

Russia Denounces Latvian Ban on News Agency

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Dmitry Kiselyov, the head of Russian state news agency Rossiya Segodnya

Russia says Latvia has refused permission to a Russian state news agency to open a bureau in the country — a case that Moscow says is open discrimination.

A Foreign Ministry statement Saturday called on the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to look into the matter.

According to the ministry statement, Latvia refused registration to Rossiya Segodnya on the grounds that its contents were contrary to the Latvian constitution. Latvian officials could not be reached for comment by The Associated Press.

Rossiya Segodnya is the umbrella organization for the RIA Novosti and Sputnik news operations. It is headed by Dmitry Kiselyov, an outspoken critic of the West.

Latvia, which has a sizable Russian-speaking minority, last year banned broadcasts of Russian state television for several months.

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