

## *Election of a homophobic president in Poland*

# **Vigil for Solidarity**

On Sunday October 23rd, Polish voters chose Lech Kaczyński, of the conservative “Law and Justice” party, to represent them as the head of their country.

This is sad news for all defenders of the rights and fundamental freedoms of lesbian, gay, bi, and trans people (LGBT). It caps two election campaigns that saw a surge in homophobic speech.

To take only one example, the new Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz declared that “the propagation of homosexuality blocks the freedom of the other citizens. If such a person tries to infect others with their homosexuality, then the state must intervene in such an abuse of freedom.” It is to be feared that the new Polish President will now give the Prime Minister the means to enact his policy: in 2005, Kaczyński, as mayor of Warsaw, had banned Lesbian & Gay Pride from the capital, while at the same time authorizing a “Walk of Normality,” a homophobic demonstration of extreme right organisations. Recently, Kaczyński himself even proposed to prohibit homosexuals from teaching.

This election is thus likely to mark a retreat in the fight to eliminate discrimination against LGBT people and people living with HIV, in the promotion of equality, and in AIDS prevention efforts.

This is why we are requesting the Member States of the European Union and the European Commission to observe extreme vigilance in their relations with Poland, and to condemn with the greatest severity possible any and all attacks on the rights of LGBT people, on women’s rights, and, in a more general way, on fundamental freedoms.

We ask the Polish authorities to remain faithful to the founding principles of the European Union, which is based on respect of human rights. We ask these authorities to refuse any stigmatization of LGBT people, to allow LGBT associations the right to act freely, including for the purposes of promoting equality and fighting against HIV. We ask the Polish government to respect the principle of the right to free association and to peaceful demonstration.

Lastly, we express our solidarity with Polish LGBT people, and through them, with all European peoples whose States do not respect the principle of non-discrimination, or which limit the freedom of action or of speech of LGBT organisations and of actors in the fight against HIV.

We call for a vigil

**Saturday October 29, 2005, at 6:30 PM**

*terre-plein des Invalides*

near the embassy of Poland, at the place even where the sympathizers of Solidarność gathered to support the combat in favour of freedoms.

*Supported by : Autre Cercle Ile-de-France, Collectif de lutte contre l'homophobie (Rhône-Alpes), Campaign against homophobia (Pologne), Collectif contre l'homophobie (Montpellier), Coordination Interpride France, David et Jonathan, Fédération Moules-Frites, Homonormalité (Lyon), Homosexualités et Socialisme, ILGA Europe (International Lesbian & Gay Association), Interassociative lesbienne, gaie, bi et trans (Inter-LGBT), Lesbian & Gay Pride Lyon, LesBienNées (Nancy), Les Verts, MAG Jeunes Gais et Lesbiennes, Moove (Lyon), Mouvement des Jeunes Socialistes, Parti Socialiste, RFSL (the Swedish Federation for LGBT rights), Sans Contrefaçon (Marseille), Solidarité Internationale LGBT*

*Thanks to « Solidarité Internationale LGBT » for the translation.*