

Amnesty International

FACTS AND FIGURES

30 January 2014

AI Index: EUR 46/005/2014

Amnesty International delivers petition to the Russian authorities ahead of Sochi Olympics

FACTSHEET

What: 336, 412 people from 112 countries have signed an Amnesty International's [petition](#) in the course of three months calling on the Russian President Vladimir Putin to repeal repressive legislation aiming to emasculate civil society, restrict legitimate protest and silence criticism.

Amnesty International members and supporters from Australia, Japan and New Zealand to Canada, Puerto Rico and USA signed the petition, with Holland alone collecting more than 100,000 signatures.

Why now: As the Olympic flame is making its way to Sochi to mark the start of the Winter Olympic Games on 7 February 2014, Amnesty International launched an international campaign to highlight the violations to the rights of freedom of expression, assembly and association in Russia.

After London Games of 2012, the Russian government made a public commitment to adhere to the Olympic principles of non-discrimination, equality, inclusion, respect and mutual understanding and to promote human rights during the Winter Olympics and beyond.

However, a number of laws brought in by the Russian authorities since then do exactly the opposite. There has been a crackdown on freedom of speech and expression, interference with the work of independent civil society leading to closure of NGOs and open

discrimination against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community.

What do we want?

We believe these laws, which:

- recriminalize libel;
- restrict public protests;
- broaden the legal definition of treason and espionage;
- oblige NGO's receiving foreign funding to register as "foreign agents";
- make "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors" an offence; and
- criminalize insulting the religious feelings of believers

are inconsistent with Russia's international obligations and its own Constitution and must be repealed.

We are calling on the President of the Russian Federation - the guarantor of the Russian Constitution and the human rights and freedoms enshrined therein - to take all necessary steps to respect and uphold the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly and set Russia firmly on the path to the fair, inclusive, rights-respecting society that its people deserve.

What now?

On 30th January 2014, eight Amnesty International European directors (Belgium (FI), Finland, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine and Amnesty International's Moscow office) will deliver the petition in Moscow while hundreds of Amnesty International members and supporters are organizing actions and delivering petitions to Russian embassies in their countries.

The deliveries are preceded by creative stunts symbolising the suppression of free speech in present day Russia.