

# May 17, International Day Against Homophobia

Solidarity with the victims of homophobia in Chechnya and not only there

Federazione dei Comunisti Anarchici

May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The Novaya Gazeta, a newspaper in opposition in Russia, has published a series of reports about Chechnya about the detention of dozens of men in a secret prison “due to their non-traditional sexual orientation or its suspicion”. The Russian newspaper writes that recent waves of repression have led to the arrest of more than 100 men and to the death of – at least – three of them.

The atrocities that the Russian newspaper brought to the fore have not yet [note from the translator : it has been since] been confirmed by independent sources but the NGO Human Rights Watch claims that indeed something is going on there, based on information from reliable sources.

Tanya Lokshina, head of HRW program in Russia says that given the numbers of sources and the coherence of their stories, there can be no doubt about the catastrophic developments of the ongoing anti-gay campaign in Chechnya.

Ekaterina Sokirianskaia of the International Crisis Group, who is an expert on the issues of the North-Caucasus region, received similar confirmations from her own sources.

A direct support line that was activated in Russia for Chechens by the LGBT-network has received more than ten calls from Chechnya within two weeks after it was published in Novaya Gazeta.

The brutality of this repression shows how much Chechnya has become Ramzan Kadyrov’s fief. The Chechen president’s spokesperson replied to Novaya Gazeta and said there was no gay people in Chechnya as “if there were such kind of person in Chechnya, police forces wouldn’t have to deal with it because their parents would already have sent them in a place which allows no way back”.

Who believes that a simple intervention from Putin could bring the Chechen authorities to end this persecution?! The Kremlin depends on Kadyrov’s presidency to guarantee stability in the region as it tried to do so for a long time now.

Actually, Kadyrov has a personal security force of about 20.000 people and his Republic strictly abides by a ultra-traditional social and religious code that is completely independent of the Rus-

sian law. He also declared to be in favor of polygamy and honor crimes. Talking about homosexuality is a huge taboo and gay people are invisible. That makes it even more complicated to reach them and provide evidence of the repression.

« The news arrive too late » says Igor Kochetkov of the Russian LGBT-Network who launched a program of evacuation from the region. The actual repression could be even more brutal than what is described by Novaya Gazeta. As Ekaterina Sokirianskaia says: “We’ve just seen the tip of the iceberg”.

Alternativa Libertaria stands in solidarity with the LGBT community in the Russian Federation, against arrests and attacks in Chechnya, in Russia and in others countries of the Federation where freedom of press and expression in public spaces have been repressed for the LGBT people. We support counter-informative work on this ongoing case and try to provide information about the way authoritarianism and traditionalist new-religious spirit in the countries of the Federation have revealed being a tool for domination on people.

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