

5 Detained in Anti-Homophobia Protest on Red Square

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A small group of gay rights protestors on Red Square. **Evgeny Feldman**

Police detained five opposition activists on Red Square for organizing an unsanctioned demonstration against new anti-gay legislation, a news report said Monday.

Administrative cases were opened against the activists, who could be fined as the demonstration was held without a permit from the Moscow authorities, Interfax reported.

Photos published by Novaya Gazeta on Sunday show the activists lighting flares and holding a large rainbow-colored poster reading "Homophobia is the religion of the lowbrow" before policemen confiscated the poster and stopped the demonstration.

The activists were later taken to the Kitai-Gorod police station and charged with public disorder for holding an unsanctioned rally.

Last month, the State Duma approved a bill that banned so-called "homosexual propaganda,"

a term that lawmakers presumably use for gay rights demonstrations, by introducing fines of up to \$16,000 for promoting homosexuality among minors.

The bill became law late last month, after President Vladimir Putin signed it along with a bill banning homosexual couples from adopting children.

Both bills prompted criticism from gay rights activists and members of the international community, with gay rights activists calling for a boycott of the 2014 Sochi Olympics to protest the legislation.

Nongovernmental organizations have also spoken out against the law.

Human Rights Watch called on the International Olympic Committee to speak out against the bill, saying it was “incompatible with the Olympic Charter’s promotion of ‘human dignity,’” and a “blatant violation of Russia’s international legal obligations to guarantee nondiscrimination,” according to The Associated Press.

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