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Russian Policewoman Accuses Boss of Sexual Harassment

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Zamir Usmanov / TASS

A former Russian policewoman has accused her ex-boss of sexual harassment, less than a week after three high-ranking officers were charged with gang raping their young colleague in another city.

Last week, investigators opened a criminal case against three senior officers for attacking and raping a 23-year-old colleague in the republic of Bashkortostan.

Related article: Russian Police Chiefs Charged With Gang Rape of Female Colleague

Retired Chelyabinsk traffic police officer Lyubov Gerasimova, 45, said the high-profile case in Bashkortostan had galvanized her to come forward with claims that she was forced out of the service for refusing her boss's advances.

“He pressed me in the hallway and unbuttoned my trademark police shirt,” Gerasimova was cited as saying. “I recoiled when he whispered: ‘I’ll let you unbutton me elsewhere’.”

“It’s the nature of any service: You can’t say no,” the 12-year-veteran of the force told the Moskovsky Komsomolets tabloid last week.

The ex-police sergeant said she was assigned holiday duties and eventually reassigned to a remote location as retaliation when she let her boss know that his efforts were futile.

In a more recent interview, Gerasimova said she had received runaround responses from higher-ups when she filed complaints.

“Of course I stood there, turned around, cried and left,” the mother of four said in an interview with Chelyabinsk’s 31 Kanal news channel on Wednesday.

“I felt bad for [my] kids as they always saw me crying in the evenings,” she said.

A year and a half ago, she said she succumbed to pressure and submitted a resignation letter. She has since been receiving unemployed benefits of $200 a month while simultaneously paying off a mortgage.

The city’s traffic police has refused to comment on Gerasimova’s allegations, the broadcaster reported.

Chelyabinsk’s police department spokeswoman said it had launched an inspection into Gerasimova’s harassment claims.

“I’m not the first and not the last who’s been harassed in law enforcement,” she told Moskovsky Komsomolets. “I did what I should have done [by coming forward], for those raped and destroyed girls who remained silent.”

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