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AMERICAS

Ecuadorian President Supports Same-Sex Partnerships

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa said March 29 that the government "will seek to grant certain guarantees to stable homosexual unions but without ever arriving at the point of marriage."

"Let's be clear that the profoundly humanistic position of this government is to respect the intrinsic dignity of everyone, of every human being, independently of their creed, race, sexual preference," he said. "We will give certain guarantees to stable gay couples, but matrimony will continue being reserved for a man, a woman and the family."

Correa also said: "Every person has dignity; that's to say, one must respect a person independently of their sexual preference. Be careful not to deny employment to someone because of their sexual preference. That is discrimination; that is unconstitutional."

Costa Rica Declares National Day Against Homophobia

Costa Rican President Óscar Arias Sánchez and Health Minister María Luisa Ávila have issued an executive decree designating May 17 as National Day Against Homophobia.

It states: "Public institutions must amply disseminate the objectives of this commemoration.

They also must facilitate, promote and support activities directed at the eradication of homophobia."

May 17 is the day the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses in 1990.



Costa Rican President Óscar Arias Sánchez has declared May 17 to be National Day Against Homophobia.

EUROPE

Copenhagen OKs Gay Foster Parents

In a first for Denmark, the city of Copenhagen has approved two gay couples as acceptable foster parents, *The Copenhagen Post* reported March 31. The couples were placed on a list to offer homes to children removed from their own homes by government officials.

"We can't guarantee that the two couples will be used as often as other couples," said Klaus Wilmann of the

city's Center for Foster Care. "But we feel that a family consisting of two men or two women can have the same beneficial qualities as any other."

Famously liberal Denmark, which in 1989 became the first country to pass a same-sex registered partnership law, has nonetheless remained squeamish on issues involving gays and children.

A spokesman for the official Danish Council of Ethics denounced Copenhagen's move as "supporting something abnormal." Morten Kvist said, "Boys and girls benefit by being raised by a man and a woman."

Euro Mayors Invited to Moscow Pride

Organizers of Moscow's third Gay Pride events, scheduled for May 30 and 31, have urged the mayors of Berlin, Paris and London to attend the events.

The city's first two Pride parades were banned by Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, who called them "satanic," and people who attended the public events that replaced the parades were violently attacked by anti-gay demonstrators.

Writing to openly gay Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit, openly gay Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë and gay-friendly London Mayor Ken Livingstone, Moscow Pride organizers Nikolai Baev and Nikolai Alekseev said: "Please take part in our conference and rally. This could principally change the situation in Moscow. This would give us a real chance that our civil rights will be respected by Moscow administration and that violence will be avoided."

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