

# 'Revolution Averted' in South Ossetia

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Turmoil is growing in South Ossetia after the election commission of the breakaway Georgian province refused to register opposition politician Dzambolat Tedeyev as a presidential candidate.

South Ossetia's president, Eduard Kokoity, said Monday that the authorities had prevented a "color revolution" and that Tedeyev has "no legal and no moral right" to run in the Nov. 13 election, according to a report by the region's official news agency.

Tension has been brewing in the small mountainous republic since Tedeyev's supporters on Friday attempted to storm the election commission, which was to decide on his application.

The standoff was defused by commission guards after shots were fired, and Tedeyev was allowed to be present during the commission's vote on his candidacy the same evening, Kommersant reported Monday.

The commission voted 7-6 against Tedeyev on the grounds that he has not lived in South Ossetia continuously, the report said.

Tedeyev is a former Soviet wrestling champion who serves as trainer of the Russian national wrestling team. Curiously, Kokoity is also a former wrestler.

On Sunday, Tedeyev reportedly refused an order by the republic's prosecutor general to appear for questioning by publicly tearing the document apart. Police detained 14 of his supporters over the weekend, Interfax reported, citing the region's deputy prosecutor Eldar Kokoyev.

Kokoity told a meeting with election commission members on Monday that the incident was "a provocation aimed to put pressure on the commission and to disrupt the elections and discredit the republic."

The political situation in South Ossetia has been tense for months as uncertainty mounts over who will become the region's next leader. Kokoity, who has served two five-year terms since 2001, is barred by the constitution from running a third time.

The elections commission has so far denied registration to three candidates, including Tedeyev, and registered three candidates, Inal Pliyev, a government spokesman, said by telephone Monday. He said decisions about 23 other applicants were pending.

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