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Systematic banning of demonstrations in support of LGBT rights in Russia

Written question No. 558 to the Committee of Ministers
by Mr Jean HUSS, Luxembourg, Socialist Group

In some Council of Europe member states, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (LGBT) are regularly subjected to acts of intolerance, discrimination or violence on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Several written questions on this subject have been presented by members of the Parliamentary Assembly (Questions Nos 497, 524 and 527). In its replies the Committee of Ministers has confirmed the worrying situation in these countries and called on member states to respect human rights. However, discrimination against people on the grounds of their sexual orientation remains widespread. For example, the situation of the LGBT community in Moscow, which has been the subject of a number of written questions, has not improved in the last few years. On the contrary, its members are still deprived of all their rights of freedom of association and expression. Wishing to take more concrete measures in future in relation to these problems in the member states, the Committee of Ministers announced in its replies to previous written questions that the Secretariat was going to consider ways of stepping up Council of Europe action.

To date, the local authorities in Moscow have not authorised any demonstration in support of LGBT rights, and the repeated homophobic remarks by the Mayor of Moscow are inconsistent with Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Mr Huss,

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

Has the Committee of Ministers monitored the discrimination towards sexual minorities in the Russian Federation and does it know on what grounds the Russian courts have upheld the bans on all LGBT demonstrations since 2006 (65 in all)?

In its reply in January 2007 to Written Question No 497 on the banning of the gay pride march in Moscow in 2006, the Committee of Ministers stated that “the Russian authorities agree that there is a need for authorities at all levels to respond strongly to any individual acts of violence and actively promote tolerance and respect in their communities. Solutions should be found which guarantee both security and freedom of assembly”. Will the Committee of Ministers ask the Russian Federation to find a solution to guarantee LGBT persons in Russia their freedom of expression and their freedom to demonstrate?

Regarding the proposals to be drawn up by the Secretariat in order to step up Council of Europe action in this field, has the Committee of Ministers already drawn conclusions from these proposals and has it already taken concrete measures?

Signed:

HUSS Jean, Luxembourg, SOC