

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération
en Europe

**JOINT INTERVENTION BY THE OSCE DELEGATIONS OF
CANADA, NORWAY AND SWITZERLAND
DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR FREDERICKA GREGORY
ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S DRAFT FEDERAL LAW ON THE
"PROPAGANDA OF HOMOSEXUALITY TO MINORS"
939TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
31 JANUARY 2013**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson

I deliver this statement on behalf of Norway, Switzerland and Canada.

We raised our concerns in the Permanent Council last year about the regional legislation in the Russian Federation prohibiting the promotion of homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender identity and expressed our regret that the law was adopted in March 2012.

We now reiterate our concern in connection with the first reading of the Draft Federal Law no. 44554-6, imposing a nationwide ban and making the "promotion of homosexuality among minors" an administrative offence under Russian federal law.

We are concerned that the proposed legislation violates the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as well as the right to non-discrimination and equality before the law. Furthermore, as the new offenses created by the draft law are vaguely defined and potentially applicable to a large number of individuals, there is a substantial risk for them to be arbitrarily used.

All participating States of the OSCE have taken strong commitments on tolerance and non-discrimination, including those found in the 1990 Copenhagen Document. In addition, International Human Rights law recognizes every person's entitlement to the same rights, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We therefore urge the Russian delegation to convey our concerns to the relevant authorities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.