

Ex-Minister Grachev Dead

September 22, 2012

The  **Moscow Times**

Pavel Grachev, a former defense minister who led troops into Chechnya in the 1990s, died Sunday at the age of 64.

President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev both expressed their condolences to friends and relatives of the general, who had served under the late Boris Yeltsin from 1992 until 1996.

Grachev died in a Moscow hospital after being admitted on Sept. 12 in serious condition. No cause of death was immediately given. He is perhaps best remembered for promising in 1994 to crush Chechen separatist rebels "in a couple of hours with a single regiment of paratroopers." The war stretched on for more than two years, with thousands of soldiers and tens of thousands of civilians killed, and ended with the Kremlin forced to sign a peace treaty.

(AP)

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