

St. Petersburg Bridge Named After Late Kadyrov Despite Protests

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Akhmad Kadyrov

St. Petersburg Governor Georgy Poltavchenko has confirmed the naming of a city bridge after Chechnya's first president Akhmad Kadyrov despite widespread protests, the Interfax news agency reported Thursday.

"Russia remembers and honors its heroes," said Poltavchenko's spokesman Andrei Kibitov. "Our country does not divide heroes by nationality: this is the essence of our multi-ethnic unity."

Plans to name the bridge across St. Petersburg's Duderhof channel after the late Kadyrov has sparked outrage among local residents since the idea first emerged in March. A number of politicians, local historians and celebrities attended protests against the initiative in the city center and an online petition on change.org the website has currently gathered almost 100,000 signatures. Critics claim that Kadyrov, the father of current Chechen leader Ramzan

Kadyrov, does not have sufficient links to the city. Akhmad Kadyrov was assassinated in the Chechen capital of Grozny in 2004.

“The complaint that they [the critics] are trying to hold against Kadyrov — saying that “he did nothing for St. Petersburg” — denies the very essence of our city, the capital of the multinational state for nearly 300 years,” Kibitov said.

The city’s toponymic commission voted in favor of the decision earlier this month via a secret ballot. Some commission members later confessed that their decision was made “under pressure.”

The petition against the bridge's naming failed to make it on to the agenda at a city parliament meeting yesterday, St. Petersburg-based news outlet Fontanka.ru reported. It appeared that opposition deputy Maxim Reznik's microphone was deliberately switched off while he was reading the petition’s text, the newspaper said.

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