

Tycoon Appeals to Titov

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Mikhail Khodorkovsky has called on business ombudsman Boris Titov to conduct a public assessment of the second criminal case against him, Gazeta.ru reported Thursday, citing a letter sent by Khodorkovsky.

But the businessman said he was skeptical about the degree of Titov's independence from the Kremlin.

In June, Titov said he believed Khodorkovsky's release would have a favorable impact on the investment climate. Subsequently, Bloomberg cited him as saying that he would ask the president to pardon Khodorkovsky, but he denied that report. Titov also said that he could not conduct an assessment of the Khodorkovsky case because the businessman had not sent him a formal request.

The embezzlement and money laundering case triggered a high-profile controversy, with some observers saying it was politically motivated. The defense argued that the charges were absurd, since Khodorkovsky was essentially accused of stealing his own oil.

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