

## Parnas Gets Clearance To Register

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Parnas co-leader Mikhail Kasyanov **Igor Tabakov**

The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the banned Republican Party can be revived, giving the party's leader a platform to obtain official registration, Interfax reported.

The court decided that the Republican Party, formerly led by opposition politician Vladimir Ryzhkov, should be registered again by the Justice Ministry after being stripped of its official status in 2007.

The ruling follows last year's decision by the European Court of Human Rights declaring the Russian Supreme Court's ban on party registration to be unlawful.

Earlier this year, Justice Minister Alexander Konovalov signaled that the ministry would no longer hinder registration of Ryzhkov's party.

The People's Freedom Party, or Parnas, was formed two years ago as a coalition of disparate opposition leaders, including Ryzhkov, willing to confront the Kremlin.

But they failed to get official registration with the Justice Ministry.

Now Ryzhkov and party co-leaders Boris Nemtsov and Mikhail Kasyanov plan to use the legal platform of the Republican Party for Parnas, the party's spokeswoman, Yelena Dikun, said, Interfax reported.

"The platform will remain focused on the fight for people's political freedoms and against corruption," Kasyanov said, according to Interfax.

After December's controversial State Duma elections, which were followed by a series of mass opposition protests, President Dmitry Medvedev proposed a package of reforms that included easing the registration rules for political parties, a longtime opposition demand.

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