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הבית הפתוח בירושלים לגאווה ולסובלנות (ע"ר)
البيت المفتوح في القدس للفخر والتسامح
Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance

LGBT Community Rights' Year to be launched at march to the Knesset on the anniversary of the murder at the Bar-Noar

Following last year's murder of two young people, the Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance, in coordination with Israel's other LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) organizations, has decided to hold this year's Jerusalem March for Pride and Tolerance in a unique way, dedicating the coming year to the promotion of the LGBT community's rights, especially in light of political declarations made at last year's remembrance rally.

Today, 3rd May 2010, the Jerusalem Open House (JOH) submitted its permit application for the Pride march in Jerusalem, in memory of Nir Katz and Liz Trobashi, who were murdered at the Bar-Noar. The request included the march's route: leaving from the square in front of Hamashbir in Jerusalem's city center and concluding at a rally at the Knesset, on **Thursday, 29 August 2010, at 7 p.m.**

The march will constitute the launch of LGBT Community Rights' Year, in which the community will demand that the Knesset, government ministries and Israeli society significantly progress in promoting equal rights for the LGBT community, as well as eradicate incitement and violent discourse against the community. This negative discourse leads to the violence that LGBT community members experience daily. Just this last Thursday, a gay couple was attacked in Tel Aviv, simply for holding hands in the street.

A year after the murder, the politicians who spoke at last year's memorial rally in Rabin Square will be invited to the **rally that will take place in the Wohl Rose Garden and will be asked: "Ma nishtana – what has changed?"**

In August 2009, 16-year old Liz Trobashi and 23-year old youth counselor Nir Katz were murdered at the Bar-Noar club in Tel Aviv; many others were injured. This heinous attack, joining the many other violent incidents that LGBT community members experience throughout Israel, illustrated to the whole country the consequences of the daily incitement from which our community suffers; from the frequent derogatory use of the word "homo" to the action of members of the Knesset to prevent an LGBT community convention in the parliament buildings. **Immediately after the murder, politicians and public figures made promises to work to reduce the incitement. One year on, the time has come to examine how these promises are being fulfilled.**

Yonatan Gher, executive director of the JOH: "The LGBT community is discriminated against in countless laws and suffers from discrimination at the hand of government ministries. Add to these the ongoing incitement by public figures permeating all strata of society. The Jerusalem Pride march, commemorating the anniversary of the murder, will focus on the community's place in Israeli society and will delineate a work plan for the coming year, to which we hope public figures, leaders and opinion-makers will enlist. Only a significant change – starting with legislation and reaching into public discourse – will constitute a fitting legacy for those who have been murdered because of their sexual identity."

Ayala Katz, mother of Nir Katz, who heads Tehila (support organization for parents of LGBT people), said today: "Almost one year after the murder in Tel Aviv, in which my son Nir and Liz Trobashi were murdered and many others physically and mentally injured, the homophobia in Israeli society that led to this atrocious act still exists. I hope that the march on the Knesset will signal the launch of a year of promoting open dialogue, a year of promoting tolerance and openness in the multi-faceted Israeli society, a year of promoting the love of our fellow man and woman, whoever they may be. Such a reality will constitute the most appropriate tribute to which I could hope."

Mikie Goldstein, chairperson of the JOH: "We are fed up with the promises and speeches about Israel being a progressive nation in relation to LGBT rights. There is no progress in a reality in which "homo" or "koksinel" are common derogatory words used by our youth, in a reality in which the LGBT community serves as the punch-bag and common denominator for hatred by members of the Knesset and religious leaders. In the coming months leading up to the march, we will detail to the country's elected representatives concrete steps in which we hope to see progress in the coming year, steps which will allow Israel to label itself as "based on freedom, justice and peace," as written in the Declaration of the Establishment of the State.

For further information:

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