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Sochi Court Rejects Gay-Pride Group

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A Krasnodar region court has refused to register the Pride House in Sochi organization on the grounds that fighting homophobia is immoral.

The group, started by activists from the web portal GayRussia.eu, aimed to open a space for holding conferences and other events in the run-up to and during the 2014 Winter Olympic Games.

A Krasnodar region court in November rejected an application by the group to officially register. The group appealed but was turned down again last month.

In its decision, published online this week, the court said it was refusing to register the organization on the grounds that its aims contradicted "public morality" and could result in the destruction of society's notions of good and evil.

"[The group] will be capable of enacting large-scale ideological influence on citizens, and the goals of the movement must not go against the bases of law and order or public morality," the court said.

New York's Human Rights First condemned the decision.

"The organization is concerned that the court construed homosexuality as 'extremist' behavior and urges the Russian government to amend vague anti-extremism laws to prevent their misuse," the statement said.

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