



Vienna, 22 June 2008

Dear friends,

In 1983 the *Homosexuelle Initiative (HOSI) Wien* hosted an ILGA (World) conference in Vienna for the first time—25 years later, we are happy to welcome, for the first time, delegates to an ILGA-Europe annual conference to the Austrian capital. And this at a time of possibly important developments in Austria, as registered partnership legislation for same-sex couples was proposed this Spring. So later this year we might be able to celebrate a major achievement for which HOSI Wien has been lobbying for exactly 20 years now (yes, things usually take a bit longer in this country!).

Preparations for the conference, taking place from 30 October to 2 November 2008, are underway at full speed. The conference is receiving strong support, both from the City of Vienna and the Federal government. Vienna's mayor will invite delegates to a reception at City Hall, and one evening we will dine at the invitation of the Vienna Tourist Board in a restaurant of a wine-growing farm (yes, wine is produced within Vienna's city limits!).

We were able to secure the honorary patronage of Heinz Fischer, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria. It is the first time in ILGA's history that a head of state is assuming such a role. The following people have agreed to be part of the conference's "honorary committee": Barbara Prammer and Eva Glawischnig-Piesczek, the First and Third Presidents of Parliament; Federal Chancellor, Alfred Gusenbauer; Foreign Minister, Ursula Plassnik; Minister of Justice, Maria Berger; Minister for Women's Affairs, Doris Bures; and Michael Häupl, Mayor and Governor of Vienna who is also currently President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).

As you know, HOSI Wien will also be hosting the 24th ILGA World Conference from 3 to 6 November, immediately following the European conference. Registration and payment/scholarships for the World conference will be handled completely separately and announced at a later date. The package for the World conference will, however, include accommodation from 2 to 3 November. Participants who register for both conferences and choose one of the hotel options will have accommodation from 29 October through 6 November. In case you are planning to stay on for the World conference and wish to make your travel arrangements already now, please note that the World conference will end on the afternoon of 6 November.

We look forward to welcoming you to Vienna!

HOSI Wien's conference organizing team