

Russian Official Has Doctorate Revoked After Plagiarism Charges

September 23, 2015



a former speaker of the Moscow City Duma Vladimir Platonov

The Ministry of Education and Science has stripped a former speaker of the Moscow City Duma of his doctoral degree, after being accused of plagiarizing his thesis.

The ministry said it acted on the request of the former speaker Vladimir Platonov, to revoke his degree and on a ruling by the state certification board, according to the ministry's order published this week by Dissernet.org — an online group aimed at exposing intellectual fraud by public figures.

Dissernet exposed parts of Platonov's thesis for a doctoral law degree as having been lifted from other sources, according to the group's report last fall.

Platonov responded months later, saying he had made a "difficult decision" and asked the State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles to revoke his degree.

Explaining via Facebook in April the unattributed matches in his thesis with works of other authors, Platonov used an euphemism "unscrupulous borrowing" that, he said, is not plagiarism.

Platonov said he would rewrite his doctoral thesis and present the new work to seek the degree.

Plagiarism accusations have been brought against scores of Russian officials, including Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky, children's rights ombudsman Pavel Astakhov, State Duma deputy from the ruling United Russia party Vladimir Burmatov, Transportation Minister Maxim Sokolov and St. Petersburg governor Georgy Poltavchenko.

None of these officials have been stripped of their degrees.

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<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/09/23/russian-official-has-doctorate-revoked-after-plagiarism-charges-a49761>