

Do Not Protest for Gay Rights in Sochi, Olympic Village Mayor Urges

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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ROSA KHUTOR — Former Olympic champion and mayor of the Mountain Olympic Village Svetlana Zhurova has appealed to protesters not to use the Games as a platform to protest about gay rights in Russia.

"I have never seen [this] at any Olympic Games and I would call on the people who are going to protest, that it does not make sense," said Zhurova, a gold medal winner in the 500m speed skating event at the Turin Games in 2006.

Zhurova said that sexuality was irrelevant in the context of competition, and that gay and straight athletes would be treated equally.

"For the spectators, it is more important who wins than whether he or she is homosexual or not," the 41-year old former Olympic champion said.

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