

Chechen Leader Announces Mass DNA Tests to Repatriate Russian Children From Iraq

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Ramzan Kadyrov (Yelena Afonina / TASS)

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has issued a call for mass DNA tests in the North Caucasus republic to help repatriate Russian children from war-torn Syria and post-war Iraq.

A criminal court in Baghdad has recently sentenced over a dozen Russian women to life in prison for belonging to the Islamic State terrorist group. Russia's Foreign Ministry [estimates](#) that Iraq has held around 150 Russian women and children since the defeat of Islamic State last year.

Related article: [Iraq Returns 27 Russian Children Home From Islamic State](#)

“A mass DNA sample collection will be carried out on my instructions to ensure the unimpeded repatriation of our children born in the Middle East into Russia,”

Kadyrov [wrote](#) in a social media post Monday.

“This will not only help determine family kinship, but also grant the children Russian citizenship.”

Kadyrov added that his envoy, Russian Senator Ziyad Sabsabi, had arranged for a single Iraqi judge to hear the Russian citizens’ cases to simplify the return of the children to Russia.

“This is our sacred duty when it comes to the life and freedom of Russian citizens,” the head of Russia’s majority-Muslim Chechen region said.

Islamic State is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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