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U.S. Moves to Defuse Latest Adoption Scandal

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Anton Fomin

The U.S. Embassy has moved to defuse the latest adoption scandal between the United States and Russia after the death of a Russian orphan in Nebraska last week prompted a senior official to renew calls for fewer foreign adoptions.

Nine-year-old Anton Fomin immigrated to the United States with his birth parents, not through intercountry adoption, the embassy said in a statement.

A spokeswoman for children's ombudsman Pavel Astakhov confirmed that Fomin was given up for adoption after arriving in the United States.

Fomin died last week in a house fire at the home of his adoptive parents in Davey, Nebraska.

Astakhov hinted in several Twitter messages on Monday that Fomin had been adopted by U.S. foster parents through intercountry adoption, which has been rattled by abuse scandals in recent years.

U.S. adoptions need to be reformed, and fewer Russian children should adopted abroad, he said.

At least 17 Russian children have died in the United States as a result of abuse by their parents since 1995, Astakhov said in January 2011.

In 2010, 1,079 Russian children were adopted by American families, down from 3,966 in 2005.

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