

Russian Company Halts 'Little Obama' Ice Cream Production

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Russian company that created the “Little Obama” chocolate ice cream has halted production following accusations of racism, local news website chelny-biz.ru reported Wednesday.

The Slavitsa ice cream company, based in the city of Naberezhnye Chelny, Tatarstan, began producing an experimental batch of “Obamka” (“Little Obama”) in late April.

The new ice cream caused several media outlets in Russia and abroad to accuse the company of racism and of damaging already strained relations between Russia and the United States.

The company defended its position by issuing a press release, in which it claimed that the “Little Obama” ice cream was “made for children and is far from politics,” the local tatar-inform.ru news website reported.

Managers at the company had earlier said the name was chosen not to make a political

statement, but because they thought the idea was “amusing.” Factory financial director Anatoly Ragimkhanov said that the design on the ice cream's wrappings, which shows an image of a smiling, dark-skinned boy wearing an earring, was inspired by a Soviet-era cartoon. The animation features an imaginary island named “Chunga-Changa,” inhabited by African children.

An unnamed U.S. official told the Reuters news agency that the United States was “disappointed by the media-driven anti-Americanism that has become so prevalent in Russia over the past few years, particularly when it takes on a discriminatory or racist bent.”

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