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Former Crimea Prosecutor Dismissed Amid Anti-War Comments

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Former Crimean Prosecutor Natalya Poklonskaya has been dismissed from her post in the Russian government, weeks after criticizing Moscow's war in Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin removed Poklonskaya from her post as the deputy head of Rossotrudnichestvo, Russia's federal agency for international outreach, on Monday.

The 42-year-old took up the role in February 2022, after declining to run for a second term as a deputy for the ruling United Russia party in Russia's lower house of parliament.

Poklonskaya announced on social media that she has been appointed as Russian Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov's adviser as of Tuesday.

"I am discontinuing my social media accounts and any public activities," she wrote on Telegram.

Poklonskaya's re-assignment comes after the former lawmaker spoke out against Moscow's

invasion of her native Ukraine, calling it a “catastrophe.”

“People are dying, houses and entire cities are destroyed [leaving] millions of refugees. Bodies and souls are mutilated. My heart is bursting with pain.”

“My two native countries are killing each other, that’s not what I wanted and it’s not what I want,” she said in a video address to an international forum in April.

She later criticized the spread of Russia’s pro-war Z symbol, which has been prominently displayed on buildings, merchandise and even cakes to symbolize the public’s support for Russian troops in Ukraine.

Her comments sparked outrage from other officials, including her boss, Rossotrudnichestvo chief Yevgeny Primakov. He later claimed that the letter Z was a symbol of the “liberation of Ukraine from the obvious evil of terrorists and bandits.”

Poklonskaya was thrust into the international spotlight when she was appointed as prosecutor general of Ukraine’s annexed Crimean peninsula in 2014. She was elected to the lower-house State Duma in 2016, but did not seek re-election in 2021.

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