

Russian Presidential Hopeful Condemns 'Extremist' Designation of LGBT Community

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Yekaterina Duntsova. **Yekaterina Duntsova / Telegram**

Yekaterina Duntsova, a Russian journalist who earlier this month announced her bid to run for president, condemned the Russian Supreme Court's decision on Thursday to ban the so-called "international LGBT public movement."

"This is a dangerous decision, which has no clear guidelines for interpretation, and it can lead to the persecution of any Russian citizen," Duntsova [wrote](#) on the messaging app Telegram just minutes after the court's ruling was made public.

The journalist-turned-presidential hopeful accused Russian authorities of concealing their homophobic views beneath a smokescreen of concern about protecting children from harmful influences.

"This ill-conceived concern could lead to persecution of children themselves, for example, for

drawing a rainbow,” she said.

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“It is imperative to respect the rights of every person and to avoid actions that could lead to restrictions on freedoms and the infringement of rights,” she added.

An independent candidate with a pro-peace agenda, Duntsova hopes to run against President Vladimir Putin in next year's presidential election.

To join the race, she needs to secure the support of a 500-strong special interest group and collect 300,000 unique voter signatures from at least 40 regions of Russia.

“I want to show with my example that one can go and resist. I want to give hope to other people,” Duntsova [told](#) The Moscow Times of her decision to run for office last week.

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