

Dear Friends of Human Rights Watch,

When Oslo took itself out of the running for the 2022 Olympic Games that left the International Olympic Committee (IOC) with two choices: Kazakhstan and China. By putting pressure on the IOC Human Rights Watch has had some successes over the last years changing abusive human rights behaviors in host countries. Along these lines, allow me to share some nice news with you regarding Kazakhstan.

In December 2014, the IOC, introduced a series of human rights reforms called "Olympic Agenda 2020," which require host countries to sign a contract with an anti-discrimination clause – including sexual orientation – and includes protections for human rights, labor, and the environment.

Consequently, when in February 2015, a discriminatory draft law in Kazakhstan - a so called anti-LGBT propaganda law, which resembled Russia's recent law - passed the Senate, the upper house of Kazakhstan's parliament, and was sent along to President Nursultan Nazarbaev for signature, Human Rights Watch researchers got on the case.

After an investigation, Human Rights Watch was in regular contact with IOC officials asking them to intervene to communicate that this law was incompatible with the Olympic Charter and International Human Rights Standards. Kazakhstan's Constitutional Council announced on May 26, 2015, that this pending legislation on "propaganda of nontraditional sexual orientation" is unconstitutional.

More work needs to be done on Kazakhstan but we are hopeful after this good news because as Kazakhstan bids for the Olympics, it should be aware that the eyes of the world will be on how it handles these issues.

The full press release can be found here [Kazakhstan: Anti-Gay Laws Found Unconstitutional](#).