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Chechen Strongman Kadyrov 'Horrified' by Police Violence at U.S. Protests

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Ramzan Kadyrov has been under U.S. sanctions since 2017 for alleged human rights abuses. **Press service of the administration of the republic of Chechnya / TASS**

A Russian regional leader who is accused of widespread human rights abuses at home has turned the tables on his accusers with criticisms of police violence in the protest-hit United States.

The United States sanctioned Ramzan Kadyrov 10 years into his iron-fisted rule over the republic of Chechnya, designating him as a human rights abuser in 2017 following reports of alleged gay purges in secret Chechen prisons. Kadyrov, who maintains that his predominantly Muslim region has no homosexuals while simultaneously calling for their purge, has laughed off the sanctions.

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"I'm watching with horror the situation in the United States, where the authorities are

maliciously violating ordinary citizens' rights," Kadyrov said Tuesday after a week of protests across major U.S. cities.

"Police officers are carrying out lynch law right on the streets of American cities: they choke citizens, beat them and run them down with cars," Kadyrov wrote on social media.

Footage from the demonstrations which broke out after the May 25 death of unarmed black man George Floyd after being arrested by Minneapolis police has shown officers shooting rubber bullets, pepper spray and tasers at mostly peaceful protesters.

U.S. allies have called on authorities to rein in the use of force at the demonstrations, while President Donald Trump has ordered the military to intervene. Several cities deployed National Guard troops and imposed curfews amid reports of looting and property damage.

Russia's Foreign Ministry called on the U.S. to investigate Floyd's death and highlighted what it called "systemic human rights problems" with race and police brutality in the country.

Kadyrov joined those calls, urging the United Nations to "intervene and take effective measures against official U.S. authorities to prevent the practice of violating human rights and freedoms and extrajudicial executions."

"Call them to account for their atrocities and, in particular, for the persecution and murder of innocent people," the strongman said.

"I demand that U.S. authorities stop this lawlessness! Stop the illegal actions against the civilian population immediately and bring to account all those responsible for human rights violations!" Kadyrov wrote.

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