



Press Release: Berlin Celebrates International Safe Abortion Day

Berlin, 25. September 2020

Across Germany, over 100 organizations, political parties, and local coalitions have announced their support for this year's International Safe Abortion Day. Rallies, readings, demonstrations, and various other actions are planned to take place in more than 50 cities on and around September 28. The Bündnis für sexuelle Selbstbestimmung (transl. Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination), together with the Polish group, Dziejuchy Berlin, will host an action of solidarity at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin this Monday at 7 pm. At the same time, NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES ALWAYS (USA/GB 2020), a film that confronts the stigmatization of abortion, will be screened at the Neues Off movie theater in Neukölln.

The situation in Poland is getting increasingly worse. "In November, the Polish Constitutional Court will decide if abortions are constitutional. Since the court is dependent on the governing party, a total ban on abortion could soon become a reality," says **Alicja Flisak** of Dziejuchy Berlin and the Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination. This is the second attempt to ban abortion in this year alone. Flisak continues: "Last time, freedom of assembly — and with it, the possibility of resistance — was massively restricted due to the lockdown. Verbal and physical attacks on queer people have also increased during the hateful presidential campaign these past few months. We want to send a clear signal against this on Monday."

At Dziejuchy Berlin's solidarity action, representatives from the Argentinean group **Ni Una Menos (transl. Not One Less)**, as well as **Berlin Ireland Pro-Choice Solidarity** and **the Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination**, among others, will speak and perform. The evening will be documented with a joint photo campaign.

Meanwhile, the film **NEVER RARELY SOMETIMES ALWAYS (USA/GB 2020)** will be shown at the Neuköllner cinema, Neues Off. The film, which received awards at the Berlinale and Sundance Film Festival, follows 17-year-old Autumn who becomes unintentionally pregnant. Director Eliza Hittman addresses the problems associated with women's health care and right to self-determination. At the following **online panel, Dr. Kristina Hänel** and others will discuss the topic "Abortion In Focus — Where Do We Stand." The preview will take place simultaneously in various German cities.

Kicking off the week of action was the rally on September 19 at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, where more than 1,000 people took to the streets against the so-called "March for Life." Every year, Christian and right-wing conservative fundamentalists call for a total ban on abortions, among other things. But the pro-choice movement has gained a massive following in Germany. From Flensburg to Munich, and Aachen to Dresden: many new alliances have formed in both

large and small cities across the country. One demand stands in focus: **the removal of paragraph 218 from the penal code**. This paragraph's criminalization of both physicians and those affected has resulted in inadequate abortion care throughout Germany.

Kate Cahoon from the Alliance for Sexual Self-Determination and co-organizer of the nationwide network announces: "We're thrilled that we are seeing so many different activities taking place around Safe Abortion Day this year. On the one hand, this shows us that we have a strong pro-choice movement here that will no longer remain silent. On the other hand, it shows how intolerable the situation in Germany has become. Indeed, there are whole regions in Germany where it's not possible to get an abortion. The pandemic has made this situation even worse." Cahoon continues: "On Monday, we also want to be visible as part of the global movement. Because on this day, people around the world will take a stand for the right to free, safe, and legal access to abortion."

Further events online and in Berlin surrounding International Safe Abortion Day:

- **25.09.2020 18:00:** Lecture and Discussion on Pregnancy, Contraception, and Abortion — Feminist Burner in the Freudensalon of Laura Méritt, Fürbringerstr. 2, Berlin Kreuzberg
- **27.09.2020 18:00:** Ask Me Anything - Digital Question Time About (My) Abortion
- **28.09.2020 10:00:** Black Umbrellas and Information Material Distribution at Frankfurter Allee / Corner Möllendorffstr. @Green_Lbg

Information on events throughout Germany can be found here:

<https://safeabortionday.noblogs.org/mitmachen/aktionen-2020/>. The nationwide appeal for International Safe Abortion Day 2020 (German/English), as well as the list of over 100 supporting organizations, can be found at: www.safeabortionday.noblogs.org. These hashtags are used on social media: **#28Sept**, **#wegmit218**, **#AbtreibungistGrundversorgung**, and **#safeabortionday**.

PRESS CONTACT

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