

# URGENT ACTION

## JOURNALIST CHARGED UNDER 'PROPAGANDA' LAW

**Elena Klimova, journalist from the Urals city of Nizhniy Taghil, has been charged with "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations" for her online project "Children 404" aimed to support LGBTI teenagers. If court rules that she violated the law she will have to pay a hefty fine and the project will have to close down.**

On 17 January **Elena Klimova** received a call from the criminal investigations department of the city police inviting her to come over for "a chat". Even though no official summons followed, Elena Klimova decided to go. At the investigators' office she was told that there had been seven complaints addressed to various authorities from Vitaliy Milonov, St Petersburg's Duma (parliament) member. He demanded to close down "Children 404" and associated social network groups and fine Elena Klimova for "propaganda". Elena was not given Milonov's complaints to read nor was she allowed to see other case file materials. When she explained that the project was set up to help LGBTI teenagers and to provide psychological support for them, the investigator agreed that he could not see any "propaganda" there and said that he would not open a case against her.

However, on 31 January, she was summoned again to the same investigator. On arrival, Elena Klimova was informed that the investigator would have to charge her with an administrative offence of "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations". To Elena's question "what has changed since last time", the investigator replied along the lines of: "You must understand, I'm only following the orders".

The case is now in Nizhniy Taghil's court. The date of the hearing has not been scheduled yet.

### Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Expressing deep concern that Elena Klimova was charged with "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations";
- Urging the Russian authorities to drop the charges against Elena Klimova and abstain from prosecuting any person under Russia's homophobic legislation;
- Calling to repeal the "propaganda" law which is being used to clamp down on freedoms of expression, assembly and association of LGBTI community and those who support them creates an atmosphere in which they increasingly face discrimination, harassment and violence from vigilante groups.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 MARCH 2014 TO:

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation  
Yuriy Yakovlevich Chaika Prosecutor  
General's Office  
ul. B. Dmitrovka, d.15a  
125993 Moscow GSP- 3  
Russian Federation  
Fax: +7 495 987 58 41;  
+7 495 692 17 25  
**Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General**

Prosecutor of Sverdlovsk Region  
Sergei Alekseevich Ohlopkov  
ul. Moskovskaia, 21  
620219 Yekaterinburg GSP-1036  
Sverdlovsk Region  
Russian Federation  
Fax: +7 343 377 02 41  
Email: sverdloblprokuratura@mail.ru  
**Salutation: Dear Prosecutor**

Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation  
Sergey Evgenyevich Naryshkin  
1 Okhotny Ryad st  
103265 Moscow  
Russian Federation  
Fax: + 7 495 697 42 58  
**Salutation: Dear Chairman**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Elena Klimova started her online project "Children 404" in March 2013 after she published a series of articles about LGBTI teenagers in order to support them and give them a space to speak about their problems. She set up two groups on Facebook and another social network popular in Russia, VKontakte, where the teenagers could share their personal stories about problems they encounter, harassment and misunderstanding they face, and seek advice and support both from their peers and from professional psychologists. The project was named as an allusion to the message "404 Page not found" one receives when a web page does not exist.

The law under which Elena Klimova has been charged was adopted in Russia in June 2013. According to the law, "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors" is an administrative offence and is punishable by hefty fines of between RUB 5,000 (USD 144) for individuals to RUB 1 million (USD 28,800) for organizations. A foreign citizen found to be promoting "non-traditional sexual relations" might end up being imprisoned for up to 15 days and deported from the country.

In December 2013, two LGBT activists were fined under "propaganda" law for conducting an action in Arkhangelsk. In February 2014, a newspaper editor from the city of Khabarovsk, in the Russia's Far East, who published an interview with a gay teacher sacked from his job, was given 50,000 roubles fine. The court found that one of the teacher's statements: "My very existence effectively proves that homosexuality is normal" constitutes "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations".

Name: Elena Klimova

Gender m/f: f

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