



**Doc. 15389**

01 October 2021

## **Decriminalisation of same-sex relations in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan**

**Written declaration No. 731**

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This written declaration commits only those who have signed it

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We, the undersigned, declare the following:

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, voluntary sexual relations between two men are punishable by imprisonment under their Criminal Codes. Due to the widespread failure to understand the difference between sexual orientation and gender identity among the general public and law enforcement, this law negatively impacts all of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in both countries.

The Central Asia Rule of Law Programme aims to improve the lives of citizens by reinforcing human rights, the Rule of law and democracy in accordance with European and other international standards. Criminalisation of the voluntary same-sex relations violates multiple human rights, including the right to private and family life and to freedom from discrimination. Repealing laws that criminalise same-sex relations and other laws used to punish LGBTI people is an important step towards protection of human lives and rights, in line with ensuring a common human rights system between Europe and Central Asia.

Therefore, we call upon the European Union and the Council of Europe to ensure that decriminalisation of same-sex relations in partner countries is a cornerstone of the common legal space between Europe and Central Asia, advancing human rights protections envisioned by the Central Asia Rule of Law Programme.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

BEN CHIKHA Fourat, Belgium, SOC  
BACELAR DE VASCONCELOS Pedro, Portugal, SOC  
BAYR Petra, Austria, SOC  
BILALLI ZENDELI Arta, North Macedonia, SOC  
BOER Margreet, De, Netherlands, SOC  
CEGONHO Pedro, Portugal, SOC  
ESTRELA Edite, Portugal, SOC  
GONÇALVES Carlos Alberto, Portugal, EPP/CD  
HAJDUKOVIĆ Domagoj, Croatia, SOC  
KOSTADINOVSKA-STOJCHEVSKA Bisera, North Macedonia, SOC  
LACROIX Christophe, Belgium, SOC  
LEITE RAMOS Luís, Portugal, EPP/CD  
MARIE Didier, France, SOC  
MEIRELLES Isabel, Portugal, EPP/CD  
MEREZHKO Oleksandr, Ukraine, SOC  
MONTEMAGGI Marica, San Marino, SOC  
MOUTQUIN Simon, Belgium, SOC  
PISCO Paulo, Portugal, SOC  
SCHENNACH Stefan, Austria, SOC  
SENSI Filippo, Italy, SOC

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Total = 20

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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group