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# Chechen Rebel Backtracks on Resignation

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Chechen rebel Doku Umarov said in an Internet video posting on Wednesday that he would not step down as leader of the Islamist insurgency in the North Caucasus, in an apparent U-turn from his earlier resignation.

Umarov was shown speaking in a video on the rebel web site Kavkaz Center, which reported Sunday that he was stepping down for health reasons and would hand over leadership of the insurgency to Aslambek Vadalov.

"In connection with the situation shaping up in the Caucasus, I consider it impossible to step down as emir of the Caucasus," said the bearded Islamist leader, dressed in a black skullcap, camouflage and a bullet-proof vest.

"God willing, this statement cancels out my previous statement," Umarov said as he pressed his palm on the barrel of a Kalashnikov rifle. He said he is healthy.

A statement accompanying the video says it was made on Monday in Chechnya.

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