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Putin Ally Matviyenko Re-Elected as Russia's Upper House Speaker

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Valentina Matviyenko. **council.gov.ru**

Valentina Matviyenko was re-elected Wednesday for her fourth term as speaker of Russia's upper house of parliament, the Federation Council.

Matviyenko, 75, is third in line for the presidency, following the prime minister, in the event of Vladimir Putin's death.

"We all work on the president's team," Matviyenko said during the opening of the 178-member Federation Council's fall session, where she was unanimously re-elected.

Matviyenko, who is also a member of Russia's Federal Security Council, has held the role of Federation Council speaker since 2011, following her tenure as governor of St. Petersburg from 2003.

Shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, allies of the late Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny claimed that Matviyenko's family owns a villa in Italy along the Adriatic Coast.

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