

The Kremlin is changing the governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast

On 16 August a committee of the United Russia party put forward three candidates to President Dmitri Medvedev for the position of governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast. The current governor, Georgy Boos, was not among them. This means that the Kremlin has taken into consideration the dissatisfaction of the residents of the region towards the policies of Boos and, not wishing for further protests, have decided to change the governor. Georgy Boos has been the governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast since 2005 (regional heads are formally nominated by the regional Duma on the recommendation of the president). In January this year in Kaliningrad there were social protests against government policy with thousands of participants, the largest in Russia in recent years. During these there were demands for the dismissal of Boos. The inadequate level of social support has caused Boos to not serve a second term. This indicates that the Kremlin has taken into account the mood of Kaliningrad's residents; this can be seen as something of a precedent in the Kremlin's regional policy. Previously Moscow as a rule had disregard public opinion when nominating regional heads.

The new governor will be chosen from among: regional Duma deputy and former mayor of Kaliningrad, Yury Savenko; the head of the Gusevsky District, Nikolai Tsukanov; and the current mayor of Kaliningrad, Alexandr Yaroshuk. All three candidates come from the Kaliningrad Oblast which suggests that the Kremlin is keen to calm the social situation by nominating a representative of the regional political elite as governor. <Wojk>