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Ombudsman Calls to Abolish Russian Statute of Limitations for Child Sex Crimes

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Russia's children's ombudsman, Pavel Astakhov, has called for the statute of limitation on sex crimes against minors to be abolished.

Astakhov's comments come amid an ongoing sex scandal at one of the capital's most prestigious schools, Moscow School No.57.

"New cases of sexual harassment from students at Moscow School No.57 prove the need to abolish statutes of limitation on sex crimes against children," Astakhov wrote on Twitter.

"People that have graduated the school long ago are talking about events which took place 13 years ago. Even if pedophiles [are] proven guilty, they might escape prosecution," the ombudsman said. "The statute of limitation on pedophilia-linked crimes must be abolished completely. Pedophiles should always be prosecuted."

The Investigative Committee has launched a probe into claims from current and former students of the elite school, revealing that several teachers engaged in intimate relationships with underaged boys and girls. School principle Sergei Mendelevich resigned on Monday, pressured by public outrage and mounting evidence of wide-spread sexual harassment in the school.

According to Russia's Criminal Code, people charged with pedophilia face up to 20 years in prison. Those accused of using a person's dependent position to coerce them into sex face up to five years behind bars. Statutes of limitation on both offenses vary from six to 15 years, depending on gravity of the offense.

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