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Gorbachev Offers Warning

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Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has warned that Russia's undemocratic political landscape is threatening its stability.

Gorbachev said in an article published Friday in Novaya Gazeta newspaper that the lack of political competition, flawed elections, shrinking media freedom and rampant corruption have slowed down Russia's development.

"If we fail to overcome undemocratic trends, all our achievements of the previous years will come under threat," he said. "Not only the democratic process, but stability as well."

Gorbachev is part owner of Novaya Gazeta, along with Alexander Lebedev, the Russian billionaire who owns two British papers.

Without directly mentioning Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Gorbachev said in the two-page article that negative trends in the nation's political life became particularly apparent in 2005 and 2006 — when Putin was serving his second presidential term. ⊠

(AP)

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