

Naryshkin Hints NGO Law May Be Amended

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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State Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin. **Igor Tabakov**

The law on nongovernmental organizations may be amended after a review of its enforcement, State Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin said.

"As far as the law is concerned, we, of course, are watching and monitoring its enforcement, including possible violations on the part of law enforcement and security agencies, and we can not rule out amending the legislation," Naryshkin said in an interview with Slovak television.

In particular, the authorities may introduce amendments to the term "political activity" in reference to NGOs, he said Wednesday.

Naryshkin said about 220,000 active nongovernmental and noncommercial organizations are working in Russia. He also noted that the government had devised a financial support

program for NGOs that has distributed increasing amounts of budget money from year to year.

Critics have complained that the money has gone to Kremlin-friendly organizations.

The presidential human rights council announced this week that it would ask President Vladimir Putin to consider a number of amendments to the law on NGOs prior to a meeting on Sept. 4. Among other things, the council will ask Putin to approve the removal of the derogatory term "foreign agent" in reference to NGOs from the law.

Amendments to the law that came into effect in November require all nongovernmental organizations that receive foreign funding and engage in "political activity" to register as "foreign agents" with the Justice Ministry.

Almost all NGOs currently working in Russia have refused to comply, arguing that the term "foreign agent" carries connotations of spying and seeks to compromise their work.

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