

Ex-Dissident Abramkin Dies

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Valery Abramkin, a former Soviet dissident, nuclear scientist and rights activist who was held for years in the Siberian gulag and campaigned for prison reform in Vladimir Putin's Russia, has died, his colleagues said Saturday.

Abramkin, 66, head of the Moscow Center For Prison Reform and a member of the Moscow Helsinki rights group and Putin's Presidential Rights Council, died late on Friday after a long illness.

"[Abramkin] sincerely strove to contribute to the development and humanization of national legislation, the strengthening of the modern system of protecting human rights and freedoms of citizens," Putin wrote in a condolence telegram cited by the Kremlin's press service.

(Reuters)

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