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Kadyrov Dismisses Retirement Rumors After Receiving 'Support' From Putin

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Vladimir Putin and Ramzan Kadyrov. **Ramzan Kadyrov / Telegram**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin on Wednesday, reportedly securing support from the central government amid growing speculation about the future of his nearly two-decade rule.

"I could turn to [Putin] with any question and always receive support. Just like today," Kadyrov wrote on Telegram after the meeting. "We discussed a number of important topics off the record, and I received full understanding and support for each one."

Kadyrov said earlier this week that he had asked the Kremlin leader to relieve him of his post. The 48-year-old later revised his statement, emphasizing that he would continue serving Putin as a "team player."

Some experts speculate that Kadyrov's remarks about stepping down, which he has made several times over the years, are likely part of a strategy to secure financial or other guarantees from Moscow, rather than a genuine desire to retire.

Related article: Kadyrov Says He Wants to Step Down as Chechen Leader

The speculation follows unconfirmed reports of Kadyrov's deteriorating health and growing tensions with Putin over "unauthorized" talks with Middle Eastern officials about security guarantees should he step down.

Putin appointed Kadyrov in 2007 after the assassination of his father and predecessor, Akhmat Kadyrov. Initially fighting against Russian forces in the first Chechen war, Kadyrov senior later switched sides, rising to prominence within Moscow's ranks.

In a follow-up post on Thursday, Kadyrov quoted Putin's dismissal of the rumors about his resignation, saying, "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated," a line borrowed from American author Mark Twain.

"[Putin] added that we still have a lot of work to do. I'm following the order of the Supreme Commander!" Kadyrov wrote.

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