



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

**JOINT STATEMENT ON THE
BAN ON LGBTI ACTIVITIES IN ANKARA, TURKEY**
Delivered by Minister Counsellor Henning Hj. Johansen
at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 14 December 2017

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairperson,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, and Norway.

We have noted with dismay the recent indefinite ban enacted on LGBTI-related activities in Ankara Governorate, Turkey, as well as other attempts to prevent LGBTI activities across the country. The rationale behind these prohibitions remains unclear. We are concerned that the extensive nature of the Ankara ban and its specific discrimination against members of the LGBTI community constitutes a violation of human rights, including freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, and the right to equality under the law

Mr. Chairperson,

Our countries believe that human rights are universal, indivisible, and must apply equally to everyone. As members of the OSCE, each of our countries has a responsibility to support the rights and freedoms of all its citizens. As we have reaffirmed on many occasions, we believe that freedom and diversity make our societies stronger, and that a healthy and vibrant society is one which includes all voices. It is for these reasons that we strive to end systemic discrimination against LGBTI communities within our own countries.

Mr. Chairperson,

We urge the Turkish government to examine the decisions recently taken to prohibit these activities and to respond in accordance with their international obligations and OSCE commitments.

Thank you.