



Russia violates human rights

Duma passes law "against homosexual propaganda"

“Resist the beginnings!” – With great concern the Austrian Association of Social Workers follows the incidents in Russia. Now that the Duma, the Russian parliament, has passed this law “against homosexual propaganda“ in its first reading, the violations of human rights conventions on the part of the Russian state are becoming ever more evident. “Especially in a global society that aims for inclusion, exclusion should be a thing of the past”

Information given makes it impossible for LGBT-people to organise public events, protests, parades and even operate a homepage or information-platforms to fight against HIV. The initiators of the law name as grounds better protection of children and their development. No differentiation is made between propaganda and information, clarification of facts and sexual education will be rated as propaganda and criminalized as well.

Social Work defines itself as a Human Rights Profession. Basis is the Ethics Code for Social Workers approved by IFSW and IASSW at the General Meeting in Adelaide in 2004. Regarding Human Rights and Human Dignity the Code of Ethics says: „Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people, and the rights that follow from this. Social workers should uphold and defend each person’s physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual integrity and well-being.“ In a special way social workers have responsibility for the persons they deal with and responsibility facing society and policies.

In this situation Obds-Austria requests the Austrian minister of European and Foreign Affairs, Dr. Spindelegger to send a protest note to the state of Russia as well as to the members of the Duma and Russian organisations.

Citing the homepage of the ministry: „Austria has been elected to the Human Rights Council of the UN on May 20, 2011. Therefore Austria is a member of the highest committee for Human Rights from June 19,2011 to Dec.31, 2014. For the first time since the founding in 2006 Austria is member of the council and also holds the position of vice president. This result of the election is the compelling expression of the international community supporting our longlasting efforts for constitutional legality and protection of Human Rights. Obviously the engagement of Austria during the membership in the Security Council of the UN – on the basis of a widespread dialogue with partners from all over the world - has been rewarded. Now it is up to us to live up to the great confidence, to pursue and immerse the worldwide effort on Human Rights.“ Dr. Michael Spindelegger.

Consecutively it is a challenge to European Institutions to become active and to promote the protection of human rights in Russia. Discrimination and Criminalization of homosexual and LGBT-persons must not be legalized by any state.

Our appeal goes to the Council of Europe, the EU-Commission, to the Commissioner of Human Rights of the EU and to the European Parliament.



The UN-Council for Human Rights in Geneva has to be involved. In March 2012 for the first time the plenary session of the Human Rights Council has debated the discrimination of LGBT-persons. On June 17, 2011 the UN enacted on the resolution on "Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity". Equal rights are claimed for all persons not regarding their sexual orientation. The resolution was launched by South Africa and Brasilia.

Obds-Austria appeals to the members of IFSW and IFSW-EUROPE, on national level, but also internationally, supported by their representatives in the UN councils, to raise their voice against discrimination and prosecution of LGBT-persons worldwide, actually in Russia.

Obds-Austria declares solidarity with LGBT-persons in Russia and other countries who are discriminated on behalf of their sexual orientation and we support these persons with all available measures.

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Maria Moritz
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