

Solidarité International – LGBT
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FRANCE

Mr. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz
Prime Minister of Poland
Al. Ujazdowskie 1/3
00-583 Warszawa
POLOGNE

Paris, November 15th 2005

Dear Prime Minister,

Our organisation is writing to express our deep concern with the declaration made by the new Polish government last week concerning the abolishment of the Office of Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men. This central administration body is responsible for the delivery of basic policies, counteracting discrimination, supporting gender equality and offering equal opportunities for marginalized groups. During the four years of its activity, the Office of Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men has been effectively active in the field of counteracting discrimination, contributing to changes in Polish legislation and introducing the issue of equality into the public discourse.

We would like to remind that by establishing the institution of the Office of Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men, responsible for counteracting discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation, the Polish government met its obligations resulting from such international documents as the Beijing Platform of Action, Directive 2002/73/EC on the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin and Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

We firmly protest against the abolishment of this institution which, like no other, has efficiently introduced the perspective of equal opportunities into the activities of Polish state authorities. At the same time we call for full implementation of the EU directives listed-above, which provide for the creation of an independent body counteracting discrimination. Such bodies have already been created in all EU Member States, successfully enforcing the rules of gender equality and counteracting unequal treatment of minority groups. It should also be stressed that abolishing the Office of Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men will constitute a breach of Poland obligations towards the European Communities. We believe that equality, counteracting discrimination and tolerance will constitute the most important values of the new government, and the cooperation with non-government organizations will remain the priority of state authorities.

Thank you for your attention,

Yours sincerely,

Philippe Colomb,
President of Solidarité International – LGBT