

**29th Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 6 – UPR Turkey**

Joint statement by the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and the International Lesbian and Gay Association¹

delivered by Ezgi Kocak

Mr. President,

This statement is delivered in consultation with a coalition of Turkish and international LGBT rights groups that have been engaged in the UPR process.

We welcome the speech of Turkey in the 21st session of the Human Rights Council, affirming that “there is no discriminatory provision against LGBTs in our laws... perpetrators who commit murder and acts of violence against individuals of LGBT and all kinds of hate crimes are identified, the necessary investigations are started in order to bring them to justice, and the process is conducted by legal authorities scrupulously.” [13th Meeting, January 27, 2015] We also welcome the response of the Turkish government to accept the recommendation on requesting to “ensure the investigation, prosecution and punishment of any act of discrimination or violence motivated by the victim’s sexual orientation or gender identity” (149.32)

Mr. President

In light of the Turkish government’s positive approach to the recommendation relating to sexual orientation and gender identity, we urge Turkey to fulfill its international obligations to bring its domestic laws in line with international conventions to ensure the protection of LGBT individuals. This has become all the more urgent as leading figures from the Justice and Development Party as well as the President employed a dangerous homophobic discourse during their parliamentary election campaign to criticize their opponents. Their rhetoric was mirrored by the media and in our experience, hate speech by public figures and the media create the atmosphere for hate crimes.

In addition, just between 2010 and June 2014, 41 individuals have been killed due to their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Moreover, several incidents of gun and physical-assault-related injuries, fatal lynchings and rape cases have also been reported throughout this period of time.

Mr. President

We urge Turkey take all administrative and legal measures, both on national and local levels, to prohibit and prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, in order to provide effective protection of LGBT persons in Turkey. We also urge Turkey to support or develop initiatives in Human Rights Council regarding rights of LGBTs.

Thank you Mr. President

¹ This statement is endorsed by Kaos GL and LGBTI News Turkey