

KPH – Campaign Against Homophobia
Nationwide LGBT organization – Poland

Intervention : OSCE High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination in
Astana

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My name is Greg Czarnecki and I represent the Campaign Against Homophobia – KPH. We are a nationwide organization working for the equality of lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people with branches in every province of Poland. Like many Poles, a good number of our members and the constituency we serve are Catholic. They are comfortable with both their religious and sexual identities.

However we have observed a troubling trend where Catholic organizations and institutions of the Church carry out “reparation therapy” which attempts to “cure” people of their homosexuality and make them heterosexual.

There is no credible medical or scientific evidence that this therapy is effective as homosexuality is not an illness (In 1991, the World Health Organization removed homosexuality as an illness from their classification of diseases). In contrast, there is evidence of the psychologically damaging effects which this therapy imposes on gays, lesbians and bisexual people. Our organization offers psychological counseling and we have documented cases of individuals, often very young, who are scarred by such programs which try to force them to be someone they are not. It is troubling to observe that this “reparation therapy” exists in many OSCE participating states and is supported by a sector of their medical and scientific community.

We therefore recommend that participating states encourage and support professionals in the medical and scientific fields to employ credible and globally accepted scientific knowledge regarding homosexuality which very clearly shows that “reparation therapy” is not valid.