



Public movement POLITICS 2.0

Representative: Julia Stadnichuk

Topic

Emerging minority and human rights protection to prevent social conflict

Good afternoon, on behalf of the members of our Movement, I greet all the participants in this forum. Thank you for the opportunity to take part in it.

My name is Yulia Stadnichuk. I represent the International Public Movement POLITICS 2.0. We started our activities in the Russian Federation, however, at the moment, there are allies of our concept in other countries, in particular in Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Chile, Great Britain and others.

Among our main goals are informing citizens about the ways of protecting and exercising their constitutional and civil rights, appeals to state authorities and law enforcement, information and educational activities, assistance in the preparation of legal claims, initiation of court hearings, etc.

Today I want to discuss what we are facing and what we can confirm with specific documents, including video recordings from the scenes of events.

Since the beginning of the active fight against the new coronavirus infection in the Russian Federation, the practice of introducing measures restricting the rights of citizens that are not based on state laws has begun to take shape. The Russian Constitution, as well as international legal acts signed and ratified by Russia, guarantee citizens freedom of religion, freedom of movement, protection from coercion to participate in medical experiments, and the right to a fair trial.

Despite all this, our Movement has repeatedly faced situations when the rights of citizens were violated in the absence of legal grounds.

Since the start of the vaccination campaign against the new coronavirus infection, the situation has worsened. Despite the fact that the available vaccines did not even pass all the necessary tests, that is, they are experimental drugs with unknown properties, citizens began to face an unprecedented compulsion to participate in an actual medical experiment. The laws of the Russian Federation do not allow in any way the coercion of citizens to vaccinate themselves, and protect the right to voluntary informed consent to medical interventions. They also do not provide an opportunity to threaten people with dismissal or deprivation of the right to education, medical care, etc. on the basis of their refusal of a medical intervention. However, citizens face threats of firing and other forms of pressure.

Thus, a situation is developing in the country when conditions are actually being created for the formation of a new minority - citizens who refuse vaccinations and wearing masks, and who want to maintain their usual way of life. We are talking about citizens who do not aim to undermine the security of the state or create a threat to the health and life of other citizens, and are not opposed to medical interventions in general.

The situation is such that at the moment, the number of such citizens is quite large quantitatively, however, in terms of the rights that they can actually exercise, they are a political minority. Since the situation is in the development stage, new initiatives from the Government appear, as well as new situations on the ground; we are talking about an emerging minority.

Despite the fact that it is in the stage of formation, it already has clear characteristics. Among the main characteristics are the following:

- refusal to vaccinate against COVID-19;
- refusal to wear masks;
- law-abidingness;
- adherence to traditional values, the intention to maintain their usual way of life;
- the use of extremely effective legal methods to protect their rights - appeal to the courts, law enforcement agencies, government bodies;
- refusal from personal and group public protest events;
- no intention to endanger the security of the state or other citizens.

Among the situations that citizens from this group have faced, and about which we know from our own experience and can provide documentary evidence:

- administrative persecution of Orthodox Christians for visiting a church on the most important religious holidays for Orthodox Christians;
- administrative prosecution for moving around the city;
- refusal to accept for consideration a lawsuit on the basis that another person has already filed the lawsuit (not the same, with other arguments), although refusal on such grounds is not provided for by the laws of the Russian Federation;
- the non-admission of the plaintiff to the court building for the hearing of the case without legal grounds, the issuance of a court ruling in the absence of the plaintiff and the refusal to overturn the decision, although the absence of the plaintiff by law is a basis for overturning a decision.

We state with regret that the growing pressure, not backed up by laws, in the context of restrictions even on access to justice, is a breeding ground for the formation of new conflicts throughout the country. We also note that the lack of judicial protection for minorities leads to a growing sense of impunity for their opponents, which creates an extremely dangerous situation.

From the experience of our allies from other countries, we know that this situation is developing not only in Russia.

In such conditions, we believe, it is necessary to pay special attention to the protection of the rights of citizens who make up an emerging minority. As far as we can judge, at the moment such a minority is a new phenomenon in the practice of protecting the rights of minorities, however, its novelty should not prevent proper attention to this problem.

Among the effective measures to protect the rights of this minority, we believe, will be the inclusion of a separate block of recommendations to governments on the observance of the rights of this group of citizens, in particular on creating conditions under which citizens can exercise all their rights in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Constitution of the state and its laws.

Thank you for your attention.