

State Duma Election Could Come a Year Early, Mironov Says

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The leader of the A Just Russia party said that Russia could hold parliamentary elections a year early due to the country's annexation of the Crimea region and the federal city of Sevastopol.

"It is possible that elections in the State Duma will be held early: not in 2016, but in 2015," party leader and Duma deputy Sergei Mironov said. "In particular, this is because there are two new federal subjects in Russia. I have no exclusive information about this. It is my sense. It sprang up in the last few days."

Mironov, who ran against President Vladimir Putin in the 2012 election, said that his reasoning is based on the fact that there has been a large increase in the number of acting governors, many of whose terms expire in 2015. Mironov said he has a feeling that they are "clearing the political field," and that there will be gubernatorial elections in 2014 followed by Duma elections in 2015.

On Friday, President Vladimir Putin signed a law to add Crimea and Sevastopol to Russia, less than a week after a snap referendum was held in the Black Sea region in which more than 96

percent of voters opted for reunification. Crimea and Sevastopol will be represented separately in the Duma.

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