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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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