

Outed St. Petersburg Chief of Police Escorted From Office by Special Forces

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President Dimitry Medvedev fired St. Petersburg police chief Mikhail Sukhodolsky from his post Friday after the colonel-general failed to attend an important Interior Ministry meeting because of unspecified health reasons, Interfax reported.

The move has been long-expected, an unnamed ministry official told Interfax. Sukhodolsky had taken actions that "placed him at odds with law enforcement," the official said.

Following the announcement, special police forces arrived to block the police chief's office, barring entry or exit from the room.

"The special forces were constantly trying to force Sukhodolsky to leave the office" as the police chief was gathering his belongings, Interior Ministry press secretary Sergei Shevchuk said.

In a phone call from his office, Sukhodolsky told Interfax that he didn't exclude the possibility of being detained or arrested. Sukhodolsky said he was told the special forces

were acting on an order from ministry leadership.

Unnamed sources cited by newspaper Kommersant link Sukhodolsky's absence at the ministry meeting to an investigation into the case of a 15-year-old who died after being questioned by St. Petersburg police.

Medvedev appointed Sukhodolsky chief of St. Petersburg police in June 2011.

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