

Russian Prosecutors Move to Soothe Outrage Over Probe Into Baltic States' Independence

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A view of Riga, Latvia

The Russian Prosecutor General's Office has conceded that its inquiry into the legality of the three Baltic nations' independence from the Soviet Union has “no legal prospects” after a flurry of criticism of the investigation.

Prosecutors were obliged to look into the request they received from Russian lawmakers, the office's spokeswoman Marina Gridneva said Wednesday, TASS reported.

“We are obliged to consider all requests we receive, regardless of their content,” Gridneva was quoted as saying. “It so happens that some of them are devoid of any common sense.”

“In this particular case, it is clear that the affair has no legal prospects,” she added, TASS reported.

The investigation request from ruling United Russia party lawmakers claimed that the

independence the three Baltic nations gained around the time of the 1991 Soviet collapse was illegal, because the body that authorized it — an interim assembly called the State Soviet — was supposedly unconstitutional.

Officials from the three Baltic countries denounced the investigation as absurd, while the Kremlin denied any knowledge of the inquiry.

The State Soviet was an interim assembly formed in September 1991, and comprised the Soviet president and the leaders of 10 of the country's republics. But the Soviet Constitution allowed no provisions for the creation of such a body, according to Rossiiskaya Gazeta, an official government daily.

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