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Duma Speaker Says Parliament Needs More Women

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On the eve of Women's Day on March 8, State Duma speaker Sergei Naryshkin expressed dissatisfaction with the low percentage of female parliamentarians, saying it's "not right."

Naryshkin, a deputy from the ruling United Russia party, noted what he called a negative contrast between the prevalence of women in civil service and the low percentage of female Duma deputies.

"Of every 10 people who work in government civil service, seven are women," while only 14 percent of parliamentarians are women, Naryshkin said at a meeting of female Duma deputies, according to comments posted on the official United Russia site.

"That's not right," he said.

The top female state employee is Federation Council speaker and former Leningrad region governor Valentina Matviyenko, who replaced Just Russia leader Sergei Mironov at the post in September. Her position makes her third in line for the presidency in case of the sudden death of the prime minister and president.

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