

Defense Minister Confirms New Civilian Deputy as Leadership Overhaul Continues

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Vasily Osmakov. **Kirill Kukhmar / TASS**

Russia has appointed senior civilian technocrat Vasily Osmakov as deputy defense minister, Defense Minister Andrei Belousov [announced](#) Friday at a meeting of post-Soviet republic chiefs in Kazakhstan.

Osmakov previously served as first deputy minister of industry and trade.

His appointment confirms earlier [reports](#) that he would replace Alexander Fomin, a career military official who oversaw Russia's international military cooperation and participated in peace talks with Ukraine in 2022 and early 2025.

It also reflects what analysts [describe](#) as Belousov's push to bring a more civilian management style into the Defense Ministry, as systematic failures in the first years of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine undermined traditional military leadership.

Belousov introduced Osmakov to fellow defense ministers from former Soviet states gathered for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Council of Defense Minister in Almaty, Kazakhstan, according to the state-run news agency TASS.

The meeting, which included participants from Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, [focused](#) on tightening military coordination among members and strengthening joint air defense and communications systems. They framed the CIS as a pillar of regional security amid what they described as a shift away from a U.S.-led global order toward a “multipolar” world.

The sides signed agreements aimed at expanding joint defense initiatives and modernizing shared military systems across the post-Soviet region.

Fomin's departure follows a sweeping reshuffle in the Defense Ministry last year that replaced longtime minister Sergei Shoigu with Belousov and saw several top generals arrested on corruption charges.

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