

# Probe Over Suspected Bias in Khodorkovsky Absolution Dropped

May 05, 2015



Khodorkovsky was pardoned from prison in December 2013.

A formal probe of an expert panel that absolved former oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky — who was jailed for a decade on charges widely viewed as politically-motivated — was dropped over a lack of evidence that its members had been biased, Interfax news agency reported Tuesday, citing an unnamed source close to the case.

A ten-person presidential human rights council published a report in 2011 stating that the convictions of Khodorkovsky, the former CEO of oil giant Yukos, and his business partner Platon Lebedev — both sentenced to prison in 2005 on fraud, embezzlement and tax evasion charges — should be overturned in light of the "fundamental violations" in the legal proceedings against them.

Russia's Investigative Committee had rejected the council's conclusions, thinking that its members had been bribed by the two businessmen and their associates.

The unnamed source quoted by Interfax said that investigators could not prove that

the actions of the council members were underpinned by "selfish motives" but claimed that funds tied to the former management of Yukos nonetheless had trickled down to some of them.

Former Constitutional Court judge Tamara Morshakova, one of the panelists, was summoned for questioning about the report in 2013. Morshakova denied at the time that investigators had interrogated her about kickbacks they claimed council members had received to advocate for Khodorkovsky's release, Interfax reported.

Council member Sergei Guriev, the former rector of the Moscow-based New Economic School, resigned from his position in 2013 and moved to Paris after having been questioned in connection with the case.

Khodorkovsky was pardoned from prison in December 2013. Lebedev was released last January.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/05/05/probe-over-suspected-bias-in-khodorkovsky-absolution-dropped-a46329>