

Protests Get Boost From Behind Bars

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The  Moscow Times

Russia's most famous prisoner, former Yukos owner Mikhail Khodorkovsky, is urging the opposition to continue with its "escalation of nonviolent protests" and not give up until its demands are met.

In an [interview](#) published Monday in the New Times Russian weekly, Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest man, laid out a strategy to secure a fair runoff of the March presidential election by organizing "mass control over the polling stations and big rallies."

"While the authorities are implementing the opposition's demands, they will be transferring to normal political competition," Khodorkovsky told the magazine in an exchange of written questions and answers from prison.

In his opinion, "the country needs a new political philosophy of cooperation to replace the archaic vertical structure of power."

Many protesters at the December anti-Putin rallies carried portraits of Khodorkovsky calling for his release.

Khodorkovsky has been jailed since 2005, and he is expected to remain behind bars until 2016 on fraud charges widely considered to be politically motivated.

On Monday, the Moscow City Court rejected a petition from Khodorkovsky and his partner, Platon Lebedev, to review a second verdict, in December 2010, that found them guilty of embezzlement. Their lawyers vowed to appeal.

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