

Politician Calls Upon Capello to Return Salary After Russia's World Cup Fail

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's coach Fabio Capello gestures during their 2014 World Cup Group H football match against Algeria at the Baixada arena in Curitiba, Brazil.

Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko has defended coach Fabio Capello even as a lawmaker called for the Italian to return his salary after Russia's early exit from the World Cup.

"I appeal to Fabio Capello: For this shameful defeat, you received 800 million rubles (about \$23 million). Return the money, even if only half," A Just Russia lawmaker Oleg Pakholkov was quoted by ITAR-Tass as telling a State Duma tribunal on Tuesday.

The Russia team returned to Moscow on Sunday after failing to qualify from Group H, having picked up two points from three games and scoring only two goals. Russian fans and media alike are unhappy with Capello's defensive tactics and want the Italian — the highest paid coach at this year's World Cup, according to Forbes — replaced.

"Look at our team, it is a selection of small people — the kind of standard of South Korea. When did our team turn into a [team of] sporting dwarves?" Pakholkov said, Itar-Tass reported.

Not everyone was equally damning about the trainer's lackluster showing in Brazil, however, with the country's sports minister jumping to his defense.

"Capello helped us to reach the World Cup finals. It certainly would not have been a given that we would have reached Brazil with someone else," Mutko said Monday in a briefing with Russian journalists.

"I can tell you that Fabio is not here just for the money. He sincerely wants to help Russia to develop a good side. Capello works a lot, travels and searches for talent."

In January, 68-year-old Capello extended his contract with the Russian Football Union to the end of the 2018 World Cup, which the country is hosting, and he has already announced that he is keen to stay on despite a disappointing World Cup in Brazil.

Russian television station Dozhd has reported that under his new contract Capello will be paid nine million euros (\$12.25 million) a year.

(Reuters / MT)

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