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Duma Deputies Appeal to Constitutional Court Over WTO Accession

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The Constitutional Court has received a request from 131 State Duma deputies to examine Russia's accession to the WTO, citing irregularities in its approval process, Kommersant reported Wednesday.

The request was signed by deputies from the Communist Party and A Just Russia, including party heads Gennady Zyuganov and Sergei Mironov. Such requests must be signed by at least 90 deputies to be examined by the court.

In the request, the Duma deputies say that procedures for ratification of treaties were broken, and that neither the government nor the Duma observed "the constitutional requirement for reaching agreement on the protocol with the subjects of the Russian Federation."

They also identified a number of other violations, including that required time limits related to adoption of the treaty were not observed, that the document was not signed in Russian and that the Duma had only an unofficial translation of the protocol.

The protocol was signed in Geneva on Dec. 16 and must be ratified by the Duma, approved by the Federation Council and signed by the President within 220 days, which would be July 23. The State Duma is expected to take up the matter July 4.

The Constitutional Court told Kommersant that they were unsure whether it would consider the deputies' request.

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