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Meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Russian Movement of Children and Youth

7-9 minutes





7 of 9

During the meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Russian Movement of Children and Youth (via videoconference).

A meeting of the Advisory Council of the Russian national public-and-state movement of children and youth took place at the Museum and Theatre Educational Complex via videoconference.

Before the meeting, Vladimir Putin visited the operating part of the complex and was told about the construction of the other buildings and the future of the cultural cluster.

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President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Colleagues, good afternoon.

Today, on Knowledge Day, September 1, we are holding the first meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Russian Movement of Children and Youth. You probably already know that I just had a good meeting – here in Kaliningrad – with schoolchildren who are actively involved in such programs as *Bolshaya Peremena*, in the Young Army, and other volunteer, patriotic, and educational projects. Two participants of that meeting are also here now – Emilia Kotlyar and Artyom Klimkov; we invited them.

The initiative to create the movement we are talking about, as you know, actually came from schoolchildren. It is important that all our decisions continue to be based on children's opinions, to follow their aspirations and dreams.

Our young people, our children are very talented and very open. They have so much energy, and many ideas to build and create,

to form a new modern space for development, in their own interests and in the interests of our great country.

Therefore, the adults' job is first of all to help and support children, to act as their equal partners, to develop this organisation according to the rules that the participants in the movement themselves propose, and to work together so as to consolidate the best children's and youth projects and make participation accessible to everyone, both younger children and teenagers.

I would like to specifically emphasise that the new movement should not become a privilege for children living in big cities, where it is easier to set up and organise activities. Now, the new movement should be present in every community where children are growing up including small towns, rural areas and even our most remote regions. It is imperative to thoroughly think through this movement's infrastructure – where the participants can meet, where they can implement their ideas and projects. I would like to address this separately today.

At the same time, I would like to emphasise that voluntary participation should be the underlying principle. By no means should it become an obligation; this is something to be avoided. A child should join the movement because they find it interesting to do stuff there, and not because someone suggested or recommended they join, let alone required them to. This is completely inappropriate.

This new movement should rely on the best educational and awareness-raising programmes, both newly-created and those that have worked effectively for generations. We have such traditions; they are recognised and popular in society.

One such programme involves volunteering to help others,

those who need help. I have just discussed this with the children; there are initiatives like this, and children are happy to volunteer for these programmes.

We must create even more opportunities for the younger generation to work together, to meet, to work on projects with their peers from other regions, and to make friends all over the country – from Kaliningrad, where we are now, to Vladivostok, from Kamchatka to Crimea. They should travel together, get to know our country.

Indicatively, we have a special programme called *More Than a Journey*. It gives young people an opportunity not only to see the country and visit unique places but also to feel like part of a big, friendly family, a team that can meet any challenge.

Of course, in addition to Russian students, it is vital to encourage student participation from the Lugansk and Donetsk people's republics in this movement.

Another thing I would like to draw your attention to is staffing, that is, attracting people that can become senior friends for children and teenagers, who can lead them into the adult world.

Considering the potential scale of the movement, the broad range of themes and the participation of many children and young people of different ages, we will need to involve professionals and increase the number of people working in this area. The movement should welcome people that are interested in working with children, in their development and upbringing, who understand the importance of this work and realise the responsibility they bear.

I will repeat that these people should be passionate professionals who are capable of leading children and who are

more interesting to them than the huge amounts of information in the modern world. We need people who will help them figure out the underlying meaning of these information flows, to dismiss everything false and ostentatious and to skillfully present genuine values, such as family, friendship, love for their homeland, and the values of self-fulfillment and development and meaningful engagement in the life of society and the whole country.

It is difficult to ensure continuity in Russia's development without this, without care for the fundamental principles of life. It is not enough to simply pass knowledge on to children; it is no less important to teach them how to use it, to explain how to live and work.

I hope to hear your specific considerations and proposals on this issue today. We will determine the next measures and tasks for the future together.

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Vladimir Putin: I do not think I need to repeat how important our work is, and how relevant it is today, given the difficulties, the challenges and the dangers posed by the current situation in public morals and education. It is very important for us to avoid this.

At today's meeting with the children, we spoke about mentoring – someone asked a question. Now some of our colleagues have mentioned it here. A mentor is like a ship's pilot, someone who helps young adults, young souls to avoid shipwreck in the sea of these challenges and dangers, but follow the right track passing between Scylla and Charybdis. The nationwide movement's mission will be to ensure this, to find people – as I said at the beginning of our meeting –

people who have a vocation and enough enthusiasm, who realise the responsibility on their shoulders, but who will undertake this big – grandiose, I dare say – and hugely important work for the country.

I would like to stress once again that by no means should this process be allowed to get bogged down in red tape; otherwise, our efforts will go down the drain from the very first steps. This is the most important condition for making this entire enterprise a success.

I am sure that everyone present here today understands this. We must do everything in our power to ensure its success.

Much has been said today. Of course, we can talk more, and we need to think about this constantly, and even more than that. But let's assume that for a start, for a run-up, as they say, the first test of this difficult apparatus, and this round should give us a good start to this grand and important endeavor.

I would like to thank everyone for their willingness to work and to wish us all success. Once again, happy Knowledge Day to everyone.

Thank you very much.

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