

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Ivica Dacic
Minister of Interior
Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 2
11000 Beograd
Serbia

3 November 2011
Our ref: B1109

Dear Minister,

Ban of Belgrade Pride 2011

We are writing to express Amnesty International's concern at the cancellation of the Belgrade Pride that was scheduled for 2 October 2011, and to urge you to ensure that measures are taken to ensure that the Belgrade Pride (including a march and associated events) can take place in 2012.

Amnesty International notes that under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), to which Serbia is a state party, the Serbian Government has an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people (LGBTI) to non-discrimination and freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. We consider that banning a Pride march violates these obligations.

While aware of the degree and intensity of violent threats against the organisers and participants of the Belgrade Pride, and the violence initiated by extremist groups during the 2010 Pride, we consider that the prohibition of a Pride march through the centre of Belgrade gives a green light to those who seek to attack and violate the rights of LGBTI people in Serbia. It also demonstrates the government's failure to fulfil its legal obligations to protect those who face harassment, violence and intimidation on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

We urge the Serbian Government to take all necessary measures to ensure that the rights of LGBTI people to non-discrimination and freedom of expression and association are guaranteed, which includes ensuring cooperation by the relevant authorities with the organisers of Belgrade Pride to enable it to take place in 2012 without obstruction or hindrance.

In the meantime we urge you to ensure that the government publicly condemns all threats, harassment and violence directed at the organisers of and participants in the Pride march, and that the Ministry of Interior conducts prompt, impartial and effective investigations into any attacks or threats against LGBTI people in the lead up to the Pride march, ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice.

We hope you will give serious consideration to the issues raised in this letter, and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

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Amnesty International EU Office

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