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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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Degrading treatment applied to gay men by excluding them from service in the Turkish Armed Forces

Written declaration No. 519

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

According to the US State Department 2010 Human Rights Report on Turkey,

"Openly gay men were not allowed to perform military service for "health reasons" due to their sexual orientation; those requesting military exemption for reasons of sexual orientation had to undergo an invasive burden of proof (…). LGBT groups complained that gay men were required to show photos of themselves in overtly sexual positions and to undergo thorough medical evaluations to prove their homosexuality to military officials."

A report by Amnesty International (June 2011), and a BBC World Service documentary, (March 2012), have raised similar concerns.

In 1999 the European Court of Human Rights ruled in *Smith & Grady* v. *the United Kingdom* that exclusion of lesbians and gay men from service in the armed forces was a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

We call upon the Turkish authorities to cease this degrading treatment of gay men, and to enable them to serve in the armed forces once the training and disciplinary measures have been taken to ensure that they can serve without danger of violence and discrimination.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

CHRISTOFFERSEN Lise, Norway, SOC
ANDERSEN Karin, Norway, UEL
AXELSSON Lennart, Sweden, SOC
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BREMER Tor, Norway, SOC
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FLEGO Gvozden Srećko, Croatia, SOC
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD
GUNNARSSON Jonas, Sweden, SOC
HÄGG Carina, Sweden, SOC
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OHLSSON Carina, Sweden, SOC
RAČAN Ivan, Croatia, SOC
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ROSEIRA Maria de Belém, Portugal, SOC
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SANNEN Ludo, Belgium, SOC
SCHOU Ingjerd, Norway, EPP/CD
SHERIDAN Jim, United Kingdom, SOC
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Total = 22

1. EDG: European Democrat Group
   EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
   SOC: Socialist Group
   UEL: Group of the Unified European Left