

# Top Court Rules Against Citizens' Right to Self-Defense

By [The Moscow Times](#)

September 27, 2012

**The**  **Moscow Times**

The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to grant permission for citizens to use force to defend themselves against police.

The court rejected the proposal during a plenary session on self-defense in Moscow, saying that despite three months of preparation, the changes still needed revision, RIA-Novosti reported.

Judge Valery Stepalin told the news agency that "no one is questioning the fact that citizens have the right to defend themselves," but said the court hadn't managed to express this in one clear phrase.

Stepalin explained that riot police and other specialized police departments were governed by different laws to regular officers, which complicated implementing legal changes.

"In cases where they [specialized officers] act within their remit, they don't bear responsibility for causing harm," the judge said.

In November, then-Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev said that citizens should be permitted to fight back if police officers attack them without cause.

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