

NGO Pledges 'Nightmares' for Corrupt Government Officials

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A new watchdog promised on Wednesday to create a large-scale system of public control that will make the lives of corrupt officials a “nightmare.”

The Organization of Public Control aims to “extinguish” a nationwide system of corrupt officials by creating a “counter-system” that relies on ordinary people, said its head and founder, professional auditor Natalya Chernysheva.

The watchdog will offer free help to those who want to check the actions of local, regional and federal authorities, she said.

Chernysheva said a government decision to declassify information on its activities starting this January was not enough.

“Citizens would be happy to take advantage of this opportunity, but the cobwebs of the reports and the heaps of figures scare them off,” she told reporters.

Russia failed to improve in the latest Transparency International corruption perception rating, occupying 154th spot among 178 countries on a list unveiled Tuesday.

The dismal showing reveals the inefficiency of the government's efforts to fight corruption, Chernysheva said.

Her group, established in May, operates in 30 of Russia's 83 regions with the assistance of 90 auditors and lawyers and 3,000 ordinary citizens, she said.

All funding comes from donations by Russian citizens, including middle-class businessmen who "don't want to bow to officials," she said.

Meanwhile, a new association to unite honest entrepreneurs will be created Thursday, RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

Members of the group, called New Deal, will pledge to abstain from corruption and tax evasion, the report said. New Deal lists among its founding members Sergei Polonsky of the Mirax real estate developer and Mikhail Dvorkovich, chairman of the communication group Press Hall and the brother of Medvedev's economic aide, Arkady Dvorkovich.

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