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Open Letter to prevent restriction of freedom of religion

From NGOs, community leaders and scholars to the President of Ukraine V. Yanukovich on the need to veto the draft law № 10221

Dear Mr. President!

We, representatives of human rights and other public organizations, express our concern over the adoption by Parliament on October, 16 2012 the law intended to make [significant changes to the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" \(draft law № 10221\)](#), which in the case of coming into force creates considerable obstacles in implementing the constitutional right of citizens to freedom of religion.

The declared objective of the Law is a necessity to adjust legislation with the Constitution of Ukraine in paragraph of redistribution powers between the President of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine in connection with the administrative reform.

Meanwhile adopted Law introduced significant changes to the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" on which [the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations expressed their objections](#). During May-July 2012 there was a series of consultative meetings with the author of the draft law Y. Miroschnyenko, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, Ukrainian Council of Churches and experts. As a result there were approved significant changes to the text of the draft law. However, during the second reading draft law № 10221 was hastily voted without any discussion and without table amendments for the second reading from the Committee.

In our opinion, **the above mentioned Law (draft law № 10221), adopted on October 16, 2012, should be put upon veto and returned for revision to the Parliament of Ukraine** in consideration of the following basic precautions:

1. Approved amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" considerably complicate the procedure for obtaining by religious organizations the status of the legal entity (Article 13, 14) in connection with the introduction of two inconsistent registration procedures: registration of statutes and state registration (inclusion in the Unified Register of Legal Entities).

This approach doesn't comply with the objectives of administrative reform aimed at introduction of the "single-window" principle to provide administrative services, reduce corruption factors and bureaucratic obstacles in the activities of non-governmental institutions.

2. Adopted Law establishes discriminatory provisions in the Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations" on the order of organization of peaceful assemblies initiated by believers or religious organizations (Part 5, Article 21), which puts them at a disadvantage with other legal entities in the right to peaceful assembly guaranteed by Article 39 of the Constitution of Ukraine. In particular, there is a permission-order organization of peaceful assembly, including the requirement to obtain permits at least in 10 days before the desired date of the meeting.
3. The draft law № 10221, like in the days of the Soviet totalitarian past, provides for the right to monitor the implementation of legislation on freedom of conscience and religion to the public prosecution bodies, the Ministry of Culture and other ministries and local authorities (Article 29 of the Law on Freedom of Conscience). At present, the authority of state control in this area is within the competence of local councils and their executive committees. We believe that expanding the list of regulatory bodies will not contribute to guaranteeing the right to freedom of religion, because it is the authorities often are violators of the law in this area.

These and other remarks lead to the need for a substantial revision of the Law before its entry into force.

In this regard, we urge you to veto the Law "On amendments to some legislative acts of Ukraine (on the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture and other central executive bodies whose activities are directed and coordinated by the relevant ministers and State Space Agency)" adopted on October 16, 2012 (draft law № 10221), and return it for revision to the Parliament of Ukraine considering expert opinions and proposals of the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations.

Sincerely,

1. **Yevhen ZAKHAROV** – Head of the board of "The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union" (NGO), Co-chairman of the "Kharkiv Human Rights Group" NGO;
2. **Arkadiy BUSHCHENKO** – Executive Director of "The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union" NGO;
3. **Anatoliy KOLODNIY** – President of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Studies, Professor, Honored Scientist of Ukraine;
4. **Myroslav MARYNOVYCH** – President of the Institute of Religion and Society of the Ukrainian Catholic University;
5. **Maksym VASIN** – Executive Director of the Institute for Religious Freedom NGO;
6. **Victor YELENSKIY** – President of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Freedom;
7. **Mykhaylo KAMENEV** – Deputy Chairman of "Foundation of Regional Initiatives" (All-Ukrainian youth NGO);
8. **Tetiana BORDUNIS** – President of "All-Ukrainian Human Rights Movement «Dignity»" NGO;
9. **Oleksiy HONCHARUK** – Representative of the "Association of the affected investors" NGO;
10. **Andriy ROHANSKIY** – Representative of the "Institute for Legal Research and Strategies" NGO;
11. **Oleksandra MATVIYCHUK** – Head of the board of "Center for Civil Liberties" NGO;
12. **Liydmyla FYLYPOVYCH** – Executive Director of the Center for Religious Information and Freedom, Ph.D., Professor;

13. **Lyudmyla KOVAL** – Expert on human rights of Kharkiv Human Rights Group NGO;
14. **Lyudmyla KOVALCHUK** – Representative of "La Strada-Ukraine" Center;
15. **Taras ANTOSHEVSKIY** – Director of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine;
16. **Oleg HUCULAK** – Representative of the Center for East and West "Meso Eurasia";
17. **Olga DOBRODUM** – Associate Professor of journalism at Odessa I.I. Mechnikov national university;
18. **Lilia KOMPANIETS** – Associate Professor of cultural theory and philosophy of science of philosophy faculty at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University;
19. **Igor KOZLOVSKIY** – president of the Center for Religious Studies and International Spiritual Relations, Chairman of Donetsk regional branch of the Ukrainian Association of Religious scholars;
20. **Oksana GORKUSHA** – Researcher of the Institute of Religious Studies Department of Institute of Philosophy in the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine;
21. **Vyacheslav ARTYUKH** – Associate Professor of Philosophy at Sumy State University;
22. **Sergiy SANNIKOV** – President of the Euro-Asian Accreditation Association;
23. **Maksym BALAKLYTSKIY** – Associate Professor of journalism at V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University;
24. **Ivan MOZGOVIY** – Chairman of Sumy Department of the Ukrainian Association of Religious Freedom, deputy head of Sumy Department of the Congress of Ukrainian intellectuals, professor;
25. **Lesia KOVALENKO** – Director of the Institute of Religion and Society of the Ukrainian Catholic University;
26. **Alla KYRYCHENKO** – Teacher of mathematics and Christian ethics at the M.P. Huzyk author's school in Yuzhne, Odessa region;
27. **Andriy HAMBURG** – Deputy bishop of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine;
28. **Vasyl DIDKOVSKIY** – Pastor of Southern Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Ukraine;
29. **Oksana RUDAKEYCH** – Associate Professor of Social Work at Ternopil National Economic University;
30. **Roman PRODANYUK** – Pastor of Kyiv Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Ukraine;
31. **Borys VOLKOV** – Director of the Spiritual Revival Association;
32. **Roman IVASIV** – Editor of the scientific and religious information newspaper "Galychyna" of Ivano-Frankivsk region;
33. **Yuriy RESHETNIKOV** – Chairman of the State Committee of Ukraine on Nationalities and Religions in 2009-2010;
34. **Nina HALAIM** – Assistant professor of civil and labor rights at Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University, Doctor of Law;
35. **Evgen SMULSKIY** – Post-graduate in department of Religious Philosophy Faculty at Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University;
36. **Ruslan MALIYTA** – President of the "Ukraine without orphans" Alliance.

Ukrainian Parliament tightened control over religious organizations

Institute for religious freedom (17.10.2012) - Contrary to an agreement with the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations October 16, 2012 Ukrainian Parliament adopted as the law the [draft law № 10221](#), which makes significant changes

to the Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations", reports the [Institute for Religious Freedom](#).

The new law complicates the procedure for obtaining by religious organizations the status of the legal entity in connection with the introduction of two inconsistent registration procedures: registration of statutes and state registration (inclusion in the Unified Register of Legal Entities).

In addition, like in the days of the Soviet totalitarian past, the draft law № 10221 provides for the right to monitor the implementation of legislation on freedom of conscience and religion to the public prosecution bodies, the Ministry of Culture and other ministries and local authorities.

It should be noted that with the adoption of this decision the parliamentary majority has completely ignored the position of the religious community and the [agreements reached by the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations](#) with the author of the project – Permanent Representative of the President in the parliament **Yuriy Miroshnychenko** and its developer – the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on behalf of the Deputy Minister **Inna Yemelyanova**.

Consideration of the draft at the session hall of the Parliament passed without discussion and lasted less than a minute, which was enough for voting. Besides, the profile Committee on culture and spirituality did not prepare the text of the draft law for the second reading and thereby made it impossible to adopt the amendments of UCCRO. Development of the Ministry of Justice and the Parliament's adoption of the draft law № 10221 took place despite the promise of the President of Ukraine **Viktor Yanukovich**, given to the leaders of churches and religious organizations at a meeting on April 21, 2011, that the Law on freedom of conscience will not be altered in the absence of a consensus support from denominations.

Given the situation, as it became known to [IRF](#), members of the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations have already prepared an appeal to the Head of State for a veto on the draft law № 10221 in part to prevent any changes to the text of the current Law of Ukraine "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations". This appeal will be passed during the meeting of leaders of denominations with the President Viktor Yanukovich, scheduled for Wednesday, October 17, according to the official website of the President.

Religious freedom concerns in Ukraine – Statement by the European Association of Jehovah's Christian Witnesses

OSCE ODIHR (01.10.2012) - Jehovah's Witnesses in Ukraine suffered much oppression under Nazi and Soviet regimes. For example, on 8 April 1951, more than 6,100 Witnesses were exiled from western Ukraine to Siberia; in 1965, an amnesty released them from exile.

The religious organization of Jehovah's Witnesses was registered in Ukraine on 28 February 1991. In spite of this solid legal foundation, Jehovah's Witnesses experience an inordinate number of troubling and serious problems as they go about their worship in Ukraine. A few examples are outlined below, following news of a legal breakthrough.

Positive development for the rule of law

The Religious Center of Jehovah's Witnesses in Ukraine has been battling the illegal seizure of a portion of its property since 2007. The land grab scam involves the illegal sale of a property to a third party without the knowledge of the legitimate owners. The sale is then validated by decisions of the courts.

Though it had often ruled against the Witnesses in this matter, on 29 December 2011 the Supreme Economic Court ruled in favor of the Witnesses and on 3 April 2012, rejected SDC's cassation appeal. This confirmed the illegal nature of the sale of property rightfully belonging to Jehovah's Witnesses. Following this decision, on 10 July 2012, the Lviv Economic Court of Appeal revoked the unlawful decision of the local court that had recognized SDC as the owner of a portion of the Religious Center's property. On 26 September 2012 the Supreme Court of Ukraine rejected the appeal filed by SDC. Jehovah's Witnesses are grateful for this positive turn of events.

If the scam had succeeded, Jehovah's Witnesses would have been deprived of their administrative building and a large portion of their property, crippling activities at their national headquarters in Ukraine and their ability to direct religious activities for more than 275,000 citizens of Ukraine.

Mob attacks

In numerous cases of violent attacks against Jehovah's Witnesses and vandalism of their houses of worship, local law enforcement authorities either failed to act or did little to assist the victims.

Following are a few recent examples.

- Jehovah's Witnesses in the village of Komyslivka, Odessa Region, were gathered on 5 April 2012 for their most sacred annual religious observance, the Lord's Evening Meal in memorial of Christ's death, when a mob of 20 people, led by a local Orthodox priest, attacked the building. The mob pushed their way into the building, striking some present with their fists and shouting that all attendees must immediately leave the village and never return. The priest then damaged about 200 copies of their religious literature.

The police not only failed to stop the mob action but have not brought criminal charges against those responsible. The police have not followed procedures that would allow the victims to appeal their inaction, and this has led to further crimes against the community:

On the night of 23 / 24 May 2012, a car belonging to one of the Witnesses was burned;

On 19 June 2012 the same priest, with another man, twice attacked a group of Witnesses, with physical violence and death threats demanding that they cease their religious activity and withdraw their criminal complaints filed with the police.

- A.H. Kapsamun, a priest of the village of Kotlovyna, Odessa Region, has repeatedly violently attacked Witnesses, most recently on 31 March 2012, yet no criminal case has been instituted.

Arson and vandalism

From October 2011 to August 2012 there were 45 incidents of vandalism against the houses of worship of Jehovah's Witnesses, resulting in damage that made them temporarily unsuitable for conducting religious services. Of these, there were seven arson attacks against Kingdom Halls (their houses of worship) in the city of Cherkassy, in the town of Shostka, Sumy Region, in Mariupol, Donetsk Region, in Zugres, Donetsk

Region, in the city of Donetsk, and in the towns of Yenakievo and Debaltsevo, Donetsk Region.

- About 1 a.m. of 5 August 2012, the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Debaltsevo, in Donetsk Region, was set on fire. The perpetrators lit and threw an oil mixture onto the roof, igniting a blaze that consumed the building's contents and caused all but its shell to collapse. The police in Debaltsevo were uncooperative and unresponsive until a report was made to the Ministry of internal Affairs. An investigation is ongoing.

- Shortly after the arson in Debaltsevo, the same morning, the Kingdom Hall in the town of Yenakievo, Donetsk Region, was similarly set on fire.

It is disturbing to report that in both cases the fire brigade and the police were uncooperative. The fire brigade refused to issue a Fire Protocol and the police failed to institute criminal proceedings. For example, only at 3 a.m. did an investigator arrive at the scene, and both he and a criminal investigator refused to make a crime report. Policemen who arrived later observed the scene, not taking fingerprints, but obscuring them.

The same Kingdom Hall in Yenakievo was vandalized in 2009 by a neo-fascist organization. At that time the building was desecrated with red nitro-dye signs and images promoting Nazi ideology, offending Jehovah's Witnesses and inciting hatred against them. This criminal case, along with three other attacks against Jehovah's Witnesses, has been vainly investigated by the local police department.

Schengen visas to EU countries will be free for religious leaders of Ukraine

Institute for religious freedom (01.08.2012) - The Treaty on the amendments to the Agreement between the European Community and Ukraine on the facilitation of the issuance of visas was signed on July 23, reports the [Institute for Religious Freedom](#).

The document was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine **Kostyantyn Gryshchenko**, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy **Stefan Füle** and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus **Erato Kozakou-Markullis**.

"Ukraine has taken another important step towards visa-free regime with the European Union", - said the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

When the Agreement will come into force it will provide long-term, multiple and free visas for members of public and religion organizations, representatives of professional associations involved in international forums, conferences and international exchange programs. This right is already provided for journalists, students and entrepreneurs.

According to the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine](#), by now there will be greater transparency in the process of obtaining visas, guaranteeing the right of all interested persons to submit visa applications directly to the Embassy and Consulates of EU Member States (without the involvement of intermediaries like visa agencies).

Supplement to the Agreement between Ukraine and the EU also clarifies the validity of multiple and long-term visas - for 1 year and 5 years instead of, respectively, up to 1 year and up to 5 years.

The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Canonical asks Human Rights Without Frontiers for help

***The Orthodox Cathedral of Transfiguration of the Lord in Kyiv under threat of demolition
Call for help to the European Union***

HRWF (04.07.2012) -

Dear Mr. Fautré!

We, the community of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Canonical (UAOC-C), whose Primate is Patriarch Moses (Koulik O.I.), address to you concerning the discrimination and repressions against our Church carried out by the state, law enforcement and judicial bodies of Ukraine. Our website is www.soborna.org For more than 10 years the clergy and the faithful of our Church have been struggling for our legal rights, guaranteed by the Constitution of Ukraine, international acts including the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The public officials in Ukraine grossly violate the rights of the faithful of our Church, namely declared by the Articles 6, 9, 11, 14 of the Convention.

For 10 years, the officials of the Kyiv City State Administration (KSSA), namely the head of the Administration Popov O.P., the deputy head Novokhatko L.M. and the head of the religious department of the Administration Vlasenko O.I unlawfully have been refusing to provide state registration for our religious communities in Kyiv, ignoring the right of each member of the community to freedom of conscience and religion. Instead of legal registration we are offered to subject to one of the existing Orthodox Churches in Ukraine.

Our categorical refusal was the cause of persecution and repression aimed at the complete destruction of the community of the UAOC-C in Ukraine.

The Primate of the UAOC-C Patriarch Moses has to endure persecution, gross denigration of honor and dignity in the media, there was attempt on his life that finally forced him to leave Ukraine. Following this, corrupt police initiated criminal proceedings against Patriarch Moses to prevent his religious activity and destroy the image of the Church. Our Church was deprived of the Holy Trinity temple by raiders and the St. Andrew the First Called chapel was burnt in Uzhgorod, Zakarpatska Oblast of Ukraine, our clergy and the faithful were beaten.

And in Kyiv the discrimination from the side of public officials grew into the real repressions: sustaining their claim, the illegal court judgment to demolish the cathedral and house for clergy of the UAOC-C was delivered. The officials of the KSSA systematically refuse to provide state registration of our religious communities in Kyiv. That is why according to the Ukrainian legislation unregistered religious communities have no right to get from the public authorities a building for prayers or a land plot to build the church buildings.

Since we do not have the legal registration in Kyiv, we have to hold meetings and prayers in a private house of Patriarch Moses, which serves the community of the UAOC-C as a house of prayer - the Cathedral of Transfiguration of the Lord, which we built at our own expense. Now this temple and the house for clergy (where the clergy with their families, 16 people, live), located in Kyiv (Osokorky area) is to be destroyed.

At the suit the Kyiv City Council and the Darnytsky district prosecutor's office in Kyiv, the corrupted courts: on June 7, 2010, the Darnytsky District Court of Kyiv (judge Tsymbal I.K.), on September 8, the Board of Judges of the Kyiv Court of Appeals (judge Shakhova O.V.), on April 25, 2012, the Superior Specialized Court of Ukraine for civil and criminal cases (judge Matveeva O.A.) delivered illegal judgments to demolish the orthodox cathedral and the house for clergy, belonging to the UAOC-C, located in Kyiv, Osokorky area.

The church buildings are built on the private land plot of the Primate of the UAOC-C Patriarch Moses at the own cost of the community of the UAOC-C.

The attorneys of Patriarch Moses (Koulik O.I.) fully substantiated and proved the legitimacy of the church buildings, which was confirmed by the case files: the expert conclusion of the "State Research Institute of Building Structures" public enterprise (compiled by the group of scientists, including the candidate and doctor of Science), three expert conclusions compiled by the Independent Forensic Institute (compiled by the expert having a degree of candidate of technical sciences, a qualified forensic expert), the technical estimation of the engineering and geological research, the construction projects, the engineering certificate, and the permit for reconstruction.

The conclusions, presented by our lawyers to the courts, institute and confirm the non-infringement by Patriarch Moses and the UAOC-C community of the constructions standards during the construction of the church buildings. The UAOC-C community believes that this case on demolishing the cathedral and the house for the clergy is a fabricated case. The corrupted government, law enforcement and judicial authorities of Ukraine persecute people for their political beliefs, enjail political prisoners and now dare persecute believers for their religious beliefs (the UAOC-C community and its Primate Patriarch Moses), which is prohibited by the Constitution of Ukraine and the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The Ukrainians already experienced such tyranny and repressions under the rule of Stalin in 1930s, so we beg for your help, to stop totalitarianism, which destroys the values of democracy and the freedom of the citizens to conscience and religion in Ukraine.

We ask you:

- to interfere in this case to prevent the demolition of the orthodox cathedral of Transfiguration of the Lord in Kyiv and to convey this information about the persecution against the parishioners of the UAOC-C by the Ukrainian authorities to the leaders of the European countries and the international community;
- as soon as possible to visit with official visit our religious community in Kyiv to personally examine the whole situation and all the necessary documents on this case (all the expenses for living and travel cost will be refunded by our community).

Yours sincerely,
the representative of the UAOC-C community Bishop Oleksandr (Nehodenko O.M.) Tel. +3080502075855
e-mail: PatriarchateKiev@soborna.org

Please find attached: signatures of the UAOC-C community members; photos of the Cathedral and house for clergy of the UAOC-C

Orthodox Churches against the gay pride

Human Rights Without Frontiers is sharing an article illustrating a campaign by the Orthodox Churches against homosexuality and the gay pride: "There should be no place in the Russian land for the vices that these people propagate". It was published in an Orthodox newspaper widely distributed in churches in Ukraine. Please note the very offensive language used by the author in the original language.

Mir No 13 (348) 2012 - The Ukrainian Orthodox Church strongly protested against the gay-parade which was planned in Kiev.

The Kyiv mayor's office has considered a request to conduct a large-scale gay pride parade in Kiev in May. The head of the Domestic Policy Department Maria Honda informed "Fokus.ua" about this. According to the application, the parade will be held in Kiev on the 20th of May from 15.00 to 16.00 on the route: the intersection of Sagaidachnogo Str. and Borichev Descent Str. – Sagaidachnogo Str. – the Kontraktova Square. In Ukraine such a march is planned for the first time. At this gathering of sodomites there will be representatives of the LGBT, not only from Ukraine but also from Europe. Honda also added that only the court can prohibit such activities – in order to prevent fights and crime, to protect public health and to protect other people's rights and freedoms.

Ukraine was the first, of the republics of the former Soviet Union, which immediately after becoming independent repealed criminal persecution for homosexual relations.

Today the parliamentary committees of Ukraine began to consider the bill "On amendments to some legislative acts (with respect to protecting children's rights to secure information space)", which prohibits promotion of homosexuality, a correspondent of "Religion in Ukraine" informs. The document has already received support from the Committee for Family, Youth Politics, Sports and Tourism. However, the Main Scientific and Expert Department of the Parliament (the MSED is headed by BordenyukVasilyIvanovich) is planning to reject the bill, on prohibiting the propaganda of homosexuality, as not suitable.

As it turned out, the gay parade, scheduled for May 20, is only a preparation to the orgy of sodomites, which they and their lobbyists are planning to implement during the Euro 2012. For instance, the first deputy head of the Presidential Administration of Ukraine Irina Akimova suggested to Viktor Yanukovych to include the targeted program "LGBT Tourism to the Euro-2012" in the program of activities of the European Football Championship in Ukraine, the "National Bureau of Investigation in Ukraine" informs.

The target program "LGBT Tourism to the Euro-2012" provides for the organization of special "gay friendly" hostels, holding an amateur tournament in the LGBT football between teams of gays and lesbians, as well as holding a gay parade in Kiev on the opening day of the championship.

Additionally, Akimova proposes to establish a public council on the issues of tolerance under the President of Ukraine and to ensure the registration of the religious organization "St. Cornelius the Centurion Church" (the church of sodomites), "The Phrase" informed. So the attempt to hold the march on May 20 is a touchstone. If the Ukrainians show tolerant attitude to it, according to the prognosis made by Irina Akimova 50 thousand sodomites will come to Ukraine from around the world during the European Championship.

The achievements of sodomy lobbyists in the government are impressive:

- In February 2011 the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine registered the LGBT Council (the Council of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transsexuals), which now actively influences the state policy of Ukraine.

- Today a pro-homosexual law "On the strategy to combat discrimination" is ready for the President to sign. It was after the adoption of such laws in Europe that gay marriages were legalized and they were allowed to adopt children.

- Homosexuality is promoted through the gender politics, the ideologists of which call the family and all the traditional heritage of Ukraine outdated gender stereotypes and propagate same-sex "marriages".

- In 2011 in Donetsk and Kiev homosexuals opened two so-called "churches", which openly jeer at the Christian principles.

Within Europe, the promotion of gay projects is also associated with resistance of the healthy part of society. The "right" to homosexual "marriage" is not one of the human rights, so the states which do not provide for such a possibility or ban it do not violate human rights – such is the verdict of the European Court on Human Rights in Strasbourg. Also in the court decision it was noted that the state is not obliged to grant gay couples the same rights as to normal heterosexual families. And a few days ago the citizens of Slovenia voted in a referendum against the adoption of children by homosexual couples, according to the "3rm.info".

In Russia the author of banning homosexual propaganda in St. Petersburg is Vitaly Milonov. He intends to achieve the adoption of such a document by the State Duma. The vast majority of Russians support the St. Petersburg law. Three-quarters (75%) of Russians polled by the portal "Superjob.ru" approved of the law adopted by the deputies the St. Petersburg concerning administrative responsibility for the promotion of homosexual and bisexual relationships among children and adolescents.

The sodomites of many countries are now up in arms against the Northern capital of Russia. Organizations such as "Amnesty International" and "The Human Rights Watch" have already condemned the law of St. Petersburg, and Madonna, whose concert will take place this summer in the city, is going to speak in support of Russian homosexuals.

Nevertheless, measures to combat the promotion of sodomy are gaining more and more supporters in other cities and regions of the country. Legislature acts against the propaganda of homosexuality were accepted in some regions of Russia, in particular, in Ryazan, Arkhangelsk, and Kostroma Regions. The Russian parliament has registered a similar bill initiated by the deputies from Siberia, aimed at restricting the promotion of homosexuality throughout the country, the "InoTV" informed.

Prepared by Yuri Istomin
Translation by Human Rights Without Frontiers
