



PERMANENT MISSION OF NORWAY

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16th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group Review of the Russian Federation, Geneva, 29 April 2013

Mr. President,

Norway thanks the delegation of the Russian Federation for the presentation of the national report, and for the cooperation with the UN and the Universal Periodic Review.

Norway strongly believes in the vital role of human rights defenders in the promotion of, and adherence to, human rights worldwide. We are increasingly concerned about the situation for those who work in defence of human rights in Russia. We recommend:

- To investigate promptly, effectively and impartially all reports of attacks on or threats against human rights defenders, lawyers, journalists and civil society activists, and to identify those responsible and bring them to justice;
- To invite the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders to visit;

We welcome the participation of the Russian delegation in the Council's negotiation of the resolution 'protecting human rights defenders' in March, and recommend that the Government fully implement the provisions therein;

While commending the simplification in procedures for registration of political parties, Norway is concerned about the many amendments in the legislation restricting civil and political rights, including the laws on NGOs and on treason. We recommend:

- To remove legislative and other regulations which limit the legitimate exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly and to ensure legislation is in accordance with the Russian Federation's commitments and obligations under international law;
- To prevent discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and to protect the rights of LGBTI people, including their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

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