

Decriminalization of Domestic Violence Was a 'Mistake,' Russian Official Admits

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Tatyana Moskalkova (Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency)

Russia's top human rights official has called the country's 2017 decision to adopt a law that decriminalizes domestic abuse "a mistake."

In 2017, President Vladimir Putin [signed](#) a law that scrapped prison sentences for first-time abusers whose beatings result in "minor harm," such as small abrasions, bruises and superficial wounds. Since the law was adopted, human rights activists say that domestic violence complaints have [skyrocketed](#), negatively impacting the situation for women in Russia and giving abusers a sense of impunity.

Related article: [Moscow Domestic Violence Appeals Skyrocket After Decriminalization Law](#)

"I believe that decriminalization was a mistake and we need to adopt a law to combat domestic abuse," Russia's Human Rights Ombudswoman Tatyana Moskalkova said at a rights

conference on Monday.

"Today, a person who is in the family space is not protected from family members who do harm unto them without it being considered a crime," Moskalkova was cited as saying by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Russia's top human rights official had earlier spoken out in favor of the decriminalization of domestic violence.

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