 4: Resolution of the Ministry of the Interior Police Directorate</i>	23
<i>Appendix 5: The principles of mutual cooperation and coordinated activities of LGBTIQ human rights organizations</i>	24

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE POSITION OF LGBTIQ POPULATION IN SERBIA FOR 2009

INTRODUCTION

The most important event in 2009 related to the position of LGBTIQ population in Serbia is certainly the organisation of the Pride March, also known as Belgrade Pride 2009. As Labris - lesbian human rights organisation was a member of the Pride March Organising Committee from its inception to its very end, the Annual report on the position of LGBTIQ population in Serbia for 2009 will primarily address the events related to the Pride March.

Pride March 2009, under the slogan *It's time for equality*, was scheduled to be held at 11 o'clock in the morning of September 20th, on the square (Plato) in front of the Faculty of Philosophy, and was banned mere 24 hours before it was scheduled to begin. At 11 o'clock in the morning of September 19th, during an impromptu meeting the government offices, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Mirko Cvetković, issued a resolution of the Ministry of the Interior by which the event was relocated to a provincial part of Belgrade, Ušće. The resolution, signed by

the Chef of Police Milorad Veljović¹, stated that the event is being relocated due to "extremely high risk levels". This represented a de facto ban of the Pride March by prohibiting the organisers to hold the event at a location previously registered with the police, by preventing them to file a complaint, as well as by failing to provide the organisers with the information on how the relocation would improve the safety of the event.

PRIDE MARCH 2009 "IT'S TIME FOR EQUALITY" CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

MARCH - Starting with the premise that the problems the LGBT population in Serbia is faces on a daily basis must be made visible, and the need to start solving these problems through the pressure on the state institutions and organs, the civil sector, and the public opinion, organisations Gay Straight Alliance and Labris - lesbian human rights organisation signed a "Memorandum on cooperation" on March 31st, 2009, with a purpose of organising a Pride March in 2009.

1 Appendix 4

The signatories of this memorandum then formed the Organising Committee (OC) of the Pride March and coordinated the Action Plan regarding the organisation of this manifestation. Following the adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law, GSA publishes the results of the poll about the public opinion regarding the LGBT population, thus giving the first indication that the Pride March will be held. On this occasion, the State Secretary at the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Marko Karadžić, publicly states that this Ministry will support the Pride March.

APRIL - Labris - lesbian human rights organisation and Gay Straight Alliance issue a statement regarding the commencement of the preparatory activities for the Pride March and are soon joined by several LGBTIQ and human rights organisations, as well as individual activists (Safe Pulse of Youth, Queer Belgrade, Queeria centre, Dušan Kosanović, Milica Đorđević, Mina Pejić).

MAY - Glitches start appearing within the Organising Committee by the end of May. After the leader of the GSA, Boris Miličević, issued a statement informing the public that the Pride March will be held on August 23rd, thus coinciding with Madonna's concert, the Organising Committee decided to exclude GSA from further participation in the Pride March preparation. The Committee stated that this act seriously jeopardised the safety of the Pride participants and organisers, and deemed Miličević's statement as "irresponsible". Precisely at the time the speculations regarding the Pride March date arose, the first open threats appeared in the media: "We'll definitely bust them. We sent a letter to the Synod asking them to intercede and stop the bloodshed. If thousands of Serbs come out on the streets and run into a bunch of faggots and politicians, anything can happen. They are calling for violence themselves by openly performing their Satanist rituals on the streets of our capital," was a comment made by Miša Vacić from the 1389 movement, published in the daily *Alo* at the end of May.

JUNE - On June 5th, 2009, the Organising Committee hired several experts from the Faculty of Security, led by D. Zoran Dragišić, to develop a security assessment study, assessing the general security, potential threats to the event, and the manner in which

the event date, the proposed location and the event itself could be jeopardized, as well as to suggest preventive methods needed to secure and protect the event. The Pride March was assessed as a high risk event.

The Organising Committee attempted to initiate a meeting with the Belgrade Police Department at this time, but received a response from the PD stating that there is no basis for further contact as the event had not yet been registered with the police.

JULY - Following this reply, the event was registered at the Police Department on July 9th, 2009 and scheduled for August 20th 2009 on the Plato in front of the Faculty of Philosophy with a march through the Vase Čarapića street, over the Trg Republike square, and back to Plato through Knez Mihajlova street. The event was registered by the members of Queeria - centre for promotion of the culture of nonviolence and equality. The following day, Slobodan Vukolić, the chief of Belgrade Police Department, was notified. He asked for the meeting to be postponed until the following week, due to his fatigue caused by the Universiade held in Belgrade at that time. Meanwhile, on July 17th, 2009, a memorandum was sent to Milorad Veljović, the Director of Police, asking him to schedule a meeting to discuss the security of the event, but no written reply was received. On Tuesday, July 21st, 2009, the statement was issued informing the general public of the date of Pride march - September 20th, 2009. In the next few days, the facades of numerous buildings are covered with graffiti such as "Death to faggots" and "Stop the gay parade", signed by the Patriotic Movement *Obraz* and the supporters of the football club *Partizan*, after which several representatives of the Organising Committee met with the city ombudswoman Dušanka Gaćeša. Graffiti on governmental buildings were soon painted over, but not the ones on the privately owned buildings, only to be followed by the new wave of calls for lynch on the walls of Belgrade and other cities in Serbia.

On July 13th, 2009, the Organising Committee attended the Zagreb Pride as per the invitation of its organisers. A meeting was held to discuss the experiences of the Zagreb Pride organisers, during which the representatives of the Belgrade Pride Organising Committee were given a detailed insight into the organisation of an identical event within a relatively similar regional context,

with a specific focus on the most vulnerable points of the event - arrival and departure of the participants, as well as the cooperation with the police. EXIT Festival joins the Pride March organising process which was a significant step for the event as EXIT offered to provide assistance with marketing, drawing the media attention to the event, as well as the general production of the event.

AUGUST - The first meeting with the Chief of Police of the Republic of Serbia, Mladen Kuribak, Deputy Chief of Police of the Republic of Serbia, Zoran Alimpić, and Aleksandar Vasiljević was held on August 8th, 2009. At this meeting, the organisers were assured that the police will adequately secure the event. Mladen Kuribak also read out loud the Section 5 of the Law of Assembly, *Official Gazette RS*, No. 51/92, which states that the organiser of the event is responsible for the order within the assembly, while the security of the participants and their belongings, maintenance of the public peace and order, traffic security and other activities related to the security of the public assembly are the responsibilities of the Ministry of the Interior. The conclusion of this meeting was that the representatives of the OC and the police need to have daily contact. Kuribak named Aleksandar Vasiljević as the contact person for the OC. The organising Committee contacted Aleksandar Vasiljević on August 15th, 2009 which was, coincidentally, the first day of Vasiljević's holiday, so Golub Gačević from the Ministry of the Interior took over as the contact person. The security assessment study by the experts from the Faculty of Security was officially forwarded by the members of the OC to the Ministry of the Interior on August 17th, 2009. The event was once again registered with the police on August 18th, 2009, for the same date and location, this time by the eight members of the OC. Queeria centre leaves the Organising Committee on August 31st, 2009, a mere three weeks before the Pride March was scheduled to occur. They issued a public statement, justifying their withdrawal with the "lack of cultural and artistic content."

SEPTEMBER - September 7th, 2009. A memorandum was sent to the police detailing the plan of action regarding the organisation and security of the Pride March, and requesting the Ministry of the Interior to give their opinion regarding this plan. An official written reply was never received.

September 8th, 2009. The Chief of Police of the Republic of Serbia, Mladen Kuribak, called the creator of the security assessment study, Dr. Zoran Dragišić. Dr. Dragišić in turn called the OC and informed them that, during the call from general Kuribak, Dragišić was asked to convince the OC to postpone the event.

September 10th, 2009. At the initiative by the OC, a meeting was organised with the representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, Golub Gačević and Aleksandar Vasiljević. No tangible results or conclusions were reached by this meeting. The general message from the police officials to the OC was that it is still too early to discuss the operative problems regarding the Pride March organisation, and that the Ministry is still assessing and strategizing the situation.

September 11th, 2009. A meeting was held with the Chief of the Bureau for Public Peace and Order, Milan Stanić, and the Chief of Belgrade Police Department, Slobodan Vukolić. During this meeting, Stanić and Vukolić were informed of the foreign citizens who will be attending the Pride March, how many of them are coming, where they were coming from, and where they will stay while in Belgrade. A mobile assembly was registered with the Municipality of Stari Grad (Old Town) which is in charge of the communal domain. The assembly was also registered with the City Secretariat for Transport, due to a specific reorganisation of traffic during the event.

September 12th, 2009. Video clips promoting the Pride March were premiered on TV B92. Several public figures participated in the making of these clips, among them Nikola Đuričko, Bebi Dol, Mirjana Karanović, Milutin Petrović, Hristina Popović, Dragan Bjelogrić, Kebra, and Gorčin Stojanović. Family Walk, organized by the Serbian Council Dveri, was held on this day and was supported by other public figures. The organisers of this event claimed that the Family Walk was not a response to the Pride March, but to this day it remains unclear what other purpose could there have been for this event. Mladen Obradović of the Patriotic Movement Obraz sent the following message to the viewers of TV B92: "Everyone knows what will happen if they try to have that parade of shame and the organisers of that event should take full

responsibility of what will happen. If they think they can go unpunished for sticking their finger in the eye of the entire nation, they are mistaken, we're waiting for them."

September 13th, 2009. In the TV Show "Utisak nedelje" ("Impression of the week") on TV B92, Chief Assistant of Police of the Republic of Serbia, Željko Nikač, states that he is not excluding the possibility of banning the Pride March, should the security risks show that it is necessary to do so.

September 14th, 2009. At his initiative, a meeting was held with the Minister for the Human and Minority Rights, Svetozar Čiplić, and Mladen Kuribak, Slobodan Vukolić, Golub Gačević, as well as several other representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and Gendarmerie whose names are unknown to the members of the OC. During this meeting, the OC was notified that the Pride March can be held as a stationary assembly at Plato in front of the Faculty of Philosophy, but the mobile segment of the March must be cancelled as it is too risky. Mladen Kuribak again repeatedly read the Section 5 of the Law of Assembly to the representatives of the OC. The representatives of the police repeatedly insisted that the organisers shall take full responsibility for everything that might happen in the city during the day of the Pride March, in terms of violence and any possible material damage. The OC expressed their dissatisfaction with the police cooperation, as they were still not given any concrete responses regarding the security plans and proposals they gave to the police. When asked to provide a concrete solution to the most sensitive question - that of the departure from the event, for which the OC proposed to hire several buses which would drive people to "safe" locations in the city - the police representatives laughed out loud and stated that they should simply disperse in whichever direction they see fit.

September 15th, 2009. Daily newspapers "Politika" and "Večernje Novosti" report that "the assessment of the Serbian security services is that, on September 20th, the right-wing organisations, parent associations and football fans will unite and stop the Pride Parade using violence, unless the organisers cancel the event." These dailies also print texts detailing the modes and locations of

the probable attacks on the Pride marchers, with the purpose of intimidating the Pride organisers and the general public. The OC holds a meeting with the Minister of the Police, Ivica Dačić, who assures them that the event will be adequately protected.

September 16th, 2009. The public prosecutor Slobodan Radovanović classified the statements, threats, and announcements of violence as "polemic tones", and stated that he sees no need to act upon them. At the same time, the members of right-wing organisations wreak havoc on the forums and social networks, Pride support Facebook groups, and wherever else they get a chance to, quite imaginatively and in great detail describing what they will do to "the fags", what weapons they will shoot out of, where they will throw Molotov cocktails from, whom they will slice and dice, and what will happen to thus "sliced fags". The Minister of the Police, Ivica Dačić, repeats his statement daily, saying that, due to the extremely high risk levels, the Pride March will be secured through presence of several thousand policemen. However, a careful listener could not miss the minister's extreme nervousness and convoluted remarks directed at the rest of the Government, still silent regarding the Pride March.

September 17th, 2009. City Secretariat for Transport issues an Approval so that specific reorganisation of traffic can be applied with the assistance of the Ministry of the Interior, if certain conditions are met. Additionally, it is stated that the applicant (the Organising Committee) "shall be responsible for all resulting expenses, as well as for the increased expenses of other organisations and citizens, resulting from this event." On the same day, the last press conference before the Pride March was held, and the route of the march was published. Also, a new memorandum was sent to Golub Gačević regarding the additional security measures and containing the questions about the manner in which the most vulnerable segments of the event will be secured. The memorandum also demanded that they provide necessary information and answers to the OC's inquiries. This memorandum also received no official replies in writing. A new meeting was held with Mladen Kuribak, Slobodan Vukolić, and Zoran Alimpić, who asked the OC for the maps of the March route and the hourly schedule of the

events. The Ministry of the Interior was yet again asked to give concrete answers to the questions and plans previously presented by the OC. During this meeting, the representatives of the OC were shown videos of cars running into police cordons, as an example of something that might happen. Also mentioned were the possibilities of the hooligans paragliding over the event and throwing sharp object onto people, which could simply not be prevented by the Ministry of the Interior, as well as the possibility of bombs and guns being used within the assembly. A message arrives from the Minister for Human and Minority Rights, Svetozar Čiplić, that the event should be relocated to Ušće, as it is safer.

September 18th, 2009. A memorandum, in which the OC expressed their worries about the lack of operative plans regarding the protection of the most vulnerable aspects of the event, was sent to Mladen Kuribak. The answers to three most important questions were requested once again: whether and in what manner will the police control the participants of the Pride March upon their arrival to the Plato, whether suspicious individuals will be removed from the event after the consultation with the organisers and event monitors, and whether and in what manner will the police provide assistance with the proposed methods of participants' arrival to and departure from the event? The OC was again not given the answers to these questions. A meeting was held with Mladen Kuribak, Zoran Alimpić, Slobodan Vukolić and Aleksandar Vasiljević, again with the repeated reading of the Section 5 of the Law of Assembly. The representatives of the Police stated that they cannot prevent individuals who might attack the participants of the Pride March from within to enter the event, in which case the full responsibility for any type of violence would fall on the organisers. Soon after, Mladen Kuribak left the office to take a phone call. He returned shortly and stated that he was just presented with the "political decision from the top tier of the government" that the Pride March is to be relocated to Ušće and that it will be adequately protected only if it is held there. He also said that, if they accept the relocation, all the requests the OC made regarding the protection of the most vulnerable aspects of the March will be complied with. The OC met with Milan Stanić regarding the protection of foreign citizens around 10 o'clock that evening.

September 19th, 2009. The OC met with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mirko Cvetković, around 10 o'clock in the morning. The Prime Minister restated the proposition of the event relocation to Ušće, avoiding to explain how is it that the Pride March would be adequately protected there. He then presented the members of the OC with an official resolution, signed by the Police Director Milorad Veljović, in which it was stated, for the first time, that the Ministry of the Internal decided to relocate the Pride March to Ušće or to the Plato in front of a government building Palata Srbije, due to "extremely high risk levels." The Pride March was thus indirectly banned.

OCTOBER - Five members of the former Organising Committee submitted an official complaint to the Constitutional Court of Republic of Serbia regarding the banning of the Pride March² which was scheduled to be held on September 20th, 2009. The complaint was filed in order to challenge the resolution from the Police Directorate of the Ministry of the Internal, ordering the organisers to relocate the event from Belgrade's centre to Ušće, as well as due to serious oversight and failure by the state officials to prevent the violence against the Pride March participants and ensure the implementation of the basic human right to free public assembly. Despite the fact that, soon after submitting the complaint to the Constitutional Court of Republic of Serbia, the plaintiffs also submitted an application to the European Court of Human Rights, as there are no procedural obstacles in doing so, a chance was given to domestic judiciary to amend this injustice. The applicants are represented by the Belgrade Centre for Human rights in these legal procedures.

DECEMBER - Five members of the former Organising Committee submitted an application to the European Court of Human Rights regarding the banning of the Pride March.

2 The complaint to the Constitutional Court of Republic of Serbia can be found at:

http://belgradepride.rs/images/stories/vesti_razno/ustavna_zalba.pdf

MEDIA

While the second half of 2009 was entirely focused on the Pride March and its accompanying activities, it can be argued that the adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law marked the first half of the year.

If it can be said that the media were not the most avid ally of LGBT human rights organisations during the organising process of the Pride March, seeing how they published hate speech and threats coming from the ranks of fascist and right-wing organisations, we can similarly argue that, in addition to the non-governmental organisations for human rights, the media played a key role in applying pressure on the government representatives to adopt the Anti-discrimination Law. In the period surrounding the withdrawal of the Law from the parliamentary procedure, following an intervention by the representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church whose explanation was that the traditional religious communities are not in accordance with the legislative provisions which prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, a forceful reaction from the general public was needed in order for the Anti-discrimination Law to be adopted in its entirety.

The media offensive regarding the withdrawal of the Anti-discrimination Law from the parliamentary procedure lasted for a month and a half, and over 200 texts of various sizes and under different columns were published on this topic in Serbian daily press.

Most of the texts regarding the withdrawal of the Law from the parliamentary procedure had a neutral context and the representatives of the non-governmental sector as one of their sources. However, some of the media used derogatory terminology and discriminating speech, especially when discussing LGBT population. A daily newspaper *Pravda* held primate in this reporting methodology. On the other hand, newspapers *Borba* and *Danas* were big allies of the civic society organisations.

The general impression is that, without the media, the struggle for reinstating the Anti-discrimination Law to the parliamentary

agenda would not end well for the minority groups and the human rights in Serbia in general. Often the media which published the hate speech directed toward the LGBT population did so in the form of readers' letters, forgetting, or perhaps not, that regardless of who authored a certain text, regardless of whether they are a journalist, a collocutor, an interviewee, or a reader, publishing hate speech is forbidden by the existing Public Information Law.

The following two texts are direct examples of published hate speech and discriminating attitudes toward the LGBT population.

Pravda, March 17th, 2009. Page: 22

ALL SERBIAN TELEVISION STATIONS ARE PROPAGATING THE GAYS

Author: V. MILADINOVIĆ

Making a fuss about the rights of the homosexuals is just blowing the wind in their sails

Let me just begin by saying that I am not one of those who believe in violent methods of "solving" the dispute with homosexuals about "violations" of their rights. I'm for everyone doing whatever they want, but in the privacy of their home. Whether he will have sex with his boyfriend, or whether she will sleep with her girlfriend, whether they are going to live together - that is their business. Just as it is my business whether I am going to live in a marital or extramarital union with my better half.

Also, I'd like to say that I am acquainted with the examples of homosexuality dating back to ancient and not so ancient history. I also know that a good many intellectuals, politicians, doctors, painters, actors, singers (whose songs I am listening right now, while I'm writing this) - are gay. I don't have a problem with that either. What I am curious about though is - why is so much fuss being made about the adoption of one law in the Parliament of Serbia, when it is well known (and minister Ljajić confirmed it) that the marriage in Serbia, according to the Constitution, implies a heterosexual relationship. Therefore, if the gay population wants to get married - they will have to do that in some other country.

Dear journalists, don't you think that by giving so much space to the discussion about violations of gay human rights, you are actually working in favour of implementation of their "rights". Just as the national television has been doing for more than 25 years now. How, many will wonder.

Well, it's simple: remember the "Dynasty" and poor Blake's misunderstood son? Or "Beverly Hills 90210" and those who "batted for the same team"? Let's not mention the fact that we candidly laughed at "Will and Grace" in which the leading character is - gay! Shall we continue? The worst thing is that these shows - according to our "pillars of morality" - are totally acceptable for those who are 12 and over - the age at which kids are starting to sexually mature. Why can't they try kissing a dude, then, when their favourite TV star can do it? Besides, there is no violence in these shows and we are fighting against violence, right? All of that, m'dears, is a well tested scenario, applied numerous times in numerous countries. It's not a western import, because it's well known that there are homosexuals everywhere. The only question is how transparent that phenomenon is. You'll see, it's only a matter of time before Gay Straight Alliance appears on our election ballots. I can already see Mr. Boris Miličević in the Parliament in a couple of years, even though those who are well versed in all things political claim that we have had homosexuals in the Parliament for years now, and even in the Government of Serbia. And that's not new. Au contraire, it's just that those individuals used to hide behind their macho guises. Irrelevant. I'm only curious to know why is it that we are going to allow the gay parade to be held in Belgrade, under the sponsorship of the state. Isn't there a better way for this country to spend the money it wants to spend on that day? I know, the gay lobby will say that they are not asking Serbia for the money for organising this, but it is a fact that even providing security to such an event - costs money. It will take loads of police presence out in the streets to protect the homosexuals from the furious far-rightists and traditionalists. If we are really fighting for protection of those whose rights are being violated, couldn't we give the money allotted for the logistics of that assembly to the Roma people, or the homeless, for example?

V. Miladinović
Belgrade

Večernje Novosti, March 3rd, 2009. Page: 4

FREEDOM OF RELIGION VIOLATED

Author: P.V.

The proposed Anti-discrimination Law is a direct violation of the freedom of religion and conscience of the faithful citizens, as well as a violation of the free functioning of the churches and religious communities, guaranteed by the laws and the Constitution - states the letter from the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the president of the parliament, Slavica Đukić-Dejanović, the Government, and the Ministry for Minority and Human Rights. The Church critiques the implementations of categories of gender identity (transexuality) and sexual orientation (homosexuality) as specific grounds for discrimination. The Church states that it is crucial to keep in mind esteemed scientific authorities who maintain that the expression of gender identity through transexuality is a form of a mental disturbance, as well as those who have determined that there is no scientific proof that homosexuality is an inherent trait.

Despite the Public Information Law which prohibits publishing information which instigates violence, hatred, and discrimination based on sexual orientation, we can say that certain media served as a main channel for propagation of threats and calls for the lynching of the Pride March participants, issued by the members of violent groups. Certainly memorable are the texts published on September 15th, 2009 in the dailies Politika and Večernje Novosti, stating that *"the assessment of the Serbian security services is that, on September 20th, the right-wing organisations, parent associations and football fans will unite and stop the Pride Parade using violence, unless the organisers cancel the event,"* in addition to publishing texts detailing the modes and locations of the probable attacks on the Pride marchers, with the purpose of intimidating the Pride organisers and the general public.

In order to provide you with a clearer picture regarding the infringement of all professional and ethical journalistic principles, we bring you excerpts from several texts in which the members of fascist organisations announced what they will be doing on September 20th, as well as sensationalist headings which contributed

to the general feeling of freedom in expressing threats and violence without the fear from sanctions.

Texts:

Kurir, September 1st, 2009. Page: 5

PANIC

Author. N. BULATOVIĆ

...

On the other hand, Miša Vacić, the spokesman for the "1389" movement, advises Dragan Đilas to look up to the mayor of Moscow who prevented the gay parade.

- It is evident that the general security is at peril and I don't think anyone needs bloodshed, to turn Belgrade into Belfast or Beirut. In case the gay parade does happen, the people will bust it. It will turn into a "punch parade". The Bible tells us how the Sodom and Gomorrah fared due to pederasty and similar diseases. They were burned in a blaze - Vacić states.

Ivan Ivanović, the president of the association "Naši" (Ours) from Aranđelovac, says that the Serbian Orthodox Church will organise a religious procession in Belgrade.

- If that happens, we will join the religious procession, if not, we'll try to gather as many people as we can in order to stop the parade - says Ivanović.

Mladen Obradović, the president of "Obraz", is only interested in "defending the Serbdom and the values of a healthy society."

- Large numbers of people will come from all Serb-populated regions. Our message to faggots is clear: We are waiting for you - Obradović repeats.

...

Alo! July 21st, 2009. Page:3

GAY PARADE IN SEPTEMBER

Author: E.A.

Miša Vacić from the 1389 movement says it still might be too early, but that a contra meeting might be organised. Many patriotic

groups, football fans, and representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church would participate.

- It's excellent that it will be in September. Everyone will be back from the holidays, kids will start school, and the football season begins as well - he says, adding that it's not about tolerance, but about "the latest humiliation of our people." - The attitude of many policemen was that "we must protect the embassies, we won't protect the fags." Nine years ago they also had orders, and we all know what happened then! - Vacić says, stressing that, as far as they are concerned, the parade will certainly not be held, and that the support given to the Pride Parade by the LSV and LDP only shows that marginal groups are always supported by the marginal political parties, and not the parties elected by the people.

Headings:

Kurir, July 15th, 2009.

THE FAG ERADICATES KOSOVO!

Pravda, July 23rd, 2009.

SERBIA DOES NOT WANT THE PARADE OF FAGS

Alo!, August 24th, 2009.

FAGGOTS ARE GIVEN, VETERAN FIGHTERS ARE BLOCKED

Pravda, September 10th, 2009.

GAY PARADE - IMPOSITION OF A NEW IDEOLOGY IN SERBIA

Alo!, September 12th, 2009.

AFTER FAGGOTS, A PARADE FOR SODOMITES AND NECROPHILIACS!

Glas Javnosti, September 13th, 2009.

LIFE IS ON OUR SIDE

Citizens of Belgrade showed mass support for the yesterday's "Family Walk"

Pravda, September 15th, 2009.

HOMOSEXUALITY IS NOT A EUROPEAN VALUE

Večernje Novosti, September 16th, 2009.

PARTY FOR THE NON-DEVIANTS

Movement 1389 registered a gathering prior to the "Pride Parade".

Serbian people's movement 1389 reported yesterday to the police a party which is to be held on the Plato in front of the Faculty of Philosophy, ending minutes before the "Pride Parade" is scheduled to begin.

Alo!, September 18th, 2009.

THE PEOPLE PAY 390.000 EURO FOR THE GAY PARADE

INSTITUTIONS

When it comes to the institutions, it is evident that the State showed tremendous amounts of inability and incompetence in dealing with the hooligans and violators who, despite being known to the police for years and despite having numerous charges brought against them, remain unpunished and their cases remain unprocessed. After September 20th, the fact that the representatives of the government, through their meek, unconvincing statements and extensive periods of silence when it came to the LGBTIQ population, contributed to the general feeling of freedom in expressing threats and violence without the fear from sanctions - became irrefutable. Even though the same groups who attacked the Belgrade Pride Parade in 2001 now openly threatened the Pride March 2009 and literally announced violent acts - stating that they will repeat the bloodshed from eight years ago - one person needed to die and Pride Parade needed to be banned in order for the Government to do something about the well known hooligans and violent individuals. It is true that a certain degree of cooperation existed with the representatives from the government institutions during the Pride March preparations. However, bonafide support for the Pride Parade came only from the State Secretary at the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Marko Karadžić, and the offices of Republic and Regional Ombud-

spersons. It is also true that certain government representatives used every opportunity to distance themselves from this protest which actuality represented the implementation of the basic human right - the freedom of public assembly.

In fact, a pattern became evident whenever a government representative was asked to comment on Belgrade Pride. It inevitably consisted of the "I don't share their beliefs or values" interlude - which in itself is irrelevant, seeing that sexual orientation is neither a belief nor value in a way that democracy, respecting the differences, or protection of human rights are - and a statement that they *still support* the right to a peaceful assembly of the LGBTIQ people, despite the extremely high risks.

Also, while the communication between the Organising Committee and the representatives of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of the Interior, and the Ombudsman was present and constant, the Mayor of Belgrade was the only representative of the Government who refused to even meet with the Belgrade Pride Organising Committee. His statement that "sexual orientation should be kept in the privacy of your own four walls" was used by the OC as the basis for a request to meet, but for two whole months the Mayor would not deign to reply.

In this overview of the responses and attitudes of the institutional representatives, we must not omit to mention the inappropriate statement of the Republic prosecutor Slobodan Radovanović, who commented on the threats from the right-wing and fascist organisations directed at the Pride March participants:

"We can't react to what the newspapers are writing, we can react only if there are consequences of all of that. I think that, as far as the media goes, I don't really see much in that, we have opposing views, those are just polemic tones. Let's not comment on that now, but let's create the preconditions so all of this can end well."³

This statement represents a pattern in the behaviour of the government officials regarding the protection of the March - they state that all citizens should enjoy equal protection, yet, at the same time, they do not take any measures to ensure that protection. The Republic prosecutor's statement is nonsensical even if viewed from the purely legal standpoint. It is an absolute fallacy

³ "Right-wing threats before the March", B92, September 16th, 2009: Republic prosecutor, Mr. Slobodan Radovanović

that the police and prosecution can act upon threats of violence only if “there are consequences of all of that”. This type of statement fulfils the important postulates of the felonious threat to personal safety from Section 138 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia, which sees the threat in itself as enough and does not require additional consequences. On the other hand, the statement given by the highest organ of the prosecution in Republic of Serbia regarding the “polemic tones” and “opposing views” sends a very clear and dangerous message - a message that one group of people wishing to gather peacefully, and another group of people wanting to violently prevent that gathering from happening, are actually leading a sort of a legitimate public dialogue or debate, instead of sending a message that threats of violence should not be allowed in a democratic society. The atmosphere in which calls for lynching of an entire segment of the population are considered a polemic culminated in the murder of Brice Taton, a French citizen, which lead to banning the Pride March.

Thirty-five members of the right-wing and fascist organisations Serbian people’s movement 1389 and Obraz, including the leaders of these organisations Miša Vacić and Mladen Obradović, were arrested on the day Pride March was scheduled to be held. It is interesting that they were arrested for public gathering, despite the police prohibition. Vacić and Obradović spent 30 days in jail. During that time, the police worked on gathering evidence for multiple felonies and criminal acts. Representatives of the Bureau for Public Peace and Order of the Belgrade Police Department notified Labris that, after banning of the Pride March, they have been working on gathering the evidence which mainly consisted of the texts published in the media and materials the police already had in their possession (!), after which they filed a criminal charge with the Republic prosecution against Mladen Obradović (Obraz), based on Section 387 of the Criminal Code: Racial and other discrimination; against Miša Vacić, based on Section 348 of the Criminal Code: Unlawful possession of weapons and explosive substances; and against Radojko Ljubičić (1389) and Ivan Ivanović (association Naši from Aranđelovac), whose cases the prosecution was already working on, according to the police.

Additionally, after the Pride March was banned, the Republic prosecutor Slobodan Radovanović publically called for banning

these organisations, and soon after, this initiative was forwarded to the Serbian Constitutional Court. Keeping in mind that this institution takes years to examine its cases, it is clear that 1389 and Obraz are far from being banned.

Another important event for LGBTIQ population in 2009 was the previously mentioned adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law. One day before the voting on this law should have taken place, the Government of the Republic of Serbia withdrew it from the parliamentary procedure following an intervention from the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Church requested the adjustment of Section 18 of this law, concerning the religious belief, as well as removal of Section 21 which prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation. During the 22 days needed for the Law to be reinstated in the parliamentary procedure and voted upon, Coalition against Discrimination⁴ put forth a tremendous effort in lobbying and advocacy for the adoption of this law in its original form. In addition to over 400 proposed amendments to the Anti-discrimination Law, after its reinstatement to the parliamentary procedure we frequently had a chance to hear hate speech directed at the LGBTIQ population from the parliamentary dais, as well as through the media. Finally, the Anti-discrimination Law was adopted on March 26th, 2009, with a vote of 127 for and 59 against.

DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE

Speaking of fascist and right-wing organisations, it is important to state that the Organising Committee was aware of the risks involved in holding the Pride March from the very beginning of the planning process. The same violent groups who participated in bashing the first Pride Parade in Belgrade on June 30th, 2001 are still, more or less, present in our society. Therefore, it was logical to expect an increase in violence, threats, and intimidation, as is the case whenever there is an increase in the visibility of LGBTIQ people.

The first wave of threats to the Pride March organisers followed the announcement of the Pride March date. All threats received via Facebook, text messages, phone calls, as well as through

interceptions of the OC members on the street, have been reported to the police.⁵

At the same time, at the end of July, the facades of numerous buildings in Belgrade are covered with graffiti such as “Death to faggots” and “Stop the gay parade”, signed by the Patriotic Movement Obraz and the supporters of the football club Partizan. Graffiti on governmental buildings were soon painted over (but not the ones on the privately owned buildings), only to be followed by the new wave of calls for lynch on the walls of Belgrade and other cities in Serbia.

During the following two months and up to September 20th, the members of Obraz, Serbian people’s movement 1389, and the association Naši from Aranđelovac threatened with violence through the media, stating that they will repeat the events from 2001. All of these statements, which were an obvious example of hate speech, were reported to the police who further processed these reports. One of the actions which arose from banning of the Pride March was the mass arrest of the members of right-wing and fascist organisations, as well the motion to ban these organisations.

In addition to these threats surrounding the Pride March, it is important to mention the outcome of the penal proceedings following the attack on the participants of Queer Belgrade festival in 2008. This is one of the first criminal procedures launched primarily because of the violence against LGBT people in Serbia. The police arrested two attackers at the scene, both the members of Obraz, and charged them with Section 334, subsection 2 of the Criminal Code: Violent behaviour, and with felonious infliction of bodily harm from Section 121 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia. In addition to criminal charges by the police, Labris also raised criminal charges for racial and other discrimination, according to Section 387 of the Criminal Code, as this violent act was motivated by homophobia and discrimination based on sexual orientation. The latter criminal charge was deemed unfounded by the prosecution in March 2009, and two victims of this attack filed private

⁵ Some of the threats we received via text-messages were: *You’ll get beaten up, faggot pigs!; Your efforts are in vain! There will be bloodshed, no matter how many policemen or private security you hire, now we are ready for everything, we’re waiting...; Fuck your sick family, get the fuck out of Serbia!*

criminal charges based on the Section 387 of the Criminal Code: Racial and other discrimination. To this day, we are not aware of the outcome of those charges, and the process is being further stalled by the reform of the judicial system of the Republic of Serbia.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF LABRIS IN 2009

Info centre

Sixth seminar for lesbians and women of sexual orientation different than heterosexual, titled “The L Word”, was held in May 2009. This seminar had the largest number of participants thus far; 28 participants came from six Serbian cities, and two came from Macedonia and Germany, which again reflected the international character of these seminars. Even though it was our initial idea to invite only the women/people who previously attended one of “The L word” seminars, during the organising process it was decided to open the seminar up for new participants as well. This seminar was held in Kovačica, nearby Pančevo, and covered topics previously discussed on Labris’ seminars, as well as new topics. In addition to the seminar ad as a part of the educational activities for lesbians and non-heterosexual women, two workshops on lesbian existence and identities were held in the second half of the year, within the cycle of workshops titled *Conversations about taboos*. Additionally, a book by Dr. Zorica Mršević, *Toward a Democratic Society - Same-Sex Families*, was promoted in Labris.

The results of the study on the needs of lesbian population from 2008, carried out by Nataša Milenković⁶ for Labris, point to a serious problem of lesbians who live outside of Belgrade, as they face difficulties in meeting other lesbians and receiving support from LGBTIQ organisations. This is why we decided to visit different towns in Serbia in years to come, and try to contact as many lesbians as possible, in order to inform them of Labris’ activities and the possibilities of subsequent cooperation with them. As a part of this decision, activists from Labris visited Zrenjanin and Šabac in 2009, where they had an opportunity to meet with a total of 22 women from these cities. During these visits, we saw

⁶ http://labris.org.rs/images/stories/seminari_pozivi/izvestaj_istrazivanje%20potreba.pdf

the way they live, learned of their biggest problems, how they socialise and contact other lesbians, etc. We were also able to inform them of Labris' activities and the ways in which they can join our programs. During these visits, we realized the importance of our efforts to contact as many lesbians as possible by us going to them, instead of waiting for them to come to us.

Education and lobbying

With the support of Astraea Lesbian foundation for Justice and Swedish Helsinki Committee, Labris - lesbian human rights organisation, in collaboration with Psihokod from Belgrade and Gayten LGBT - Centre for promotion of LGBT human rights, organised the fourth seminar on the topic of "Same-sex orientation in counselling and therapy". The seminar was held from April 8th to April 11th in Belgrade for the experts providing counselling and therapy (psychiatrists, psychologists, pedagogues, and social workers), with the goal to inform them about LGBT topics, to increase their sensibility, to better the collaboration following the seminar, to create a network of LGBT-friendly experts, etc. During the four days of this seminar, workshops were held on the topics of identity and same-sex orientation, everyday life of lesbians in Serbia, trans-existence, LGBT human rights, and social mechanisms of homophobia and prejudices.

In November and December, two representatives from Labris participated in seminars regarding gender equality, organised for the employees of the Republic Ombudsman and the employees of Regional Ombudsman, respectively. During these seminars, representatives of Labris introduced the participants to the most frequent problems LGBT population is faced with and shared their experiences regarding the Pride March organising process. They also covered the good practice of cooperation with these institutions, which protect and promote human rights in Serbia.

A representative of Labris held three workshops for the students of the *New Policy School*. This school is a part of the program by the *Youth Initiative for Human Rights* for young activists, members of political parties, and young journalists. Workshops on LGBT rights and homophobia were held in Belgrade, Niš, and Novi Sad, for a total of 39 participants.

Similar to the previous years, Labris marked the International day against homophobia on May 17th, this time in collaboration with Queeria centre. We marked this day with an informal press conference in the *Cinema cafe*. For this occasion, Labris, in collaboration with the producer Frame, made a short documentary regarding our work and the position of lesbians and gays in Serbia.

In February 2009, Labris received a reply from the Republican Radio Broadcasting Agency (RRA) regarding the three complaints for hate speech against lesbian and gay populations, and women. The RRA deemed all three complaints as unfounded. Labris filed these complaints to the RRA in 2007 as a result to instances of hate speech against lesbian and gay population broadcast on TV Pink and RTS. As there was no reply from the RRA, Labris filed a complaint to the Republic Ombudsperson in December 2008, as the Section 14.2 of the Law on Broadcasting obliges the RRA to respond to a plaintiff even if it determines that a complaint is unfounded. Additionally, Section 14.3 of this law obliges the RRA to take measures against the broadcaster should it determine that the complaint is reasonable and valid. After the reaction from the Republic Ombudsperson, the RRA responded to Labris, determining that the complaints are unfounded. They did, however, state that there were negative comments⁷ about LGBT persons and women in the mentioned TV shows (*Ključ (Key)* on RTS and TV Shows *Piramida* and *Bravo show* on TV Pink), but that taking any measures against the broadcasters would represent a violation of freedom of speech.

⁷ The following are examples of the comments from these TV shows - Jovica Stojanović, sociologist, TV show *Ključ* on RTS: "Love for me is when I meet a woman who is your average Serbian cow and turn her into a goddess. I'm full of myself then."

Ivana Žigon, actress, TV show *Piramida* on TV Pink: "So, human rights, it seems, are no longer protecting that which is dignified and human in a person, instead we keep hearing, I don't know, about the rights of some pathological and deviant phenomena. Say, homosexual rights, rights of... I don't know whether there were as many drug addicts before Europe and the West started lecturing us on how we should live."

Legal counselling

Legal counselling for LGBTIQ persons provided by Labris - lesbian human rights organisation is currently the only of its kind in Serbia and was formed in April 2008. Five persons have addressed Labris' legal counselling in 2009 with different questions/problems: obtaining information related to asylum-seeking in Holland on the basis of lesbian sexual orientation, a physical attack on a lesbian in Zrenjanin, settlement of the property rights among gay partners, seeking information regarding the legal rights and social position of trans persons in a small village in Serbia. Mr. M.Z., a father of a transgender minor T.Z who was arrested in Germany under the suspicion of participating in a robbery, addressed Labris in November. Mr. M.Z. contacted Labris seeking support as his child was in a very poor mental state. According to him, T.Z. was being held in inhumane conditions. After meeting with M.Z., Labris addressed the Serbian Consulate in Hamburg, asking the following from the Serbian Consulate: to visit T.Z. in prison as soon as possible and to inspect the conditions in this prison; to make sure that the way T.Z. is treated in prison is in accordance with applicable German laws and regulations, and to ensure that T.Z. is not suffering from discrimination and/or violence based on gender identity. The Serbian Consul in Hamburg was very cooperative. He sent a letter to the prison, and visited T.Z., after which he demanded regular updates regarding T.Z.'s condition from the prison.

ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING THE BANNING OF PRIDE MARCH

After the banning of Pride March 2009, Labris initiated a creation of the LGBT Platform - a document which will define the minimum of understanding among LGBT groups. This initiative was a result of numerous disagreements between LGBTIQ organisations and activists during the Pride March organising process. Due to the inability to achieve the minimum of understanding with all LGBT organisations, Labris signed the *Principles of mutual cooperation and coordinated activities of LGBTIQ human rights organizations*⁸, together with Gayten LGBT, Rainbow Association from Šabac, and Safe Pulse of Youth. The signing of this document represents an

important step for LGBT activism in Serbia. After the signing of the Principles, these four organisations applied to the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights with a proposal for a project titled "Dialogue and cooperation with institutional representatives regarding the position of LGBTIQ population in Serbia". We have not received any response from the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights by the date this report was written, even though the Minister keeps publicly stating that he is cooperating with the organisations from the civic sector who advocate for LGBTIQ rights. Regardless of the outcome of this project proposal, it is important to highlight the important fact that LGBTIQ organisations are working in collaboration. This fact represents a good basis for the future collective efforts on implementation of LGBTIQ human rights in Serbia.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no doubt that the importance of the year 2009 is multifarious when it comes to the LGBTIQ rights, most importantly because the LGBTIQ rights were in the focus of public political activity throughout the entire year, first with the adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law, as well as with the Pride March 2009 organising process. And while the LGBTIQ population is receiving more support than ever before from numerous public persons and leading domestic and foreign organisations on one side, on the other side, the institutional representatives are showing a complete lack of readiness and willingness to work on the promotion and advancement of LGBTIQ human rights. Their support remains only declarative, while the honest support comes only through the work of certain sensibilized individuals.

Recommendations to the state institutions for the improvement of the position of LGBTIQ population are as follows:

- Enable LGBTIQ persons to practice the right to freedom of assembly and ensure the safety of event participants;
- Process all cases of violence against LGBTIQ persons, as well as the cases of threats and intimidation directed at activists fighting for LGBTIQ rights, which includes finding and prosecuting the perpetrators of these crimes;

- Promote the right to a sexual orientation as one of the basic human rights;
- Develop programs which aim to sensitise the employees of governmental institutions regarding the question of sexual orientation and LGBTIQ human rights, with a primary focus on the employees of the judicial institutions, prosecution, police, and health services;
- Introduce hate crime into the existing Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia;
- Adopt a legislature necessary for recognition and implementation of the human rights of transsexual and transgender persons;
- Distribute information necessary for providing adequate support to transsexual and transgender people to all relevant establishments and institutions.

APPENDIX 1

Press release by the Coalition against Discrimination and its partner organisations regarding the withdrawal of the Anti-discrimination Law from the Parliamentary Procedure

“STOP THE SUBVERSION OF THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW”

March 11th, 2009

Coalition against Discrimination and its partner organisations from all over Serbia strongly condemn the most recent attempt of subversion of the Proposal of the Anti-discrimination Law by the “traditional churches and religious communities” and demand from the Government of the Republic of Serbia to immediately reinstate the unadulterated legislative document into the Parliamentary Procedure of legislative adoption by the delegates of the National Parliament.

The representatives of the Coalition against Discrimination had an opportunity to make an inquiry into the demands for changes of the Proposal of the Anti-discrimination Law, received by the Government of the Republic of Serbia on Tuesday, March 10th 2009. These demands are inadmissible in their entirety and demonstrate that the real target of their attack is not the gay and lesbian community, but the legislative document itself, i.e. the principle of equality of all those living in our society. Complying with these demands would drastically alter the essence of the Law and would make a complete nonsense out of the legislative efforts.

The list of “the objections to the Law” is an extensive one, with three differentiated groups of demands. One group of demands targets the provisions regarding the different forms of discrimination, starting with the principle of equal rights and freedoms, through demands of removing the regulation of prohibition of forming alliances with discriminating purposes, to negation of several serious methods of discrimination such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, i.e. discrimination against individual specifically targeted groups (based on race, religious beliefs, language, political determination, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability).

The second group of demands targets an entire section of the Law concerning the special cases of discrimination. After attacking the Section 21 and claims that the Law should not contain directives which prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation, interventions on a string of other special cases of discrimination are proposed. Additionally, the removal of an entire chapter dealing with discrimination against specific categories is requested using the following wording:

“Erase Part III (Sect. 15-27), keep only the general prohibition of enforced declaration regarding the personal traits, unless it is justified and/or prescribed by law.”

APPENDIX 1

Finally, the third group of demands consists of the attempts to encumber the procedure of legal protection against discrimination by erasing those rules whose sole purpose is to significantly facilitate the efforts of the plaintiff to obtain legal protection. It is important to mention that these rules represent one of the main connecting points of the Proposal of the Anti-discrimination Law to the anti-discriminatory directives of the European Union and that, without their direct implementation into the domestic legal system, the coordination of two legal systems in this domain is impossible to imagine, even though it remains one of the most important preconditions for addition of Serbia to the White Schengen list.

Therefore, Coalition against Discrimination and its partner organisations demand from the Government of the Republic of Serbia to ratify the Proposal of the Anti-discrimination Law in its unadulterated form during the first upcoming session and to promptly direct it to the National Parliament for legislative adoption by the delegates. We also demand from the president of National Parliament to reinstate the Proposal of the Anti-discrimination Law to the Parliamentary agenda without further ado. We demand from the national delegates to adopt the Proposal unanimously. In this way, the damage created by the irresponsible withdrawal of the Law Proposal would be minimised. Our mutual stand is that the adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law would represent a monument of the legal culture all citizens of Serbia could be proud of, and one which would reflect a strong democratic and pro-European orientation.

Members of the Coalition against Discrimination are Centre for Improvement of Legal Studies, Swedish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Gay Straight Alliance, Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Labris - Lesbian Human Rights Organisation, Anti-trafficking Centre, Committees for Human Rights in Serbia (CHRIS Network), Association of Students with Disabilities, Initiative for inclusion "BigLittle", and Gayten LGBT.

APPENDIX 2

Press release by the Coalition against Discrimination regarding the death threats directed at the State Secretary Marko Karadžić

IMMEDIATELY ARREST THOSE WHO ARE THREATENING THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY FOR HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS

Belgrade, April 16th 2009

Following the most recent death threats directed at the State Secretary of the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, Marko, Karadžić, the Coalition against Discrimination demands from the police and prosecution to immediately locate and arrest the perpetrators of this crime.

Additionally, we expect from the Minister for Human and Minority Rights, Svetozar Čiplić, as well as from the entire Government of the Republic of Serbia, to immediately condemn these attacks on the member of the Government who has been relentlessly fighting for equal rights of all Serbian citizens in previous months.

We believe it is unacceptable that not one government official issued a statement following these repeated serious threats, violation of human rights, and attack on those who publicly support the human rights of all Serbian citizens and can serve as an example to all government representatives.

The silence of the Government of the Republic of Serbia regarding threats of death directed at a State Secretary is worrisome. This forces us to second-guess the state protection of “regular people” and wonder what any individual citizen can expect if the state does not react to the calls for lynching of a government representative.

We emphasize the fact that Marko Karadžić is further exposed to threats due to his “support of the Anti-discrimination Law” and “the right to protest of homosexual individuals”, as stated in the letter.

We remind that several weeks ago, the organisation “Nacionalni stroj” (“National front”) whose members are known to the police, the judicial system and the general public, posted stickers all over Novi Sad with threatening messages and hate speech directed at homosexual people. The perpetrators of this crime were not apprehended, either. Similar threats, directed at the members of minority groups and government representatives who support the equal human rights of all citizens, can be seen on web sites of the organisations “Obraz”, “Stormfront”, “Naši” and “Serbian Nationalists”, again failing to garner any reaction from the police.

Therefore, we agree with the statement that this is an attack on all those who are fighting for equal human rights in Serbia, and we demand that the accountable institutions to react immediately and arrest those who incite violence and hate.

APPENDIX 3

DECLARATION LET THERE BE THE PRIDE PARADE, SIGNED BY 89 ORGANISATIONS

We the undersigned -

Welcome the adoption of the Anti-discrimination Law as a sign of readiness of the state institutions to lay down the foundations for the protection of rights of minority groups in this society, while being aware that the state and each of us individually can and must positively influence the decrease in discrimination and the building of a tolerant society respectful of universal human rights and values.

We do not accept the possibility that in Serbia, in 2009 or ever again, the human rights of any citizen are denied or withheld simply because of the fact that they are different in shape or form.

We do not consent to the fact that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons in Serbia are insulted, discriminated against and are constant targets of hatred and violence.

We support LGBT persons in their persistent struggle for their rights and equality in society, and we support the legitimate presentation of their goals through various activities, public debates, peaceful protests and gatherings.

At a public event in 2009, citizens of Serbia, regardless of their sexual orientation, will express their legitimate pursuit in their struggle for obtaining complete equality in the society.

We wish to remind that year 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of the global LGBT movement which grew out of peaceful, female and anti-racist movement.

We would also like to remind that the highest legal documents of the Republic of Serbia and the international conventions and charters our country has signed, fully affirm the right to a public assembly and prohibit hate-related violence.

We shall no longer condone homophobia and excuses!

Belgrade Pride will be held in 2009 and we are proudly supporting this event as an important and courageous step of our fellow citizens, LGBT persons, their friends, family, cousins and colleagues in the fight for equality and freedom.

Let there be Pride – Belgrade Pride!

APPENDIX 4**Republic of Serbia
Ministry of the Interior
Police Directorate**

03 Number: 8988/09-20
19.09.2009 Belgrade

Based on Section 2. of the Law of Assembly, and regarding the public assembly and mobile public assembly titled "Pride March", scheduled for 20.09.2009, between 11,00 and 14,00 hours at the Plato next to the Faculty of Philosophy, the director of the police issues the:

RESOLUTION

To the organiser of the public assembly titled "Pride March" regarding the relocation, i.e. this assembly is to be held in the Park Prijateljstva (Ušće), Novi Beograd or at the Plato in front of the Palata Srbije, according to the Resolution on determination of the location suitable for public assemblies in Belgrade ("Official Gazette of Belgrade", No. 13/97).

EXPOSITION

The organiser of the "Pride March" registered a public assembly and a mobile public assembly with the Police Station Stari Grad of the Belgrade Police Department on 31.08.2008, with the following route: - Vasina street - Trg Republike - Knez Mihajlova street - Plato of the Faculty of Philosophy.

Taken the total security in the city of Belgrade into consideration, as well as being mindful of the announcements of multiple informal groups and citizens' associations that they will attempt to violently stop this event at any cost, it is determined the significant security risks and threats are too high for this event to be held in the centre of the city.

Based on the security assessment by the Ministry of the Interior and other security services of the Republic of Serbia, it is deemed that holding this event at the abovementioned location carries an extremely high security risk and disturbances of public peace and order might occur in a large scope throughout the city of Belgrade, jeopardising the safety, lives and health of the participants of this event, as well as the security of the people, property of the state, public buildings, personal and material security of the citizens and traffic security.

In accordance with the text above, the resolution was made and presented in this text.

Resolution to be delivered to:

- The organiser of the public event
- Belgrade Police Department

Police Director
Milorad Veljović
(signature)

APPENDIX 5

THE PRINCIPLES OF MUTUAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATED ACTIVITIES OF LGBTIQ HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Rainbow Association, Gayten LGBT, Labris - lesbian human right organisation and SPY - Safe Pulse of Youth

Document **The principles of mutual cooperation and coordinated activities of LGBTIQ human rights organizations** (further referred to as 'The Principles'), was developed as a result of the need to improve the current practice of work and mutual activities of LGBTIQ human rights organisations in Serbia by defining the minimum of the need for mutual activities and public appearance. The aim is to establish a more powerful mutual action on the issues significant for the human rights of LGBTIQ population through communication with various interested parties.

The document is a result of the analysis whose objective was to ascertain the essential needs and expectations of the LGBTIQ organisations from their mutual activities in Serbian public. This would, in turn, present a basis for creation of the future appropriate model of mutual work and cooperation.

The basic purpose and essence of the Principles is to define mutual, coordinated activities of the organisations which signed the document, in order to improve the position of LGBTIQ population in Serbia. Coordinated activities imply the work based on the mission, vision, and values defined by the Principles themselves.

By establishing 'The Principles', a framework and basis for laying the foundations of clear rules of conduct of the organisations signees and individuals – members of the organisations working on solving the problems of LGBTIQ population, are established. The aim is also to improve the quality of life for the LGBTIQ population, and to prevent conflict of interests between the organisations as well as other potential forms of conflict.

The mission of the mutual activities of LGBT organisations includes the following: work on eradication of all forms of violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ individuals, work on the affirmation of the rights of LGBTIQ population through creation of the appropriate legal framework which protects and recognizes LGBTIQ population. Additionally, creation of safe social surroundings in which LGBTIQ individuals are equal citizens of the state is also an imperative.

The vision of the organisations, signees of The Principles, is a society in which the people will be equal before the law and able to live with dignity and with complete protection and promotion of their basic human rights persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and other differences.

APPENDIX 5

The Principles as a strategic document and a network of cooperation between LGBTIQ organisations in Serbia, are founded on the following mutually accepted values:

- Non-hierarchy and indivisibility in view of respect towards human rights and freedoms
- Equal right for expression of differences for all people
- The absence of any kind of violence and discrimination
- Anti-fascism
- Feminism
- Nonviolent expression of attitudes and values
- Support for, and solidarity with, all sensitive and marginalized social groups
- Active participation in social life of the community

Gayten LGBT - Centre for promotion of sexual minority rights

Rainbow Association

Spy - Safe pulse of youth

Labris – organisation for lesbian human rights