

To the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus
I.V. Karpenko

From the citizen of the Kingdom of Sweden
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On conducting control inspections
to verify the quality of education at
Ikhvis Private School

Dear Igor Vasilyevich,

Since 2008, being in the territory of the Kingdom of Sweden, I lived together with the Belarusian citizen Liudmila Arkadeyevna Trafimovich. During our life together we have had two minor daughters – Anthoula Anthie Cheropoulou, born on June 08, 2012, and Alexandra Cheropoulou, born on April 01, 2015, who were born and permanently resided at the address: Sweden, Stockholm, Dansbanevägen 28, 126 31 Hägersten, before their removal to the Republic of Belarus on April 18, 2017, which was not agreed with me.

Currently, there are unresolved disagreements on the upbringing and education of the children between me and L.A. Trafimovich.

As it became known to me, since September 2019, my daughter Anthoula Anthie Cheropoulou, born on June 08, 2012, has been educated at Ikhvis Private School at the discretion of my wife L.A. Trafimovich, but without agreement with me, which is confirmed by the official response of the Department of Education of the Administration of the Oktyabrsky District of the City of Minsk (ref. No. 1-2/H-208-1-ЭЛ. of November 16, 2019), *as well as photographs posted on the website <https://obitelminsk.ru/smotret/foto/?galAlbum=250>*. Religious rites are conducted in relation to my daughter, for which I did not give my consent. Furthermore, I did not give my consent to the publication of photos of my daughter used in the advertising of the monastery on the global computer network, the Internet, which is a media, which constitutes a violation of Clause 9, Article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Advertising”, which expressly states that consent must be given by the legal representative of a minor.

In accordance with Part 2 of Article 75 of the Code on Marriage and Family, all issues regarding the forms and methods of raising children, their education, their attitude to religion, organization of free time and other issues of raising children shall be decided by both parents by mutual agreement. Disagreements between parents regarding parenting issues shall be resolved in court.

In this regard, on May 14, 2020, a statement of claims was filed with the Oktyabrsky District Court of the City of Minsk to resolve disagreements regarding the education of the child between parents.

At the same time, in accordance with Article 10 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the Rights of the Child”, every child has the right to independently determine his or her attitude to religion, to profess any religion or not to profess any.

The same article of the Law provides that the state cannot intervene in the upbringing of the child based on a certain religious worldview of the parents (guardians, custodians), and, therefore, it cannot interfere with the performance of religious rites with the participation of the child outside educational institutions, observing traditions, except when the incitement to religious actions directly threatens the life and health of the child, violates his or her rights and legitimate interests. For a child under the age of fifteen, religious rites shall be performed with the consent of the parents (guardians, custodians).

Moreover, in accordance with Clause 1.10 of Article 2 of the Code of the Republic of Belarus on Education (hereinafter - the Code), the state policy in the field of education is based on the principles of the secular nature of education.

However, these principles are grossly violated by Ikhvis Private School.

By virtue of Clause 3 of Article 2 of the Code, the establishment and anonymous or other activities of religious organizations contradicting the law are not allowed in educational institutions.

According to Clause 4 of Article 2 of the Code, educational institutions can interact with registered religious organizations with regard to the issues of upbringing on the basis of written statements of students (legal representatives of minor students) after school hours, taking into account their influence on the formation of the spiritual, cultural and state traditions of the Belarusian people.

At the same time, I as a parent (a legal representative) did not file such an application with Ikhvis Private School, I did not give my consent to this, and the obvious activities of a religious organization in this educational institution are expressly prohibited by Belarusian law.

I believe that a child should receive a general education in a state secular school, and not a private religious school. A child must have freedom of religion and exercise his or her right to freedom of religion at a conscious age, without the pressure of studying at a religious school at a young age.

As follows from numerous publications on Internet resources, Ikhvis Private School is based on the personality cult of its religious leader, Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok, who established an authoritarian regime in the institution. Thus, during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the institution continued its activities as usual, without taking measures to protect the health of its employees, students and parishioners. As a result, most nurses and staff fell ill with pneumonia and the coronavirus COVID-19, but officially this information is hidden (<https://news.tut.by/society/683501.html>). It became known to me that my daughter Alexandra and her mother L.A. Trafimovich are currently in the hospital with an infection,

allegedly they have the COVID-19 coronavirus, which they contracted in the abovementioned facility.

FOR REFERENCE. *Ikhvis Private School is located within the territory of the St. Elisabeth Convent, located at 6, Vygotskogo Street in Minsk, and is an integral part of it. This monastery is often visited by odious individuals who hold radical neo-Nazi views that they do not hide, but, on the contrary, show publicly, in particular, Dmitry Lemeshonok - the son of Archpriest Andrei Lemeshonok (<https://nn.by/?c=ar&i=197309&lang=en>), and is also used as a platform for propaganda of hatred and the cult of war by people with a dubious reputation, namely the 'warrior of Christ Anthony' or as he calls himself 'lieutenant colonel of the Russian Military Intelligence Directorate Anton Manshin' (<https://nn.by/?c=ar&i=197200&lang=en>).*

In addition, in violation of Clause 7.1. of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 645 dated April 29, 2010 "On Certain Issues Regarding Internet Sites of State Bodies and Organizations and Repeal of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus No. 192 dated February 11, 2006", there is no information about the Principal of the school, including the position, last name, first name, middle name, email and office phone, on the website of the Ikhvis Private School (<https://obitelminsk.ru/shkola-ixvis/>). The site contains only the general email address of the aforementioned monastery and its telephone number.

Thus, all external communication with this educational institution is filtered, which is a gross violation of the legislation on education. I don't have the opportunity to discuss the issues of my children's education with a school principal who must be a competent person in such matters. I don't want to talk about this with the priest. In this regard, as a parent (legal representative), I have a reasonable question: why is this allowed and why government bodies authorized by the Code to exercise control in the field of education do not respond to this.

Under such circumstances and in accordance with Art. 109 of the Code of the Republic of Belarus on Education,

I demand:

1. In order to identify the above violations of the legislation on education, to instruct the corresponding structural units to carry out specially organized monitoring measures to verify the quality of education at Ikhvis Private School, based on which to evaluate the performance of this educational institution and to consider the issue of the revocation of the accreditation of this educational institution, if the grounds for such decision are found.

2. To notify me in writing of the results of the consideration of the appeal.

Annex:

1. Copies of documents of kinship to Anthoula Anthie Cheropoulou;

2. A copy of the response of the Department of Education of the Administration of the Oktyabrsky District of the City of Minsk No. 1-2/H-208-1-эл. dated November 16, 2019;

3. Copies of photographs posted on the website <https://obitelminsk.ru/smotret/foto/?galAlbum=250>;

Nikolas Cheropoulos /signed/

May 19, 2020