

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party
for the South East of England

Commissioner Franco Frattini
DG Justice Freedom and Security
The European Commissioner
200 Rue de la Loi
Brussels B1049
Belgium

April 24th 2007

Dear Commissioner,

I understand that Amnesty International are planning to hold an event in Riga, Latvia on June 2nd and 3rd in solidarity with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, who will be holding their regular Pride event that weekend.

As I am sure you will recall, the Latvian authorities did not permit Gay Pride to take place in Riga last year and previous marches have been marked by violent attacks on the LGBT participants. A number of my constituents are traveling to Riga for this event and are, understandably, concerned that their right to freedom of expression and to free assembly may not be upheld in a European Union member state.

In May 2006, the Council of Europe Commissioner on Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, re-enforced the Council of Europe's commitment to freedom of assembly in a public statement with specific reference to LGBT marches in Council of Europe member states. In a resolution entitled "Homophobia in Europe" on 18 January 2006, the European Parliament called on member states "to ensure that LGBT people are protected from homophobic hate speech and violence.

Please can you advise what the Commission intends to do to guarantee the safety of all those taking part in the Latvian Pride event this year and what measures have been taken since last year's march to press the Latvian authorities to fully recognise the rights of the LGBT community.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.