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National Assembly of Slovak Republic

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Slovakia

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am deeply concerned that the National Assembly of the Slovak Republic advanced the draft Bill No. 301/1995 Coll. on the birth number to the second reading. The adoption of this law would constitute a direct attack on transgender people in Slovakia and, ultimately, on their lives, as it would prevent them from undergoing legal transition which has been legally permitted in Slovakia for 60 years.

The change in the law would require people seeking official gender reassignment (the term 'sex' is used in the law) to undergo a genetic test to prove that the person's sex has been incorrectly determined in the past.' This requirement is contrary to the latest recommendations of the World Health Organisation and the country's international human rights obligations.

Every person has the right to self-determination and to live in accordance with their identity. It means that a person has the right to define how they feel regardless of the sex assigned to them at birth and has the right to express their gender identity through their appearance or behaviour. To make this right subject to a medical opinion is a violation of human rights of transgender people and ignores the latest recommendations of the World Health Organisation.

According to the sponsors of the bill, changing the law would not prevent legal transition, but that is not true. Legal gender recognition in Slovakia is impossible without the change of the birth number. The purpose of gender recognition is precisely the change of the gender marker in identification documents. Otherwise, a transgender person would be constantly exposed to involuntary social coming-out and the associated risks of bullying, discrimination, or violence.

Living with documents incorrectly reflecting one's gender has enormous consequences for the mental health and well-being of transgender people and their loved ones. By making legal transition impossible, the Slovak Republic would be responsible for human rights violations of thousands of people, as well as for the deterioration of their health, with potentially fatal consequences.

We urge you - do not allow this to happen!

De-facto ban on legal gender recognition constitutes a violation of international human rights obligations that bind the Slovak Republic to protect the rights of every individual, including the right to private and family life, right to self-determination and other human rights. Members of the Slovak Parliament must demonstrate their rejection of transphobic rhetoric and attacks on transgender people when voting on this bill. The murder of two people in front of the Tepláreň bar in Bratislava last

October exposed the lack of protection of LGBTI+ people from violence, discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech. A vote in favour of a transphobic bill like this one would expose that the solidarity and support for LGBTI+ people shown by many politicians in the aftermath of the attack were only declarative and that protecting the rights of transgender people is not their priority at all.

Therefore, I call on you to:

- ***reject the transphobic Bill No. 301/1995 Coll. on the 'birth number' and call on the members of your party to vote against it as well,***
- ***refrain from further legal attempts to worsen the human rights situation of LGBTI+ people in Slovakia, and call on the members of your party to refrain from it as well,***
- ***work on the improvement of legal status of LGBTI+ people in Slovakia and the protection of their human rights.***

Yours sincerely,