

Kremlin: Children Ombudsman Astakhov 'Still Working'

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Children's Rights Ombudsman Pavel Astakhov.

The Kremlin has denied reports that Children's Ombudsman Pavel Astakhov has been fired from his post, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Friday.

"The president hasn't signed any presidential decrees [firing him], I don't know who has written a resignation letter or whether anyone has written one at all. So far I can say only one thing: Astakhov continues to work," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said, RIA Novosti reported.

Peskov said that no new candidates for the post of children's ombudsman are currently being considered.

A number of Russian media outlets reported Thursday that Astakhov had resigned, citing unidentified sources close to the Kremlin. "In the coming days, he [Astakhov] will leave on vacation and will not return to his post," an unnamed source told the RBC news outlet.

The news came shortly after the ombudsman drew public criticism for asking a young survivor of a deadly boating accident, “how was your swim?”

A online public petition asking to dismiss Astakhov after the statement has gathered more than 150,000 signatures.

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