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Russian Talk Show Host Defends Anti-Gay Remarks

By The Moscow Times

August 12, 2013



A clip of Russian talk show host Dmitry Kiselyov making anti-gay remarks on his program has gone viral, adding to mounting controversy surrounding Russia's anti-gay propaganda law ahead of the Winter Olympics in Sochi.

Bloggers also filed an electronic complaint with the Investigative Committee and General Prosecutor's Office, calling for Kiselyov to be investigated for extremism, Ekho Moskvy reported. The charge carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

In April 2012, Kiselyov stated on his show that he believed anti-gay propaganda laws did not go far enough and that homosexuals should be banned from donating blood and sperm. Taking it even further, he said if a homosexual died in a car accident, his or her heart should be buried or burned, but never given to someone as a transplant since the organs would be "unsuitable for extending the life of another."

A group of Russian bloggers uploaded and reposted the video over the weekend with the title "Fascism TV." Different uploads of the clip have collectively amassed more than 300,000 views.

The controversy surrounding Kiselyov comes as the Russian government seeks to reassure the International Olympic Committee that LGBT athletes and spectators will suffer no discrimination at the Sochi Winter Olympics amid calls for a boycott.

In his Sunday interview with Ekho Moskvy, Kiselyov defended his remarks, stating that he simply wanted Russia to become more "civilized" by joining the U.S., EU, Japan and Arabic countries in banning homosexuals from donating blood and organs. He explained that homosexuals cannot "hide" what they are and that in the U.S. the Food and Drug Administration keeps a database of everyone in the U.S. who has had a same-sex sexual relation over the past twenty years, with the equivalent EU agency doing the same.

In most Western countries as a result of the AIDS crisis there are restrictions on men who identify themselves as having sex with men donating blood. The FDA, however, does not maintain a database of homosexuals.

When asked about Vlad Tornovy, 22, who was murdered in May after coming out as gay, Kiselyov explained that the problem was that homosexuals continue to "provoke" the majority. He added he did not regret his statement and that it is the people who organize gay pride parades who should be ashamed.

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