



Speaker: Nicolas AGOSTINI

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Item 6: Universal Periodic Review of the Russian Federation

FIDH deeply regrets that Russia rejected key UPR recommendations based on its international obligations, in particular in relation to non-discrimination, LGBT people, and freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

While we welcome the Russian authorities' commitment to accept some of the recommendations that were made during its review, in particular to prohibit the use of confessions obtained under torture and to grant detainees free access to a lawyer from upon arrest, serious human rights violations continue to be committed on a daily basis.

The large-scale **crackdown on civil liberties** initiated last year through a series of repressive measures continued in 2013, as the new laws and regulations have been enforced. Moreover, in June 2013, the State Duma adopted a bill on "*propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations*", which bans de facto not only any demonstrations and gatherings by LGBT activists, but also allows to silence them online, wiping out any expressions of tolerance towards, and support of, LGBT people.

ADC Memorial, one of the most active NGOs in combating discrimination, has been charged of having published a report and submitted it to the Committee Against Torture – a clear case of reprisals for providing information to the UN. On 19 June 2013, LGBT organization "**Coming Out**" was fined for functioning as a "foreign agent" without registering as such. Despite the fact that the decision was later cancelled on procedural grounds, "Coming Out" received two letters from the prosecutor requesting that the NGO stop its activities or register as a "foreign agent".

We urge the Russian government to ensure that NGOs and civil society can operate freely and without fear; repeal legislation requiring them to register as "foreign agents"; and stop administrative and judicial harassment of NGOs and human rights defenders. Reprisals for interacting with the UN must come to an end.

Furthermore, the authorities must investigate all acts of violence and intimidation against journalists and human rights defenders, and ensure that perpetrators are held to account. Finally, we call on Russia to invite the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders to visit the country.