

Opposition Mulling Bill Regulating Officials' Behavior on Social Media

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A screenshot of Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin's Twitter posts about pop star Madonna, which sparked a firestorm on social-networking sites.

An opposition lawmaker is drawing up a bill to regulate the conduct of officials and employees in state-controlled companies on social-networking sites, a news report said Monday.

The move to draw up a so-called "Ethical codex" comes just a few days after Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin tweeted an obscene message about pop star Madonna and Sberbank sacked an employee who joked in a Twitter post about the savings bank's popularity among pensioners.

Alexander Ageyev, a Just Russia State Duma deputy and the brains behind the bill, said in an interview with Izvestia that people's perception of officials and top managers of state companies was a "matter of national security" and that the legislation would improve authorities' standing in the eyes of the public.

"I am an active user of social networks. And every day I see how quickly and gladly people latch onto some high-profile official's 'alternative,' to put it mildly, point of view. This is momentarily sent out on blogs and causes hostility toward authorities in general," Ageyev said.

The opposition lawmaker added that corporate codes of conduct proved that the idea was effective and called ethical norms "the mark of a civilized society."

Ageyev admitted, however, that the ruling United Russia party, which holds a majority in the State Duma, could oppose the bill. The Izvestia report did not say whether other opposition parties would back the bill or give a time frame for the proposed legislation.

On Wednesday, Rogozin caused a firestorm after using an abbreviated form of the Russian word for whore to describe Madonna 24 hours after the singer had called on authorities to free Pussy Riot musicians standing trial for an anti-government performance in a Moscow church.

"Every former w. who has aged wants to give lectures about morals, especially during tours and gigs abroad," Rogozin wrote, sparking angry responses from fellow Twitter users.

Separately, the fired Sberbank employee wrote on the bank's official microblog Friday that "if you write 'Sberbank' in chalk on the wall, then a line of 30 pensioners forms immediately." The post prompted the chairman of Russia's Pensioners Union to write an official complaint to Sberbank president German Gref.

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