

Gay parade to return to Jerusalem in '08

by UPI

JERUSALEM - Organizers of Thursday's gay pride parade in Jerusalem called the event a success and said it would be held again in Jerusalem next year.

Almost 2,000 people marched in the controversial parade, protected by an estimated 7,000 police officers.

"This is a great victory for the community," organizer Noa Satat told Ynetnews. "We wanted to march at the heart of Jerusalem, and I'm very glad we did it."

Satat expressed gratitude to police for protecting the marchers.

Jerusalem City Councilman Saar Netanel called the parade "a victory."

"We marched in the center of Jerusalem, and our pride flags, which represent tolerance and equality, were flown through the streets, despite the mayor's discontent and his attempt to sabotage the parade," he said.

Police arrested 20 rioters and one suspected bomber who had threatened to disrupt the parade, Ynetnews reported.

The parade was opposed by local religious leaders, who led a mass service before the protest for thousands of followers.

Although the parade was allowed to go on, Ynetnews said police did force organizers to cancel a party that was to follow the parade.

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