

Council of Europe
The Secretary General

Strasbourg, 4 October 2012

Dear Chairman,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the bill No 8711 which proposes to ban the so-called "promotion" of homosexuality via a wide range of production and publication products and media. I understand that the bill foresees fines or prison sentences for up to five years in connection with this proposed ban.

I note that the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has signaled its expectation that Ukraine's international obligations in the sphere of human rights protection would be taken into account in this bill in its further consideration.

I welcome and concur with this expectation. I would urge you, as Chairman of the Parliament, to ensure, before submitting this bill to a second reading, that relevant international obligations undertaken by your country are not put into question, in particular the obligation to ensure freedom of expression and freedom from discrimination which are set out in the European Convention on Human Rights.

In this respect, I would draw your attention to the fact that a number of cases are currently pending before the European Court of Human Rights concerning the incrimination of the so-called "promotion of homosexuality".

I call upon the Ukrainian Parliament to demonstrate its commitment to the full respect of the human rights and equal treatment of all individuals in society, and to show political leadership in rejecting initiatives which are likely to increase intolerance and prejudices in society at large. The Council of Europe is ready to offer all necessary assistance to this effect.

I would be grateful if you could transmit my letter to the leaders of the different political parties in Parliament.

Yours sincerely,


Thorbjørn Jagland

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