



Press Release

27 January 2016
For immediate release

International Holocaust Remembrance Day



During the Nazi period it is estimated that up to 100,000 gay men and women were persecuted and imprisoned for their sexuality under Paragraph 175 of the German Penal code. About 15,000 were sent to concentration and extermination camps (as many as 60% of them died) where they were forced to wear the 'pink triangle'. This human tragedy can be referred as the 'homocaust'.¹

In 1995, 50 years after the liberation of camps by the Allies, a declaration on the homocaust was adopted:

"Today, 50 years later, we turn to the young generation and to all of you who are not guided by hate and homophobia. Please support us in our struggle to memorize and document the Nazi atrocities against homosexual men and lesbian women. Let us never forget the Nazi atrocities against Jews, Gypsies, Jehovah's witnesses, Freemasons, the disabled, Polish and Russian prisoners of war and homosexuals.

*Let us learn from the past and let us support the young generation of lesbian women and gay men, girls and boys to lead unlike us a life in dignity and respect, with their loved ones, their friends and their families."*²

But persecution did not end for LGBT-people in the world, and in Europe. Violence and murders of LGBT people are still occurring daily. We see that persecution of gays and transgenders goes hand in hand with the abuse of other human rights. Twenty years later the words of the declaration need to be remembered, with the spectacular rise of populism (which sometimes can appeal to LGBT individuals) and the slow disparation of direct victims of this atrocity. Let's not forget about History and victims! Still today, recognition of LGBT

¹ <http://www.homocaust.org>

² <http://www.hardenet.com/homocaust/recognition.htm>

victims sometimes lack in public discourse on World War II persecutions. And even the presence of individuals willing to remember these victims during official commemoration ceremonies is sometimes rejected.³

Fear of other individuals cannot be a guiding principle of a tolerant and inclusive European society, especially with the current situation facing Europe. Therefore Rainbow Rose continues its fights, supported by the family of European Socialists and Democrats, for a tolerant future regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, disability, religion or any other ground.

We are obliged to keep on going for those who fell in the past and those who are falling now !

Ends

For further information email: contact@rainbowrose.eu or call: +32 495 16 1005

Notes for editors:

1. Rainbow Rose is the network for the LGBT groups of the socialist, social democratic and labour parties across Europe. It gathers 31 structures.
2. Rainbow Rose is affiliated (associate member) to the Party of European Socialists (PES) and works with the Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats (S&D Group) in the European Parliament
3. You can find more about Rainbow Rose on Facebook (www.facebook.com/RainbowRose.eu) its website (www.rainbowrose.eu) and Twitter (@RainbowRose_PES)

³ <http://yagg.com/2015/04/25/le-centre-lgbt-touraine-exclu-par-le-prefet-de-la-ceremonie-en-memoire-de-la-deportation/>