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Muslims, Jews Reject 'Orthodox Church Party' Idea



"The law does not allow parties based on religion, but no one will ban the formation of an Orthodox or Christian party if there is no formal mention of it in the title," Father Chaplin wrote in the recently opened Orthodox Politics blog.

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MOSCOW, January 20 (RIA Novosti)

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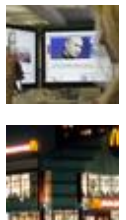
The leaders of Muslim and Jewish groups in Russia have responded to a recent call to form an Orthodox Church party by rejecting all religion-based parties.

Chairman of the Russian Congress of Jewish Religious Organizations Zinovy Kogan and Deputy Chair of Russia's Union of Muftis Farid Asadullin on Friday condemned the proposed formation of an "Orthodox" party, voiced earlier this month by Orthodox Church spokesman Vsevolod Chaplin.

"The law does not allow parties based on religion, but no one will ban the formation of an Orthodox or Christian party if there is no formal mention of it in the title," Father Chaplin wrote in the recently opened Orthodox Politics blog. "Let us recall that Christian Democrats in the European Parliament refer to themselves as the European People's Party and the moderate Muslim party in Turkey as the Justice and Development Party."



The Mo



“The Church is positive about the prospect of setting up Christian or Orthodox parties or in-party groups, but it won't provide them with exclusive support or bless them.” Chaplin said.

But Kogan and Assadulin disagreed. “This proposal... seems provocative,” Assadulin said at a press conference at RIA Novosti.

The idea may resurface after March presidential elections in Russia, he went on, adding that “the political landscape” is too vague for a serious discussion.

“I do not back the idea of creating a Jewish party... I back the idea of setting up a secular association of Jews – religious and non-religious,” Kogan said.

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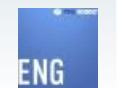
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