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United Russia to Unveil 'Straight Flag' in Honor of Traditional Family

By Jennifer Monaghan

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A flag depicting "A Real Family" urges Russians to stick to traditional family values.

Russia's ruling political party has designed a "heterosexual flag" to honor traditional family values, the Izvestia newspaper reported Wednesday.

Copies of the flag, which feature the outlines of a man and a woman holding hands with three children, were shown to Izvestia by Andrei Lisovenko, deputy head of the United Russia branch in Moscow. The flags also come printed with the Russian-language hashtag "A Real Family."

According to Lisovenko, the flag will have its official unveiling at Moscow's Sokolniki park later Wednesday, where hundreds of people will gather for a United Russia rally in honor of the Day of Family, Love and Fidelity, which the country celebrates annually on July 8.

United Russia's decision to unveil a "heterosexual flag" comes after the U.S. Supreme Court

ruled to legalize same-sex marriage in late June, when the White House was lit up in the colors of the rainbow flag traditionally associated with the LGBT community.

“This is our response to same-sex marriage, to this mockery of the concept of the family. We have to warn against gay-fever at home and support traditional values in our country,” Lisovenko was quoted as saying by Izvestia.

Homosexuality is not illegal in Russia, but a law passed in June 2013 bans the promotion of "nontraditional" sexual relations to minors. A survey by independent pollster the Levada Center in May found 37 percent of Russians think homosexuality is a disease that needs to be cured.

After news broke of the heterosexual flag's design, it didn't take long for microblogging site RIP Novosti — which describes itself as "an anonymous, humorous blog" — to cast doubt on the flag's originality.

It posted a photo to its Twitter account of a similar flag bearing the symbol of La Manif Pour Tous, an anti-gay marriage movement based in France. The latter features two rather than three children, but is otherwise almost identical to United Russia's.

The Day of Family, Love and Fidelity is a relatively new celebration in Russia, having only been introduced in 2008. In honor of the holiday, divorces have been banned for the day in four Russian regions — Tula, Amur, Kaluga and Kurban — the Lenta.ru news site reported.

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