The Directorate of Immigration has confirmed the decision to reject a repeat application for international protection submitted by an unaccompanied minor from Colombia. This clarification follows public discussion surrounding the case and a ruling by the Immigration Appeals Board.

Contrary to some claims, the minor's initial application for international protection was thoroughly assessed when he was in Iceland with his father and sisters.

Authorities evaluated his case in accordance with the Aliens Act, the Child Protection Act, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. When the boy later applied again for protection as an unaccompanied minor, his circumstances had changed. However, the Directorate concluded that the changes were not significant enough to alter the original decision.

As a result, the repeated application was dismissed, a decision that has now been upheld by the Immigration Appeals Board. While acknowledging the difficult conditions in the minor's home country, the authorities found no evidence that he faces persecution or inhuman treatment key criteria for granting international protection.

Additionally, he was not considered eligible for a humanitarian residence permit based on the case data and the assessed situation in Colombia. Responsibility for the minor's welfare now lies with child protection services in both Iceland and Colombia. The Icelandic authorities announced that will ensure his wellbeing while he remains in the country, after which Colombian child protection agencies will take over upon his return. Despite the boy's wish to stay in Iceland and a local family's willingness to care for him, he has parents in Colombia who retain legal custody. Neither Icelandic nor Colombian child welfare agencies have assumed custody rights.

The Directorate emphasizes that although the decision may be disappointing, fostering false hope can worsen the vulnerability of children in such situations once a final administrative decision has been made.

Source(s)

- Directorate of Immigration | Útlendingastofnun (26 May, 2025), Í tilefni umræðu um úrskurð kærunefndar útlendingamála [On the occasion of the discussion on the decision of the Immigration Appeals Committee],

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