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# Russian Deputy Vows to Criminalize Sexual Harassment After Duma Scandal

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Oksana Pushkina **Anton Novoderzhkin / TASS**

A Russian lawmaker has promised to take up a 15-year-old bill criminalizing sexual harassment after one of her colleagues was accused of inappropriate behavior towards female journalists.

At least three correspondents last week accused State Duma deputy Leonid Slutsky of sexual harassment. The lawmaker denies the claims and has threatened to sue the outlet that reported the allegations.

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In an interview with the RBC business portal Tuesday, Slutsky's colleague Oksana Pushkina pledged to reintroduce a bill on gender equality "where everything, including the issue of harassment, will be clearly spelled out."

The bill has been stuck in committee after first being introduced in 2003.

Pushkina lamented the legal gap in Russia's Criminal Code that does not define sexual harassment and does not incorporate sexist misconduct at the workplace.

"There is no regulation of accountability for sexual harassment [at work]," she was cited as saying.

"In cases of sexual harassment, women most often remain silent, or, at best, quit their jobs," Pushkina told RBC in the interview.

If passed, the decade-and-a-half-old draft bill would hold public officials criminally liable for violating the equal rights of men and women.

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