Justizminister
Abdülhamit Gül
Adalet Bakanlığı
06659 Ankara
TÜRKEI

Sehr geehrter Herr Justizminister,

ich bin sehr besorgt darüber, dass 18 Studierende und ein wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter der Technischen Universität des Nahen Ostens in Ankara angeklagt sind, am 10. Mai 2019 an der LGBTI Pride Parade auf dem Uni-Campus teilgenommen zu haben, und ihnen deshalb Gefängnisstrafen drohen.

Ich bitte Sie daher, alle Anklagen gegen die 18 Studierenden und den wissenschaftlichen Mitarbeiter wegen ihrer mutmaßlichen Teilnahme an der Pride Parade am 10. Mai 2019 fallenzulassen. Niemand darf aufgrund der friedlichen Wahrnehmung der Rechte auf freie Meinungsäußerung und friedliche Versammlung strafrechtlich verfolgt werden.

Bitte sorgen Sie außerdem dafür, dass die unverhältnismäßige Gewaltanwendung durch die Polizist\_innen auf dem Campus umgehend, unabhängig und unparteiisch untersucht wird und dass die Beamt\_innen, die sich rechtswidrig verhalten haben, vor Gericht gestellt werden.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Justizminister
Abdülhamit Gül
Adalet Bakanlığı
06659 Ankara
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Dear Minister,

I am writing to you concerning the ongoing prosecution of 18 students and one academic from Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara in connection with their alleged participation in the 9th annual LGBTI Pride Parade on the University’s campus on 10 May 2019.

The METU Pride Parade on 10 May constituted a legitimate exercise of the right of students and academics to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Nevertheless, police officers entered the METU campus on the request of the university management to disperse the gathering and when students did not disperse, broke up the gathering with pepper spray, plastic bullets and tear gas. Several people were injured and at least 22 people were detained, including the 19 people currently facing criminal charges.

The 19 face charges under Article 32 of the Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations and risk prison sentences for “failing to disperse despite being warned”. One of the students is also charged with “insult” under Article 125 of Turkey’s Penal Code, for allegedly “making a hand gesture considered rude” against police officers. Some of the students facing criminal charges have stated that they did not participate in the Pride Parade and were just bystanders.

In light of the above, I urge you to ensure that:

* Charges against the 18 METU students and the academic for their alleged participation in the Pride Parade on 10 May 2019 are dropped, as no one should be prosecuted for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;
* The excessive use of force by the police on campus on 10 May is promptly, independently and impartially investigated and police officers found to have acted unlawfully are brought to justice.

Yours sincerely,