

14 November 2005

Civil Society Must Be Free Of Restriction, Says Transparency International

Annual Meeting condemns draft legislation in Russia

Berlin – In the light of proposed legislation in the Duma of the Russian Federation, Transparency International, the global coalition against corruption, passed the following resolution at its Annual Meeting on Sunday in support of the right of civil society to operate without restriction in all countries. The resolution calls upon the other countries of the Group of Eight to make specific representations on this issue to the government of Russia during its G-8 presidency.

The text of the resolution follows.

Resolution by Transparency International

Annual Membership Meeting, 13 November 2005

Given the essential role of civil societies in the fight against corruption, Transparency International at all times, in all countries, supports the right of civil society organisations to operate without restriction.

Transparency International, the global coalition against corruption, strongly condemns provisions of the draft law “On Introducing Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation” which promotes discrimination against non-governmental organisations and the rights of foreign organisations and citizens in Russia.

The draft legislation proposes putting severe restrictions on civil society organisations in Russia and contradicts existing laws, conventions and basic standards protecting the freedom of speech and association, and is contrary to the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Corruption undermines the very fabric of the Russian state and society, and can only be fought effectively with the active participation of strong and independent civil society organisations.

The Transparency International movement calls on the Russian State Duma, to abandon these restrictive provisions and publicly endorse the freedom of civil society organisations to operate freely throughout the Russian Federation.

Transparency International urges the other countries of the Group of Eight industrialised nations to make specific representations on this issue to the government of Russia during its G-8 presidency.

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