

Russian General Denies Being Killed in Syria

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Major-General Vladimir Kuzheyev, who Syrian rebels said they killed outside Damascus, speaking to reporters Wednesday.

A military general called a news conference at the Defense Ministry on Wednesday to deny a claim by a Syrian rebel group that he had been killed in clashes outside Damascus.

Major-General Vladimir Kuzheyev worked for some time as an adviser to Syria's Defense Ministry on military schools, but he moved to Moscow after being transferred to the military reserves, Interfax reported.

"I am grateful to the media for their great interest in poor little me. As a human being, it was very unpleasant for me to hear about my supposed death in Syria," Kuzheyev told reporters, adding that his phone has been ringing nonstop with calls from worried family and friends.

"I want to confirm that I am alive and well, I am in good health and live in Moscow," he said.

He said the claim of his death was a provocation against Russia and him personally.

Syrian rebels calling themselves the "Hawks Special Operations Battalion, a division of the Military Leadership of Damascus City and Province" told Al-Arabiya television, Reuters and other news organizations that they had killed a Russian general. The news outlets identified the general as Vladimir Petrovich Kochyev or Vladimir Petrovich Kodzhiyev.

The full name of the defense official who met with reporters Wednesday is Vladimir Petrovich Kuzheyev.

The rebels sent Reuters a video showing what they said was a copy of the dead general's ID issued by the Syrian military.

"With the help of God, the Russian adviser for the minister of defense for military scientific affairs, General Vladimir Petrovich Kochyev, has been eliminated with his personal translator, Ahmad a-Ayyouq," a rebel, Majid Sayyed Ahmad, said in the video.

Reuters, citing a senior opposition figure in contact with the rebels, said the general had been killed about two weeks ago.

The Russian military is believed to have several hundred personnel stationed in Syria, including at a port city where it has a maintenance facility for naval ships.

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