

Duma Delays U.S. Child Adoption Pact

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 08, 2012



Pavel Astakhov, Russia's children's rights ombudsman, has repeatedly criticized the United States on its lax checks on adoptive American parents. **Denis Grishkin**

The State Duma on Friday postponed a vote on ratifying a long-awaited adoptions treaty with the United States that supporters hope will help combat abuse by U.S. foster families.

The treaty, which was signed last year, stipulates a new certification and monitoring regime for Russian children adopted by U.S. parents.

Russian officials demanded the treaty after a string of abuse scandals, culminating with a 2010 incident in which an adoptive mother sent her 7-year-old son on a plane back to Russia.

In response, the Kemerovo region on Thursday became the first to ban adoptions by Americans, a move that senior Duma Deputy Yelena Mizulina condemned as unconstitutional.

The Duma on Friday rescheduled the treaty ratification to this week. After the Duma, the document must be approved by the Federation Council and signed by President Vladimir Putin. It does not require approval by the U.S. Congress.

The United States has historically adopted more Russian children than any other country. Last year, 956 children were adopted by U.S. families, according to Russian government statistics.

It was unclear how many of the 140 Kemerovo children sent abroad were adopted by Americans.

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