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Sports Minister: Russian National Football Team to Be Built From Scratch

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The Russian national football team will undergo a dramatic transformation following its poor performance at UEFA Euro 2016, Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko told the Interfax news agency Friday.

"We have neither the coach nor the team, we are starting with a clean slate, but by Aug.29, we should have formed a team," Mutko was quoted as saying by Interfax.

Mutko noted that some Russian footballers performed unprofessionally during Euro 2016.

Russia's national football team failed to make it through to the play-off round at Euro 2016 in France after a crushing 3-0 defeat to Wales. This was followed by the resignation of the team's coach Leonid Slutsky — the man who succeeded Fabio Capello in August last year.

The defeat stirred criticism from Russian officials and ordinary citizens. An online petition to disband the national team was published on the change.org website in June and gathered

almost 950,000 signatures.

Mutko also said that three of the four candidates for the position of the team's new coach have already agreed to take up the new post, the TASS news agency reported.

The fourth candidate is expected to announce his decision on Friday. The candidates include the Turkmen football manager Kurban Berdyev and Russian football managers Alexander Borodyuk, Sergei Semak and Stanislav Cherchesov.The new coach is expected to be announced within the next three weeks.

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