

Russian Supreme Court Rejects Yabloko's Appeal Over Candidate List Ban

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Yabloko chairman Nikolai Rybakov speaks during an appeal hearing in the Supreme Court. **REUTERS / Ramil Sitdikov**

Russia's Supreme Court on Monday rejected an appeal by the liberal Yabloko party, upholding a decision to cancel the registration of its federal slate of candidates for next month's State Duma elections.

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court disqualified Yabloko from parliamentary elections in September for copyright violations during campaign activity and for breaking campaign finance laws by allegedly accepting funding from abroad.

That ruling, which is now final, removes Russia's oldest liberal party — and what was the only registered party campaigning on a pro-peace platform — from the nationwide party-list ballot. Yabloko candidates can still run in single-member districts, but securing a parliamentary seat through these races is far more challenging.

Under Russian election law, half of the State Duma's 450 seats are distributed among the list of political parties that receive more than 5% of the votes. The remaining 225 seats are given to the winners of elections in single-member constituencies.

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Yabloko party chairman Nikolai Rybakov, who attended Monday's appeal hearing, slammed the Supreme Court's decision.

"What we witnessed was the mere imitation of a court proceeding. Yet we will continue to use every available avenue to prove that we are right — every legal means at our disposal," Rybakov [told](#) journalists outside the Supreme Court building.

"As you saw, the court made no attempt to examine or engage with the substance of the case. In fact, we are not at all certain that the members of the bench even understood what the matter before them was actually about," Rybakov added.

"Yabloko was effectively disqualified from the election for standing for peace and freedom. Those who removed us from the ballot stand for the exact opposite political direction," the party chairman continued.

"Yet we have already achieved the most crucial thing: the whole world now knows how many people in Russia want peace."

Rybakov [said](#) Yabloko was preparing a "plan B" for Russians who support the party's pro-peace platform but who are now unable to vote for its candidates in the parliamentary elections.

While he did not provide further details about those alternative plans, he said Yabloko would file an appeal to the Supreme Court ruling with the high court's advisory body, as well as with Russia's Constitutional Court.

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Russians will head to the polls in September to elect a new State Duma and regional officials in a vote that the ruling United Russia party is expected to dominate but which could offer insight into how four years of war in Ukraine have reshaped the country's political landscape.

Yabloko, which is not currently represented in parliament, has been campaigning on calls for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine, freedom of information and an end to political repression.

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