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Moscow City Assembly Unseats Exiled Anti-War Deputy

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Evgeny Stupin. **Evgeny Stupin / VK**

Moscow's city assembly voted Wednesday to unseat an exiled anti-war deputy whom the Russian authorities designated as a "foreign agent."

Yevgeny Stupin, who was elected into the Moscow City Duma as a Communist Party member in 2019, was among the signatories of a letter titled "Communists and Socialists Against Fratricidal War" that condemned Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Last year, the Communist Party expelled Stupin over his anti-war views while Russia's Justice Ministry designated him as a "foreign agent." Stupin left the country in September over what he described as threats of criminal prosecution and has since settled in Armenia.

Related article: Russia Moves to Ban 'Foreign Agents' From Running for Political Office

The Moscow City Duma stripped Stupin of his mandate in a 28-5 vote Wednesday for failing to

attend sessions for more than half a year without a valid reason. Stupin and his supporters have accused pro-Kremlin members of refusing to include him in those sessions remotely.

“The Moscow City Duma wouldn’t let me attend remote sessions, they just disconnected me from the server,” Stupin told the RBC news website following the vote. “So my six-month absence was artificially created.”

A ruling party member claimed Stupin’s inability to connect to the Moscow City Duma sessions was due to “actions by the providers of foreign countries to restrict access to Russian internet resources, particularly state resources.”

Stupin has called the vote to unseat him “revenge” by the pro-Kremlin United Russia ruling party for his critical views of the war.

Russia’s lower-house State Duma earlier this week passed a bill banning “foreign agents” from running for any political office in the country. Authorities have increasingly tightened restrictions against those whom the Kremlin accuses of working in the interests of Western governments.

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