

Special Commission in Chechnya 'Reunites' 1,000 Divorced Families

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Maxim Shemetov / Reuters

A special commission in Chechnya has begun “reuniting” divorced families following an order earlier this year from the North Caucasus republic's leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

Around 1000 separated families have been brought together again since July, Chechen Information Minister Dzhambulat Umarov [told](#) the opposition-leaning Dozhd television channel on Tuesday.

“The reunification is like the most beautiful and romantic melodrama,” he said, echoing the tone struck by Chechen media who have covered the initiative by airing scenes of happy couples. “I’ve seen this with my own eyes.”

Umarov added that another 4,000 families are due to be rejoined. “We need to move towards this goal,” he said, adding “we will definitely achieve this.”

The Chechen strongman Kadyrov in July ordered the creation of a special commission of

government officials and spiritual leaders to reunite the families and resolve the problem of single mothers.

“Most [divorced] mothers want to take away their children from their fathers,” he was [cited](#) as saying by BBC Russia. “They then rent an apartment in the city and start asking for charity. One of them told me she needs a home. I asked her: where is your husband? She said: he left me.

“I told her: if you didn’t have a husband, I would help you. But you have a husband, the father of your children.”

Kadyrov then called for the creation of groups of spiritual leaders, village elders and district heads in every municipality to “figure out why people have divorced.”

“We need to preach, teach, help, and work on this issue,” he said.

According to BBC Russia, a hotline has been set up which allows separated couples to request the authorities’ help in getting back together, even after years of divorce.

“In a large part of the world such problems are considered insoluble,” Umarov, the minister, told Dozhd. “But in Chechnya there are few problems that can’t be solved.”

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