

## Divisive Chechnya Deal Sparks Protest Calling for Ingush Leader's Resignation

March 26, 2019



## Musa Sadulayev / AP / TASS

Thousands of residents in Russia's <u>smallest region</u> protested for the right to hold a referendum on a divisive border-change deal after local leaders sought to remove such proposals from the ballot box.

In October 2018, the republic of Ingushetia's leaders signed the land swap deal with neighboring Chechnya, <u>sparking</u> mass protests. According to proposed rules, residents will not be able to vote in a referendum on issues concerning the border.

As many as 10,000 people rallied in Ingushetia's capital against the land deal and proposed referendum rules, organizers <u>said</u> Tuesday. Protesters called on Ingushetia head Yunus-Bek Yevkurov to resign, as well as for the return of gubernatorial elections.

Related article: In Ingushetia, Russia's Smallest Region, Protests Are Reaching a Boiling Point

Yevkurov last week withdrew the proposed referendum legislation after tribal councils, elders and some lawmakers urged him to send it back for changes, the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) news outlet reported.

In December, the Ingush electoral commission <u>rejected</u> a public vote on the border-change deal submitted by local activists.

Russia's Constitutional Court has <u>upheld</u> the agreement that Ingush activists said amounted to a surrender of their territory.

## Original url:

https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/03/26/divisive-chechnya-deal-sparks-protest-calling-for-ingus h-leaders-resignation-a64967