



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT

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**Russian MFA Information and Press Department Commentary on the Acquittal Handed Down by an American Court for Miles Harrison Who Had Been Charged with Involuntary Manslaughter in the Death of His Russian Adoptee Dima Yakovlev**

2071-18-12-2008

We are deeply angered by the verdict of the Fairfax County Circuit Court in Virginia. We consider it to be repulsive and unprecedented, even if in this case--unlike in others--it was criminal negligence that led to a tragic outcome, rather than deliberately cruel treatment. The ruling of the judge, who did not find corpus delicti in Harrison's actions and released him without penalty, goes beyond any legal and moral framework.

Although US adopters guilty of their Russian adoptees' death far from always received proper punishment in the past, we have not yet encountered such woeful neglect of the life of a Russian child.

Serious doubts arise as to the legitimacy of the practice of transferring our children for adoption to a country where their rights, primarily the right to life, turn out to be unprotected. And where adequate and, first and foremost, inevitable punishment is absent for those guilty of such tragedies on, apparently, the sole ground that they are "full-fledged" citizens, whereas their adoptees are not.

We will seek to ensure that American authorities protest this flagrantly unjust ruling and we intend to make our further cooperation with the US in the realm of international adoption contingent upon Washington's readiness to undertake practical steps to remove our concerns.

December 18, 2008