

Kremlin Critic Khodorkovsky Says Attending Trump Inauguration

January 20, 2025



Mikhail Khodorkovsky. @khodorkovsky_en / X

Exiled Russian opposition activist Mikhail Khodorkovsky [said](#) he was in attendance at U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration on Monday.

"May as well check it out, since I've been invited," Khodorkovsky posted on X, describing security measures at the event as "laid-back."

Khodorkovsky attached a selfie of himself in a tuxedo, followed by photographs of the inside of Capital One Arena in downtown Washington and a guest pass for a Jan. 18 "cabinet reception."

Public spectators are watching the inauguration from Capital One Arena while Trump's swearing-in ceremony is taking place at the U.S. Capitol due to cold weather.

Khodorkovsky, once Russia's wealthiest man, left the country after he was pardoned by President Vladimir Putin and freed from prison in late 2013.

The Kremlin [said](#) last week that it would not send a representative to the event.

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At the inauguration today—may as well check it out, since I've been invited, it's a good chance to satisfy my curiosity and meet some new people.

It's interesting how laid-back the security is, considering the massive crowds. I mean, sure, there are plenty of patrol officers... pic.twitter.com/BNabFXh89c

— Mikhail Khodorkovsky (@khodorkovsky_en) [January 20, 2025](#)

“Nobody will represent Russia at the inauguration ceremony,” Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov told reporters Friday, adding that an interim charge d’affaires would attend if invited.

Though Trump [invited](#) a host of foreign leaders to his inauguration, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [said](#) the U.S. president-elect had not done the same for Putin.

Trump's inauguration marks the first time that foreign leaders have attended a U.S. presidential inauguration, as they are typically attended by ambassadors and other diplomats.

Russia has not had an ambassador to the U.S. since its previous Ambassador Anatoly Antonov [returned](#) to Russia in October without a replacement.

A senior Russian senator [said](#) on Monday the new ambassador — who [reports](#) have named as Alexander Darchiyev, the head of the Foreign Ministry’s North American department — may be formally appointed in the coming weeks.

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