

JACQUES BARROT

*Vice-président de la Commission européenne*

Brussels, - 1 DEC. 2008  
FRA/cd D(08)2380

Dear Dr Lucas,

I apologize for responding late to your letter of 22 July 2008 expressing concerns about homophobic violence during the last Gay Pride in Budapest.

The Commission understands that the Hungarian authorities have condemned the violence and that several persons have been arrested. It is a matter for the competent national authorities to take the necessary measures against the perpetrators.

I raise this opportunity to reiterate that the Commission is committed to fight against homophobia with all the powers conferred to it by the Treaties. Homophobia is a violation of human dignity, as the Commission had the occasion to recall in a declaration on homophobia at the European Parliament on 25 April 2007.

As an important step in the fight against homophobia and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, the Commission took the decision to propose, on 2 July 2008, a new Directive that will give the same level of legal protection against discrimination on grounds of age, religion, sexual orientation and disability as currently exists for discrimination based on race or ethnic origin. The Commission will also continue to monitor the implementation of the existing Community Directives adopted under Article 13, notably Council Directive 2000/78/EC.

The Commission has also welcomed the report on homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in the EU, issued on 30 June 2008 by the Fundamental Rights Agency.

The Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination (2001-2006) promotes Information and awareness-raising. An EU-wide information campaign "For Diversity. Against Discrimination" was launched. Similar awareness-raising activities continue under the new PROGRESS Community programme (2007-2013).

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In the field of Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, Council Decision 2007/252/JHA established for the period 2007-2013 the specific programme "Fundamental rights and citizenship". One of the thematic priorities outlined by the Annual Work program is "Fight against homophobia: Enhanced/improved understanding and tolerance". For more detailed information, please consult the following website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/funding/intro/funding\\_rights\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/funding/intro/funding_rights_en.htm)

Yours sincerely,



Jacques BARROT