

# Khodorkovsky Says 'Revolution Inevitable' in Russia

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Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the exiled former oil tycoon turned political opposition figure, gave a press conference Wednesday, prompted by another round of criminal charges brought against him in Russia. His speech was published on the website of the Open Russia pro-democracy organization he founded.

"Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends! I'm grateful to the Russian authorities and their associates from the Investigative Committee for a reason to meet with you ... Yesterday I was informed I will be charged on Dec. 11 in connection with the case of [Vladimir] Petukhov, who was killed in 1998," Khodorkovsky said in his opening statement.

In the course of the press conference Khodorkovsky denied that the murder of Petukhov, a former mayor of the oil town of Nefteyugansk, had anything to do with him or the Yukos oil company. According to him, the new charges were brought in order to "change the agenda."

"They don't want to pay \$50 billion [to former Yukos shareholders in accordance with

The Hague court ruling], that's why they're using all possible leverage," Khodorkovsky said.

He added that the ruling elite wasn't pleased with Open Russia's allegations that Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Investigative Committee, was connected to a Russian criminal organization.

"We are dealing with a unconstitutional overthrow," Khodorkovsky said. "While there is no such thing as fair elections and any other mechanisms of legitimate change of power, the only way to change it is revolution. Revolution in Russia is inevitable," he added.

Khodorkovsky, the former chief of the Yukos oil company, spent a more than a decade behind bars in what was widely seen as politically motivated case. He was pardoned by Russia's President Vladimir Putin in December 2013, several months before his sentence was to run out, escorted by guards to St. Petersburg, and put on a flight to Berlin.

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