

Appeal to the Russian Authorities to Reject Repressive Draft Legislation on “Foreign Agents”

On July 6, the State Duma of the Russian Federation passed in the first reading a package of amendments to existing legislation that would allow a broad spectrum of Russian NGOs to be classified as “Foreign Agents.” Such a designation would not only stigmatize organizations, but would subject them to discriminatorily severe auditing and reporting requirements, and potentially catastrophic financial and/or legal sanctions for any violations. Although supporters of this legislation paint it as the equivalent of Foreign Agent Registration legislation in other countries, this is patently untrue. The Russian draft not only applies to organizations operating in the interest of foreign governments but to any non-commercial organization that receives money from any foreign source for any purpose while also engaging in any type of “political activities,” including such broadly-accepted work as policy advocacy on a national or even local level. This legislation clearly violates the Russian Federation’s international commitments to respect its citizens’ rights to freedom of association and participation in political affairs. The Duma should reverse course and reject the draft law. If passed by the Duma it should be rejected by the Federation Council or vetoed by President Putin.

The full text of the Appeal can be [here](#).

The Civic Solidarity Platform unites 46 civil society organizations committed to improving the human rights situation in Europe, Eurasia and the US. It provides a common space for these groups to share their experience in conducting

research, advocacy, and public organizing and to find new channels of communication and improved methods for working cooperatively. Its aim is to serve as a conduit through which civic activists can build alliances, strengthen mutual support and solidarity, and improve their influence on national and international human rights policy. The Civic Solidarity Platform was born out of recognition that nongovernment groups need to work in a more effective and coordinated way in order to counteract negative trends in the field of state protection for human rights and defense of democratic principles.