Commonwealth of Independent States: Model Statute to Protect Children

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The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Interparliamentary Assembly which is currently comprised of delegations from the parliaments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine enacted on 3 December 2009 the Model Statute *О защите детей от информации, причиняющей вред их здоровью и развитию* (On the Protection of Minors against Information Detrimental to their Health and Development).

The Model Statute develops the ideas of the recent Russian Federation's bill of the same name which was adopted on 24 June 2009 by the State Duma (Russian parliament) in its first reading (see IRIS 2009-8: 18/29). On 11 June 2010 the bill was adopted in second reading and awaits the third and final reading during the current session of the parliament.

The preamble to the Model Statute speaks of the necessity to take into account international instruments in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Model Statute regulates products of the mass media, printed materials, movies, TV and video films, phonograms, electronic and computer games, computer software, other audiovisual products on any material object, including those disseminated in public performances and on the information telecommunication networks of general access (including Internet and mobile telephony) (Art. 3).

The Model Statute defines several categories of information banned for dissemination among minors (persons below 18 years of age). They range from pornography (also defined in the Model Statute) to "discrediting the social institution of the family" (Art. 6).

The ratings of the "informational products" related to the age of their consumers are recommended to be as follows: universal (all ages), below 6 (years old), 6+, 12+, 16+ and 18+ (Art. 7). The Model Statute introduces mandatory specific labelling of the products including TV programmes in accordance with their age rating (Art. 14 and 15). Airing of products labelled 16+ shall be allowed on TV only from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m., and those labelled 18+ from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. (Art. 16).

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Facilities, such as Internet cafes, providing Internet access to customers shall be obliged to use technical and programming means to protect minors from detrimental information (Art. 17).

Producers and distributors shall be responsible for marking their products in accordance with the directives of the new law. In particular it encourages them to solicit an expert opinion (that is an opinion of experts as to what category the product belongs), specific rules and legal consequences of which are also regulated in the Model Statute.

О защите детей от информации, причиняющей вред их здоровью и развитию, Информационный бюллетень, 2010, No. 46

http://www.iacis.ru/html/?id=22&pag=728&nid=1

Model Statute On the Protection of Minors against Information Detrimental to their Health and Development, 33rd plenary meeting of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly (Resolution No. 33-15 of 3 December 2009), Информационный бюллетень, 2010, No. 46

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