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Sanctioned State Duma Lawmaker Appointed as Russia's Next Human Rights Chief

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Yana Lantratova. **Dmitry Belitsky / Moskva News Agency**

State Duma lawmaker Yana Lantratova was elected as Russia's next human rights commissioner on Thursday, a choice that could potentially complicate future prisoner exchanges with Ukraine given accusations that she has been involved in the alleged forced transfer of Ukrainian children.

Lantratova, a member of the center-left party A Just Russia, secured 301 votes in the 450-seat State Duma, defeating candidates from the Communist and Liberal Democratic parties.

She succeeds Tatiana Moskalkova, a former senior police official whose second five-year term expires this month. Human rights commissioners can serve a maximum of two terms.

While a staunch Kremlin loyalist, Moskalkova was one of the few Russian officials to maintain a direct line of communication with Ukrainian officials after the 2022 invasion, which allowed

her to help facilitate the exchange of Ukrainian and Russian prisoners of war.

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Currently under U.S. and EU sanctions, Lantratova is accused of playing a key role in the alleged systematic transfer of children from occupied Ukrainian territories to Russia.

Reports from independent outlets and the BBC have specifically linked Lantratova to the 2022 removal of two children from an orphanage in the Kherson region of southern Ukraine, one of whom was later reportedly adopted by A Just Russia party leader Sergei Mironov.

Lantratova has denied any wrongdoing and claimed that her actions were humanitarian efforts to rescue families from combat zones.

Within the State Duma, Lantratova has been a leading figure behind Russia's restrictive social legislation, co-authoring laws that banned so-called LGBTQ+ "propaganda" and the non-existent "childfree" movement.

She has also frequently used her office to file police complaints against educators and activists for anti-war sentiments or alleged ties to "foreign agents" and "undesirable" organizations.

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