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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

UN Passes Russian Resolution on Citizenship

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A United Nations flag waves outside the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) accepted during its 32nd session a resolution proposed by Russia on "human rights and arbitrary deprivation of nationality," the RIA Novosti news agency reported Friday.

Passed without needing a vote, the document is a set of international human rights standards on the right to citizenship and seeks to put up safeguards against people becoming stateless.

"There are many cases of deprivation of citizenship in the world, and while this is due to different factors, many times it is evident that it is purely arbitrary, and thus connected with other human rights," said Alexei Goltyayev, the Russian representative to the Council.

Goltyayev says that the specific concern of the resolution is cases in which the denial of citizenship is widespread and explicitly a form of discrimination.

Moscow has pointed out that such a case exists in a number of former Soviet republics including Latvia and Estonia, where thousands of people live as so-called “non-citizens,” having become stateless after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

This resolution comes a week after both houses of Russia's parliament passed new anti-terrorism laws with strict stipulations on citizenship. Under the new laws, any dual nationals who hold Russian citizenship, as may be the case in the former Soviet Union, can have their Russian citizenship revoked for “inciting hatred.”

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