

His Holiness Pope Francis  
Vatican City State  
00120

We, foreign students from Russia, have been forced to ask you for protection against illegal conviction of the Catholic and God's servant Osia Alphaeus Ebitimi - a citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Ayo (nickname) goes by the name Osia A. E. He has been in Russia since 2013, he has already received a bachelor's degree and got enrolled into graduate school. Everyone has a good opinion of him and characterizes him exclusively on the positive side, as a kind and sympathetic young man. Ayo always took an active part in public events at the University, and in his spare time he taught English.



Since January 2019, Ayo has been arrested in Ufa (Republic of Bashkortostan of Russia), on the false statement of a prostitute who accuses him of rape and assault. This story is known in Russia as it was widely covered in the media and on the popular talk show "Let them talk". We sincerely believed that the close attention of journalists and the public would not allow them to convict a clearly innocent person.



Court sessions there've been in since August 2019. We hoped for an objective review of Ayo's case, but our expectations were not met. Repeated attempts by the lawyer Ramil Gizatullin, who presented irrefutable evidence of falsification of the criminal case, are ignored by the Prosecutor and the court.

Absolutely all evidence was refuted by responses to the lawyer's requests. moreover, during the lawyer's investigation, falsified facts of fraud on the part of officials who are dealing with the case were revealed.

Investigator of the Investigative Committee, who was questioned at the court session, stated that, as a student, at the request of the investigator, he signed an empty Protocol for the seizure of Ayo's personal belongings.

How can we not pay attention to these gross violations :

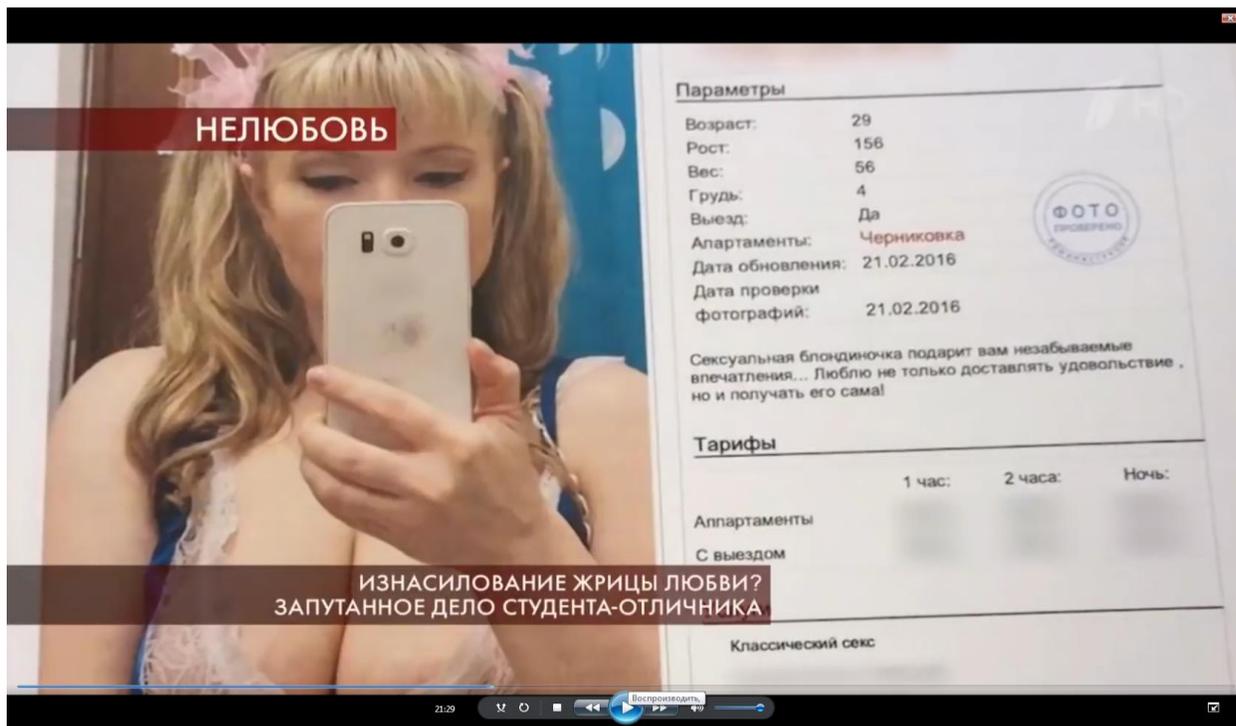
- a foreign citizen without notifying the Embassy for a whole day (from 2nd to 3rd January 2019) was actually deprived of liberty and illegally held in the police station.

- investigative actions were carried out with him at night (from 3rd to 4th January 2019), but protocols was dated in the evening on 3rd January 2019.;

- the lawyer who was provided by the investigator did not actually defend Ayo and did not write any comments on the illegal actions of the investigator. After this case, the lawyer became an investigator of the Investigative Committee, i.e. he was not initially interested in his defense.

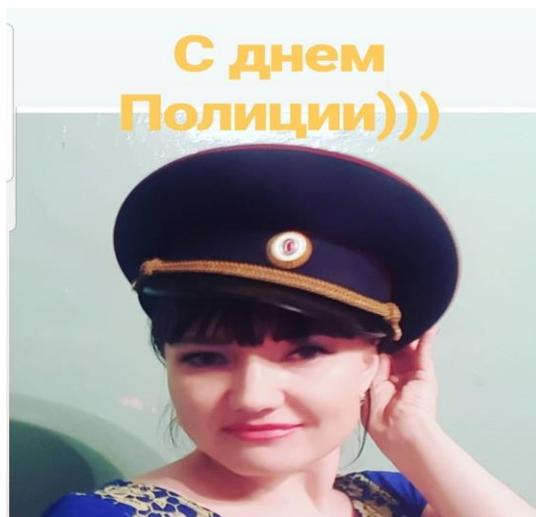
Ayo's case will leave its mark in the history of Russian jurisprudence, as he, his lawyer, and a support group of concerned citizens were opposed by the prosecution system represented by the investigator, Prosecutor, and the court. It's very simple. If the innocence of an ordinary citizen of an African state is recognized, it will be necessary not only to recognize the fact of illegal arrest, but also to bring to criminal responsibility all those involved: investigators, lawyers, representatives of the Prosecutor's office.... lots of victims for one foreigner.

Under these circumstances, it is easier for officials to illegally sentence Ayo to a long term with the words "there is no reason not to trust the Prosecutor and the "victim" and forget about the falsification.



In order to do this, the prostitute in her comments to journalists spreads false information that Ayo is involved in a number of sexual attacks on women. This is not true and has not been confirmed during the investigation. Such actions are attempts to put pressure on the state and society.

The "victim" does not hide her occupation, which she carries out exclusively on the territory of Oktyabrsky district of Ufa, i.e. where the criminal case was investigated and is now being considered in court. Her audacious behavior and open advertising of her sex services, as well as her photo congratulating the police on a professional holiday, give reason to assume that there are corrupt ties with officials.



We did not dare to attach photos of a naked prostitute to this petition, which she posted not only on a special website, but also on social networks. Unfortunately, all of them are in the public domain, which does not exclude viewing them by minors.

Not indifferent to the fate of Ayo, foreign and Russian students recorded their video messages to showcase solidarity (#freeOsia, #prayforOsia). This was attended by students studying in Canada, Germany, China, the Philippines and Russia, as well as former

students from Nigeria, Angola, Benin and other countries. Other foreign students wrote numerous petitions to the President of Russia, the Government of Russia, the heads of the General Prosecutor's office and the Investigative Committee, as well as representatives of the regional authorities, but these appeals did not have any effect.

Wanting to stop us, prostitutes not only from Russia, but also from foreign countries, held their flash mob, openly stood up to protect their fellow prostitute. This phenomenon is new not only in Russia, but also, if we are not mistaken, in the whole world.

Since this action took place in connection with Ayo's case, the lawyer Ramil Gizatullin suggested calling it the "Osia Effect" (a social phenomenon that is expressed in the fact that a certain community of people whose activities are legally prohibited openly support their colleague).

Supporters of Ayo, who are not indifferent to its fate, have already exhausted all legal methods of protection, which are provided for in the Russian Federation. That is why, your Holiness, we appeal to You in the hope of providing all possible assistance in resolving the fate of Osia Alphaeus Ebitimi.

This story is tragic not only because of the falsification of evidence and clearly accusatory bias on the part of the court, but also other significant circumstances:

1. Ayo was raised by a single mother, who died after he left for Russia to pursue his studies. He has no adult relatives who would be interested in his fate and could provide him with any help or assistance;

2. The Nigerian Embassy in Russia did not take any measures to protect their citizen, although Ayo and his lawyer constantly informed them about the investigation and repeatedly wrote for contact with the Prosecutor General's office and the Ministry of foreign Affairs of Russia about his case.

3. With the connivance of the Embassy of Nigeria in Russia, Ayo's money amounting to \$5,700 was stolen, which was a state stipend for years of study in Russia. Currently, Ayo is deprived of cash for the purchase of food, medicine, clothes, etc.

4. The "victim" prostitute is an unofficial leader of prostitutes in the city of Ufa, she does not hide her face on sex service sites, gives television interviews about her profession and income, and takes an active part in the activities of informal communities of sex workers in Russia. The trial is coming to an end, according the Prosecutor's speech, Ayo will be sentence to 12 years imprisonment, for crimes that he did not commit and in the absence of any evidence.

The lawyer has repeatedly filed a motion to disqualification of the Prosecutor's office of Oktyabrsky district of Ufa, as irrefutable evidence of falsifications on their part was presented in court. But these arguments were rejected by the court.

Back in January last year, when the investigation had just begun, a prostitute on a sex-services forum openly wrote that “guilt has been proven” and Ayo would be sentenced to a minimum of 10 years. Please, note that this is how it happened and everything is going according to the script of a prostitute. This is not an accident, which further confirms the fact that she has corrupt ties with officials.

Last summer, the famous Russian artist Sergey Zagorovsky (Instagram @sergozagarik) painted a tragic picture of the history of Ayo "We are glad to eat you" (#wearegladtoeatyou).



The picture, which was not allowed to be shown on the set of the talk show "Let them talk", depicts the Union of the judiciary with the three-headed Cerberus (police, investigative Committee and Prosecutor's office), who, with the participation of a prostitute (in the form of a snake), openly attack a falling black boy (Ayo). Note that the snake wraps around the Cerberus ' front paw, but it tries to attack the image of Ayo.

We kindly ask you to pay attention to the fate of Osia Alphaeus Ebitimi and protect him from this illegal conviction.

We consider it an honor to Express our great respect to you.