Statement by the Spokesperson of High Representative Catherine Ashton on LGBTI rights in Russia

The Spokesperson of Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, issued the following statement today:

"High Representative Catherine Ashton expresses concern over the approval by the Russian Duma of a federal law making the promotion of 'non-traditional sexual relations among children and minors' an administrative offence under Russian law.

The High Representative believes that this law could stigmatise particular groups and individuals and lead to discriminatory practices and discourse against them, and is therefore in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights. She is concerned, in particular, by the possible impact of the implementation of this law on the activities of LGBTI organisations in Russia, also in the context of the on-going pressure on civil society in the country.

The High Representative calls on Russia to uphold its national and international commitments to non-discrimination, freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, in particular in the framework of the Council of Europe, to protect the enjoyment of these rights by all individuals."

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