

Auditor Warned Defense Ministry About Corruption in 2010

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The mass embezzlement and abuse of power that shook the Defense Ministry and led to the dismissal of former head Anatoly Serdyukov in 2012 were reported by the Audit Chamber as early as 2010, a former chief of the auditing body said.

"When the audit was complete, Serdyukov came to me. This was in 2010. I set out the whole affair for him. I said: put things in order, otherwise they'll put you in jail," Sergei Stepashin told Kommersant in an interview published Friday.

Stepashin said that he sent the report to then-President Dmitry Medvedev, who ordered the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office to review the issue, but the affair remained quiet through the end of Medvedev's term.

"Afterward, when Vladimir Putin became president [in May 2012], I saw that for some reason the situation was still up in the air. I personally went to the president with this paper.

The conversation was sometime in June," Stepashin said.

Putin fired Serdyukov on Nov. 6, 2012, a month after searches showed up major violations at the Defense Ministry-affiliated company Oboronservis.

High-level officials are thought to have used Oboronservis to sell off ministry properties at below-market prices at a cost of at least 7.5 billion rubles (\$232 million) to the state budget.

The former Defense Minister may be called as a witness in upcoming trials but has yet to face criminal charges.

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