



Ambassador Mr. Antoni Fałkowski
The Embassy of the Republic of Poland
Richelieus Alle 12
2900 Hellerup

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**
DANISH SECTION
Gammeltorv 8, 5. floor
DK-1457 Copenhagen K
Denmark

T: +45 3345 6565
F: +45 3345 6566

www.amnesty.dk
amnesty@amnesty.dk

Copenhagen, 30. August 2022

Dear Ambassador,

On behalf of **38.140 Danish citizens**, Amnesty is calling on you to ensure and protect the fundamental rights of LGBTI+ people in Poland. Amnesty International has repeatedly sounded the alarm about the actions of the authorities in Poland which have shrunk the space for civil society around the country, undermined the rule of law, attacked women's and LGBTI people's rights and those who defend them, particularly over the last five years.

Although the space for civil society has been targeted and restricted by the authorities for all those standing up to defend human rights, there are specific ways in which state officials and the police have violated the rights of LGBTI people wishing to engage in the civic space. Hostile and stigmatizing rhetoric against LGBTI people, including by high-level officials, is having increasingly harmful consequences that are clearly translating into more violence and discrimination on the basis of people's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. The atmosphere of hostility against LGBTI people has been particularly growing since the change of government in 2015, which has been accompanied with a sustained repression of their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Amnesty International demonstrate in the report, [THEY TREATED US LIKE CRIMINALS -FROM SHRINKING SPACE TO HARASSMENT OF LGBTI ACTIVISTS](#), that there is a direct link between the progressive erosion of these rights and the harassment, profiling and targeting of LGBTI activists. The report exposes the deplorable situation of LGBTI people and their allies in Poland. It evidences both the deliberate actions and failures to act by authorities and law enforcement officials that constitute violations of LGBTI people's human rights and create a more dangerous environment for LGBTI people and those who support them.

What emerges is a picture of systemic violence and discrimination directed against LGBTI people and those working to defend and promote their rights. People in positions of power in government and other influential public figures have intentionally negatively portrayed LGBTI people as a "threat to family values", "the Catholic faith" and "public order". The situation for LGBTI people rapidly deteriorated after 2019 with the gradual adoption of homophobic local government resolutions arbitrarily banning Pride parades and Equality Marches, also known as "LGBTI-free zones".

Intimidation and harassment of LGBTI people is a manifestation of deliberate and systemic violence and discrimination against those who often need the protection the most. LGBTI people, like anyone else, have

the right to be free from violence, to freedom of expression, to freedom of peaceful assembly, and to non-discrimination. The Polish authorities have an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil LGBTI people's human rights and must take urgent action to do so.

Amnesty International and 38.140 Danish citizens call on the government of Poland to:

- **Add sexual orientation, gender identity and gender characteristics in the Criminal Code as a potential motive for a hate crime and hate speech**
- **Support the work of LGBTI+ organizations**
- **Meet transgender people who want to change gender with respect**
- **Protect Pride participants and other gatherings of LGBTI+ people**
- **Stop persecuting LGBTI+ activists for their peaceful activism**

Yours sincerely,

The Danish citizens and behalf of Amnesty International

Simone Jacobsen
Policy advisor on Gender and Anti-racism
Amnesty International Denmark