

# Sobyanin Sends Aide to Duma

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Mayor Sergei Sobyanin has strengthened his grip on City Hall, making a longtime aide his representative to the city and federal legislatures, choosing a new spokeswoman and firing a prefect he had reappointed two days earlier.

Sobyanin nominated on Wednesday his chief of staff, Anastasia Rakova, 34, as his representative to the City Duma and the State Duma, Interfax reported, citing City Duma Speaker Vladimir Platonov.

Rakova has worked with Sobyanin since he served as Tyumen governor in the early 2000s.

On Thursday, Sobyanin also picked Gulnara Penkova, 37, deputy head of the presidential press office and a Kremlin employee since 1999, to replace Sergei Tsoi as the mayor's main spokesperson, Interfax reported.

Tsoi, who had worked as the mayor's spokesman since 1989, told Interfax that he had declined an offer from Sobyanin to work as a prefect or head of City Hall's

telecommunications and advertising department.

Tsoi, 53, called a prefect's post "not my scene" and said he declined the other position because he did not want to "interfere with a new team that is forming an information policy its own way."

Tsoi submitted his resignation Wednesday, but Sobyenin rejected it. On Thursday, Tsoi resubmitted it at a meeting with the mayor, who accepted it, Tsoi said.

On Friday, Sobyenin dismissed the prefect of the Eastern Administrative District, Nikolai Yevtikhiyev, 59, who had held the job since 2003 and was appointed acting prefect two days earlier, Interfax reported, citing a City Hall source.

The prefect was replaced by his first deputy, Nikolai Lomakin, 55, who was formerly in charge of construction issues, the report said.

Meanwhile, President Dmitry Medvedev changed Sobyenin's status on the presidential advisory Security Council, demoting him from a permanent member to a regular member with unspecified powers, the Kremlin web site [reported](#) Sunday. Former Mayor Yury Luzhkov did not sit in the Security Council.

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