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LGBTIQ

**Statement from Hongkong
Against Hatred of the
Marginalised: Justice for
Hande Kader – In support to
our Turkish LGBT comrades,
long live international
solidarity!**

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- News from around the world -

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Recent military coups in Turkey have led to its instabilities and the suffering of its people. The queer is no exception in facing the difficulties of political instability, not to mention the insecurity brought by physical threat when further enduring discrimination against their sexualities.

Turkish transgender sex worker and activist Hande Kader was found murdered on August 8, having been sexually assaulted before death and body burnt afterwards. This happened in the backdrop of violent governmental suppression of LGBT activities, though homosexuality is not illegal in Turkey. Pride Parade in Turkey since 2003, as well as the reaching of a hundred thousand participants in such in 2014 have shown that LGBT rights movements in Turkey have been robust. Yet, ever since the new term of government took office, Pride Parade and Transgender Parades and activism have been suppressed by tear gas, water cannons and even rubber bullets, in the name of safeguarding public order against terrorist threats. Meanwhile, the country ranks ninth globally in the rate of sexual minorities murdered. Over 40 cases of murdered transgenders have taken place between 2008 and 2016, whereas more than 7 cases of so occurred only within the short period between November 2014 and June 2016. Just two weeks before the murder of Kader, a homosexual Syrian refugee was beheaded, his body found not far from where that of Kader was also found.

All this shows that such cases are not arbitrary, but crimes of hatred pinpointed against the marginalised. Rather than stopping the occurrences of such atrocities, the Turkish government strove to secure its rule on top of such hatred, leaving sexual minorities living under stigma and discrimination.

Kader is a sex worker, and the victimization of those with the same identity is often due to the conservativeness of society towards the conception of sex, forcing sex workers around the world to do their job in dangerous venues, Kader herself being one of those harmed exactly when patronised. The 2008 serial murders of sex workers in Hong Kong prove evident that sex workers here are also faced with the same difficulties (especially those in “one-woman brothels”), often bullied by the police with no support and reckoning from society. Furthermore, verbal abuse by the police while being searched all naked, lack of access to hormonal medical treatment during imprisonment, as well as psychological trauma brought by solitary confinement are all examples of the frequent infringement of transgender sex workers’ rights. Neither had the police, the Correctional Services, nor the Immigration Department ever formulated working guidelines in particular for transgenders, thus neglecting their needs, interests and rights.

Demonstrations for Kader were held last Sunday in Turkey, demanding a fair and rightful settlement of the incident by bringing the homophobic and transphobic criminal to justice. As stated by Turkish LGBT organisations, “[t]he only way to stop hate crimes is to raise our voice together against hatred and hate crimes.” Because of this, we have come to the Turkish Consulate General in Hong Kong today, to demand for a just settlement of the incident, and justice for Kader. Meanwhile, we demand that the Turkish government stop its oppression of LGBTs, sex workers and all other sexually stigmatized.

We would like to express our support to those in Turkey by voicing out to the world that discrimination and hatred have caused these killings, and that all, no matter sex workers, transgenders, or homosexuals, are deserving of respect and security. We hope that the Turkish government protects the physical safety of sexual minorities as it should, and stop them from living in lasting fear.

We would also like to express our support for the unity of Turkish LGBT comrades. Long live international solidarity! Our national borders do not divide us, and we are deeply angered by the harm done to our Turkish comrades! An

injury to one is an injury to all. LGBTs, the impoverished, and all fellow oppressed must unite and stand together in the fight against the powerful for our own freedom and autonomy!

participating organizations:

Left 21

Mid Night Blue

Our & Vote

autonomous 8a

Action Q

League of Social Democrats

Rainbow Action

Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women

Demosist?

Transgender Resource Center

Hong Kong Women Workers' Association

The Association for the Advancement of Feminism