

Duma Deputies Introduce Bill That Would Ban Russian Organizations From Replying to Foreigners

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A new bill introduced to the State Duma on Friday proposes to ban Russians from providing information to foreign organizations without permission of the authorities, according to a copy of the bill posted on the Duma website.

Permission would be obligatory for answering "the requests of foreign governments and international organizations," including Russian legal entities controlled by foreign governments, foreign organizations and foreign state agencies. The ban would not concern information that was released earlier, the bill said.

If the law passes, violations would be punishable with fines starting from 50,000 rubles (\$782) for citizens all the way up to 10 million rubles for legal entities.

The authors of the bill wrote that currently "State agencies and governmental organizations of certain countries (in particular the U.S.) often ignore international agreements by sending direct requests for information and undermine the existing order by making the demands mandatory according to their own governments."

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