

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ADVISORY

AI index: EUR 46/041/2013
27 September 2013

Olympic Committee should be firm against homophobia

Amnesty International is disappointed by the failure of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to see the detrimental effect that Russia's discriminatory legislation will have on the Games in Sochi.

"Russia's law banning propaganda of 'non-traditional sexual relations' among minors is clearly discriminatory and in this it violates international law and runs counter to the Olympic Charter. Moreover, the introduction of the law creates an atmosphere in Russia that has already encouraged brutal crimes against people only because of their real or perceived sexual orientation," Sergei Nikitin, Amnesty International's Moscow Office Director.

"The fact that the IOC has satisfied itself with Russian officials' assurances of non-discrimination is not enough. It disregards the fact that Russian law effectively prohibits people from public expression of 'non-traditional' sexual orientation. This is an affront to gay and lesbian athletes and spectators. It is also a disappointment to sports fans across the world who care about the Olympic ideal."

"The IOC could have used its influence with the Russian authorities in the run-up to the Olympics to make sure that the Games are not tarnished by human rights abuses. Sadly, they appear to be missing this opportunity."

Public Document

International Secretariat, Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW, UK