



October 21, 2020

Letter of Solidarity with Polish people

As members of ASTRA Network's, we express our deepest concern regarding another attack on reproductive freedom in Poland. Polish Constitutional Tribunal is to decide on the compliance of abortion on the grounds of the high probability of a severe and irreversible foetal defect or incurable illness that threatens the foetus's life with the Constitution tomorrow. The decision to discuss a matter of such gravity during COVID-19 pandemic constitutes another display of disrespect for public opinion, as hosting protests or any other form of public gatherings is impossible.

Tomorrow, on October 22, Polish Constitutional Tribunal is to issue a ruling on whether abortion on the grounds of foetal malformations should remain legal in the country. Reportedly, foetal defects account for over 98% of legal abortions carried out in Poland, meaning that the Thursday decision may result in a virtual ban on abortion.

The news come as another example of radical and conservative forces being on the rise in Poland. It is worth to notice that the ruling will come as consecutive action aimed at sexual and reproductive health and rights in the new reality of COVID-19 pandemic, making it highly dangerous to protest proposed restrictions in the streets.

In Poland, abortion remains illegal with 3 exceptions – the law is one of the most restrictive in Europe. Even discussing further limitations to legal access to the procedure is draconian and disgraceful. There is no other way of putting it than that Polish authorities are aiming to legalise torture, as that what forcing a person to give birth to a severely damaged foetus is. We will not stand for treating human beings as incubators for suffering.

We urge Judges of the Tribunal to refute this abhorrent fundamentalistic claim and blatant attack on human rights.

In solidarity,

ASTRA Network