

Russian Space Chief Rogozin To Get New Job – Kremlin

By [AFP](#)

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TASS

The head of Russia's space agency, who has made headlines with his bombastic statements and support for Moscow's Ukraine offensive, has been relieved of his duties and will get a new job, the Kremlin said Friday.

Dmitry Rogozin, a firebrand nationalist politician and one of the most ardent supporters of Moscow's offensive in Ukraine, was dismissed as head of Roscosmos, a Kremlin decree said.

But President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told state news agency TASS that Rogozin, 58, would get a new job "in due time."

Peskov did not provide any details but said his departure from the space agency did not mean the Kremlin was unhappy with his work there.

One independent media outlet said he would be promoted and could be put in charge of

occupied territories in Ukraine.

After Putin sent troops to Ukraine on Feb. 24, Rogozin has regularly published gung-ho statements on social media, saying in May that it would take Russia only half an hour to "destroy" NATO countries in a nuclear war.

At Roscosmos, Rogozin was replaced by Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov, who has a military background.

Meduza, an independent Russian-language news site, citing three sources close to the Kremlin, reported this week that Rogozin could soon get a Kremlin job.

Citing the sources, the media outlet said Putin "loves" Rogozin and his eyebrow-raising statements and that Rogozin could be appointed to oversee Ukraine's separatist regions as well as Ukrainian territories taken over by Russia.

Pro-Moscow officials in occupied Ukrainian territories say they are hoping to stage referendums on joining Russia soon.

Putin appointed Rogozin to manage the country's struggling space agency in 2018.

At the time some experts described him as an outsider who lacked the necessary education and expertise to head Roscosmos.

Rogozin also oversaw the space industry as deputy prime minister from 2011 until 2018. Placed under U.S. sanctions in 2014 when Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine he also served as Russia's NATO envoy.

Rogozin has repeatedly raised eyebrows with his statements and behavior.

After Washington introduced sanctions against Russia over its annexation of Crimea, Rogozin said that U.S. astronauts should use trampolines instead of Russian rockets to get to the International Space Station.

Cooperation in space

Sending the first man into space in 1961 and launching the first satellite four years earlier are among key accomplishments of the Soviet space program and remain a major source of national pride in Russia.

But experts say the Russian space agency remains a shadow of its former self and has in recent years suffered a series of setbacks including corruption scandals and the loss of a number of satellites and other spacecraft.

Borisov takes over as head of Roscosmos at a hugely sensitive time.

Raging tensions over Ukraine are beginning to affect space cooperation between Moscow and Western countries and a new arms race in space is emerging as a growing source of concern.

Until now space exploration was one of the few areas where cooperation between Russia and

the United States and its allies had not been wrecked by tensions over Ukraine, Syria and elsewhere.

Russia and the United States have worked side by side on the ISS, which has been in orbit since 1998.

Borisov, 65, was deputy defense minister from 2012 to 2018 and oversaw the defense industry as deputy prime minister from 2018 until now.

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