

Venice Breaks With St. Petersburg on Anti-Gay Law

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MILAN, Italy — Venice is seeking to break off cultural relations with St. Petersburg because of the Russian city's legislation curbing gay rights.

The city council invoked Venice's "history, international prestige and conscience" in a motion unanimously approved Monday evening asking the city administration to refrain from cultural exchanges as long as anti-gay laws are in place. The motion says "the city of Venice cannot ignore what is happening in the institutions" and asked officials to communicate the reason for the unilateral action.

Two of Europe's cultural jewels, Venice and St. Petersburg signed an agreement in 2006 to pursue cultural and other exchanges.

St. Petersburg is one of a number of Russian cities that have passed laws banning what they call "homosexual propaganda." The Kremlin also is pushing such a law.

(AP)

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