

Opposition Politician Sobol Ends Month-Long Hunger Strike Amid Moscow Protests

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Lyubov Sobol **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

Russian opposition politician Lyubov Sobol has announced she has ended her month-long hunger strike over health concerns for an arrested campaign aide who had joined her in striking.

Sobol went on hunger strike last month after Moscow election authorities refused to allow her and other opposition candidates on the ballot for next month's local legislature vote. That refusal has [spurred](#) weeks of mass protests for fair elections, thousands of detentions and a dozen protesters charged with "mass unrest."

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"I'm ending the hunger strike at the request of Alexei Minyaylo's mother," Sobol announced

late on Wednesday, referring to her campaign aide who [faces](#) up to eight years behind bars on the “mass unrest” charges.

“Alexei has been holding a hunger strike in solidarity with me since late July 13,” Sobol [wrote](#) on Facebook. “And now he’s in pre-trial detention without the ability to receive quality medical treatment.”

Sobol has become this summer’s de facto protest leader after several rejected candidates and prominent Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny were [jailed](#) on protest-related charges for seven to 30 days. Sobol herself has been [detained](#) several times ahead of demonstrations over the past several weeks but has been released from custody each time because she is the parent of an underage child.

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When Russia’s Central Election Commission (CEC) last week [issued](#) a final denial of Sobol’s appeal to be allowed onto the Sept. 8 ballot, the opposition politician initially vowed to continue her hunger strike and called on supporters to continue protesting.

In Wednesday’s announcement, Sobol criticized the authorities of “fabricating” the “mass unrest” criminal case and other proceedings launched over the protests.

“These criminal cases are an attack on the public,” she wrote.

“They’re [Mayor Sergei] Sobyenin’s revenge against Muscovites for demanding political representation in the Moscow City Duma elections and not giving up.”

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