

Russia Refuses to Extradite 'Legitimate' President Yanukovych to Ukraine

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Moscow will not extradite Viktor Yanukovych to Ukraine.

Moscow will not extradite Viktor Yanukovych to Ukraine, Russia's chief prosecutor said on Friday, calling the ousted leader the "fully fledged, legitimate president" of Ukraine.

Ukraine's new authorities opened a mass murder case against Yanukovych and other "responsible people" in late February in connection with the killing of more than 80 people by snipers in Kiev.

The shootings took place during a week of violent street protests that led to Yanukovych's removal and his flight to Russia.

The protests started in November when Yanukovych turned his back on a planned association agreement with the European Union in favor of closer ties with Russia.

Earlier this month, Ukraine's general prosecutor general said 12 members of the now-disbanded Berkut riot police had been detained on suspicion of shooting peaceful participants

in the protests.

Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, head of the state security service, said the killings happened directly under Yanukovich's leadership.

Yanukovich has denied having any involvement in the killings.

Material from The Moscow Times is included in this report.

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