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Lithuanian authorities retain Russian minors on their territory

Written question No. 623 to the Committee of Ministers
by Mr Alexey PUSHKOV, Russian Federation, European Democrat Group

Since 1997, the Russian citizens Malik Gataev and Khadizhat Gataeva, founders of a family orphanage have periodically taken seriously ill minors to the Republic of Lithuania for medical treatment and studies. When they reached adulthood some of the children returned to Russia. Others stayed in Lithuania to help the Gataevs with the upbringing and treatment of ill minor brothers and sisters.

However, since 2008, the Lithuanian authorities have started to hinder the return of Russian minors to their homeland. At present there are six minors illegally retained on Lithuanian territory: Raisa Larionova, born in 2000, Galina Larionova, born in 2003; Amina Zaitova, born in 2001, Tanzila Zaitova, born in 2001; Heda Chinkhoeva, born in 1999; Suleiman Idigov, born in 1996.

All the attempts of the Russian Embassy to get access to the Russian children have been ignored by the Lithuanian authorities (including the local child custody authorities as well as the Lithuanian immigration service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs).

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has sent several notes, which have so far been neglected. The issues of the arrangement of a meeting of the Russian Embassy officials with the children and their return to their homeland were raised at different levels, including at the level of the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Azubalis and the President D. Grybauskaite.

Mr Pushkov,

To ask the Committee of Ministers,

– to clarify on what legal grounds the above-mentioned minors are being retained on Lithuanian territory;

– to clarify on what grounds the Lithuanian authorities prevent parents from meeting with their underage children;

– to request the opinion of the Committee of Ministers as to whether the above actions of the Lithuanian authorities meet the obligations and commitments of Lithuania with regard to its participation in international treaties and conventions, particularly Council of Europe conventions concerning children's rights protection.