

Homophobic Russian Actor Blacklisted by Estonia After Ebola Rant

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Russian actor Ivan Okhlobystin.

Estonia has become the third country to declare Russian actor Ivan Okhlobystin persona non grata, after his incendiary comments on gay people and Ebola victims caused international outrage.

Though Estonia's Foreign Ministry declined a request from the country's ERR broadcaster on Sunday to comment on the measure, the blacklisting follows bans from two other countries — Ukraine and Latvia — over the actor's controversial statements and his outspoken support of separatists in eastern Ukraine.

The former priest turned actor said earlier this month that Ebola victims were coming back from the dead as zombies, citing instances in which those who had died from the virus had resurrected several days later.

Late last year, the actor shocked the LGBT community by suggesting that all gay people should be burned alive in an oven because they presented a "living danger" to his children.

That statement, and a range of other remarks deemed to be promoting ethnic hatred, prompted Latvia's Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevics to announce last week the actor had been blacklisted ahead of his one-man show in Riga on Nov. 7.

The Estonian ban also derails Okhlobystin's plans to give a performance in Tallinn this month, ERR broadcaster said.

Okhlobystin reacted to the latest travel ban by saying he considered the measure a recognition of his accomplishments and 'thanking' the U.S. State Department.

"Our mole in the Capitol called, congratulated me on the third star," he said Sunday on Twitter, referring to the three travel bans. "Thanks to the [U.S] State Department for a high evaluation of my achievements."

Okhlobystin is among several Russian performers to have been blacklisted by Ukraine for their support of the annexation of the Black Sea Crimea peninsula in March and Moscow's involvement in eastern Ukraine.

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