

Chechnya's Kadyrov Takes Umbrage at Biden's LGBT Reference

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov. **Yelena Afonina / TASS**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov [took umbrage](#) at U.S. President Joe Biden's speech mentioning his Kremlin-loyal southern Russian region in his calls to protect LGBT rights.

The strongman took to social media after Biden [said](#) "we all must defend the rights of LGBTQI individuals ... whether it's Chechnya or Cameroon or anywhere" during his UN General Assembly address Tuesday. The republic of Chechnya has a notorious track record of persecuting sexual minorities, including alleged abductions and extrajudicial "honor killings."

"Biden made such an absurd statement in response to which I can only invite him to our republic so that he can see with his own eyes that there are no roosters in the Chechen republic," Kadyrov said.

The Russian word for rooster, *petukh*, is Russian prison slang for inmates who have been sexually abused in jail and can also refer to gay men.

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Writing on the popular Telegram messaging app, Kadyrov ridiculed the U.S. president for leading “the world’s most problematic, aggressive country.”

“Biden, whose country is angry at all Muslim states, is plowing the Arab world with air bombs and has returned troops from Afghanistan in shame, suddenly began to mention the Chechen republic for no reason at all,” he said.

“We haven’t recovered from a number of his ridiculous statements and actions as president of the United States yet and he’s already delighting us with his new strange and absurd statements.”

Kadyrov has repeatedly claimed, most famously in an 2017 HBO Real Sports interview, that his conservative, Muslim-majority region doesn’t “have any gays.”

Russian LGBT rights groups, which have helped gay and lesbian Chechens flee the repressive region, have long accused Kadyrov of orchestrating a campaign against homosexuals that has at times extended beyond Chechnya’s borders.

Kadyrov has dismissed the accusations despite years of media investigations into the imprisonment and torture of LGBT people in secret prisons.

The Chechen strongman extended his 14-year rule with a 99.7% sweep in the nationwide elections this weekend that critics and Western governments dismissed as fraudulent.

Kadyrov and several of his associates are under U.S. sanctions for a range of human rights abuses.

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