09 2018

For Zak: The responsibility for our grief

Collective text

The last few days, we have been witnessing with emotion and rage the developments in relation to the violent, unexpected, and unjust death of queer activist and drag performer Zak Kostopoulos in the centre of Athens.

The racist and homophobic positions, those opinions publicly expressed by some of our fellow citizens, which are extremely insulting to the memory of the deceased, as well as the initial misinformation and unethical coverage of the events by certain mass media outlets, must be condemned once again. Nevertheless, they have been answered by the immediate reaction of the LGBTQI community—to which Zak belonged and in which he was cherished—as well as other collectives, initiatives, groups, and individuals who strongly expressed their grief, but also their demand for a full investigation of the conditions in which the events of the previous days had unfolded.

We are shocked, however, by a series of acts of apparent mismanagement in relation to the initial investigation, which may compromise further investigation of the events that led to Zak's death and the substantive administering of justice. As the

prosecution and many witnesses have indicated, there are omissions and deficiencies in the investigation and the initial recording of the incident, in the collection of investigative material, in the recording of eyewitness testimony, and in the evaluation of facts that have already been brought to light in the media.

The reactions over the past few days in relation to Zak's death are not incidental. On the contrary, the sensitivity demonstrated by a large part of Greek civil society underscores the demand, even on account of this tragic occurrence, to finally come to terms with entrenched practices of violence, habitual violations of rights, and their possible institutional obfuscation. For this reason, we call upon all the relevant institutional bodies, and any and all government officials in charge of the investigation, to show the necessary prudence, courage, and efficacy required at this trying time.

This is not only a question of paying due respect to the deceased Zak Kostopoulos and to the boldness he embodied while he was alive. It is also a duty to all of us.

'Signed by more than 100 Greek academics'.

See also:
http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2018/09/27/zak-kostopoulos-police-violence-video/