



Brussels, 17 May 2005

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

17 MAY 2005

On the occasion of International Day against Homophobia, which will take place in 35 countries all over the world, Mr Josep Borrell Fontelles, President of the European Parliament, made the following statement:

“As we are currently debating the Constitutional Treaty in many countries of the European Union, I wish today to recall one of the major principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights: the non-discrimination principle.

Whatever their origin, nationality, social background, religion or sexual orientation, all citizens of the Union have the same rights.

Today is a symbolic day as it is exactly 15 years since the General Assembly of the World Health Organisation removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. And while it may be true that homosexuality is freer today than in the past, discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation remains a serious problem experienced by millions of people all over the globe and within the Union.

The European Parliament has always fought for equality and the defence of human rights and supports the campaign against homophobia in the context of the wider struggle for the defence of human rights, which is one of the fundamental values of the European Union.

It remains our duty, as an enlarged European Union, to continue the struggle against the moral discrimination and physical violence related to sexual orientation. Such injustices must be overcome in all countries by all means.”