

Dvorkovich Says Surkov Left Voluntarily

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said Monday that former colleague Vladislav Surkov left the government earlier this month of his own accord.

Surkov, who worked as deputy prime minister and Cabinet chief of staff, resigned two weeks ago, with some observers saying he was forced to do so by the Kremlin.

The Kremlin, however, said Surkov left voluntarily after disputing President Vladimir Putin's claims that the government had failed to fulfill campaign promises he made last May.

Putin signed the order relieving Surkov of his duties a day after he complained about the government's work at a Cabinet meeting. Surkov told Putin openly at that meeting that the government was working effectively.

"I can once again repeat that the decision to resign was made by Surkov himself," Dvorkovich said in an interview published Monday in Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

He also said that he considered the work of the government effective, calling it "a well-functioning bureaucratic machine, in a good sense."

Dvorkovich stressed that delays in implementing presidential decrees and orders made by the prime minister had been completely eliminated.

"I would give high marks for what the government has done over the past year, although the final word rests with president and prime minister," Dvorkovich said.

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