

Astakhov Condemns Gay Australians Over Exploitation of Russian Boy

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Pavel Astakhov

Kremlin children's rights ombudsman Pavel Astakhov has condemned a gay Australian couple convicted of sexually exploiting a young boy who they had adopted from a Russian surrogate mother.

In 2005, Mark Newton and his partner Peter Truong paid \$8,000 for the boy, who was inappropriately photographed and made to feature in pornographic films, Astakhov said Monday on Twitter.

The abuse came to light after the boy was taken to visit three men in the U.S., New Zealand and Germany, all of whom had known connections to pedophile rings, the Sydney Morning Herald reported.

"Russian orphans have always attracted foreign perverts due to their availability" for

adoption, Astakhov said. "By banning foreign adoptions, we are erecting a barrier against such people."

The ombudsman has been a prominent advocate of a bill recently passed by the State Duma that would ban the adoption of Russian children by foreign same-sex couples.

The Australian couple, who used to live and work in the U.S., were arrested while visiting relatives in the United States. Australian authorities had searched their Cairns home while they were away and tipped off U.S. police about Newton and Truong's activities.

Newton has been handed a 40-year prison sentence for his part in the crime and been ordered to pay \$400,000 in compensation to the boy by a U.S. court. Truong, who has pleaded guilty to the charges, is awaiting sentencing.

Astakhov said the boy had been put into the care of an American foster family.

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