

Russian Journalism Union Head Blows Off Sexual Harassment Scandal

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The head of a Moscow journalism union Pavel Gusev **Anton Novoderzhkin** / TASS

The head of Moscow's journalism union has dismissed the latest sexual harassment allegations in Russia as "belated" after four women accused a lawmaker of inappropriate advances late last month.

Yekaterina Kotrikadze, the deputy editor-in-chief of the international Russian-language RTVI channel, openly [accused](#) State Duma deputy Leonid Slutsky of attempting to forcibly touch and kiss her in his office in 2011. She came forward a week after three other female correspondents [accused](#) him of sexual harassment.

Related article: [Fourth Journalist Accuses Russian Deputy Slutsky of Sexual Harassment](#)

"I look at all this with surprise, irony and a bit of laughter," Pavel Gusev, who heads the Moscow Union of Journalists, [told](#) RTVI on Thursday.

“It’s surprising that seven years later, someone says that some man touched them, and I should believe that. Why?” he asked.

Challenging Kotrikadze’s story as “unprovable,” Gusev suggested he would have accused the journalist herself of sexual harassment in the lawmaker’s place.

“Had I been Slutsky, I would have said ‘she was wearing black panties and some bra that day’,” he said, drawing criticism from the host for failing to come to his colleague’s defense.

Gusev nonetheless stressed that he was “very serious when it comes to journalists who were actually oppressed” and always came to their defense “when there was a reason to defend them.”

Meanwhile, Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper correspondent Yelena Krivyakina added to the sexual harassment allegations against state officials. In a column published on Wednesday, Krivyakina reported an incident in which an unnamed Duma deputy and a senior Energy Ministry official warned her to “stay silent” while making inappropriate advances against her.

“I kept my mouth shut for 20 years. And I would have remained silent if not for this story with Slutsky,” Krivyakina [wrote](#).

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