

Russian Media Freedom NGO Added to 'Foreign Agent' List

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Glasnost Defense Foundation said it would continue its work, and would appeal the ministry's decision, Ekho Moskvyy radio reported Friday.

The Justice Ministry has added the Glasnost Defense Foundation — a respected non-governmental organization dedicated to protecting media freedom in Russia — to its list of “foreign agents.”

The ruling was made as a result of an “unscheduled inspection,” the ministry said in a statement Thursday.

A recent Russian law requires all NGOs that receive funding from abroad and engage in vaguely defined political activity to register as “foreign agents” — a term dating back to the Soviet era when it was widely used to mean a spy.

The Justice Ministry has slapped the label on a number of prominent human rights groups in

the country, while others have opted to shut down rather than carry the label.

The Glasnost Defense Foundation said it would continue its work, and would appeal the ministry's decision, Ekho Moskvu radio reported Friday.

The NGO was founded in the waning days of the Soviet Union, in mid-1991, aiming to defend the freedom of Russia's media — and, “through them,” help develop democracy in the country.

The foundation is headed by prominent writer and film director Alexei Simonov.

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