

## **PRESS RELEASE**

On the occasion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Budapest Pride Festival, we convey our support to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities in Hungary and their right to express themselves peacefully and lawfully. Respect for human rights — including justice, equality, non-discrimination, freedom of expression as well as the non-interference in the practice of these rights — and the rule of law are the foundations upon which democratic states are built. Indeed, international human rights law is grounded on the premise that all individuals are entitled to the same rights and freedoms as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Human rights shall apply equally to every human being, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. This is the essence of our democratic values. Celebrating diversity is a sure way to promote respect for human rights.

We reject and condemn acts of violence and discrimination in all regions of the world committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Any discrimination on those grounds is incompatible with the provisions of the relevant legal texts within the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union. We welcome positive developments at the international, regional, and national levels in the fight against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. We encourage further steps in every country to ensure the equality and dignity of all human beings irrespective of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Budapest Pride, which has the longest history of such events in Central Eastern Europe, promotes the principle of equal treatment for LGBTI persons, which is an important aspect of a tolerant and respectful society. We look forward to the Pride celebrations, to the respect which the Hungarian people will show, and to the determination of the Hungarian authorities not to allow those of extreme views to disrupt what should and will be joyful occasions.