

Foreigners Considered for Yukos Review

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Foreign experts could be invited by the Kremlin to look into the case of jailed tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky but his verdict will not be overturned, President Dmitry Medvedev's human rights council said Monday.

Khodorkovsky, in jail since 2003, was sentenced in December to six more years behind bars after what his supporters said was a politically motivated theft and money-laundering trial. The United States has sharply criticized the decision.

"A group of professionals, possibly including foreign experts with knowledge of our legal system ... is now carefully being considered," council member Tamara Morshchakova told reporters.

Morshchakova said Medvedev was "pleased" when he heard the council's proposal to involve foreigners last week.

Morshchakova, a former justice at the Constitutional Court who has publicly criticized her country's legal failings, stressed that the experts' conclusions "will have no direct legal consequences" on Khodorkovsky's verdict.

Their findings will instead be used to recommend changes to the existing laws on economic crimes, she added.

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