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Putin Fires Head of Russia's Cultural Diplomacy Agency

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Igor Chaika. **Evgenij Razumnyj / Vedomosti / TASS**

President Vladimir Putin on Monday sacked Yevgeny Primakov as the head of the cultural diplomacy agency Rossotrudnichestvo and replaced him with Igor Chaika, the son of Russia's former chief prosecutor.

Primakov, who is the grandson of former Russian Prime Minister and diplomat Yevgeny Primakov, took over as head of Rossotrudnichestvo in June 2020.

Commenting on his dismissal to the pro-Kremlin Telegram news channel Ranshe Vsekh, he said "Dobby is free," a reference to the fictional elf character from Harry Potter.

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Primakov later wrote on his own Telegram channel that he does not plan to continue to work in government or run for office in the State Duma, as earlier reporting suggested he might.

Primakov was a lawmaker in the lower house of parliament between 2018 and 2020.

“My parting with the civil service is amicable and based on mutual respect… I consider myself part of our supreme commander-in-chief’s team. Same path as before, just now in civilian life,” he said.

Rossotrudnichestvo operates as a subagency of the Foreign Ministry. It is under EU sanctions.

Under Primakov, the agency significantly expanded the number of its overseas Russian House cultural centers, with more than half of them being located in African countries.

Since March 2025, Chaika had served as deputy head of Rossotrudnichestvo, where he oversaw humanitarian and educational initiatives.

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