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UN Urges Russia to Change 'Foreign Agent' Law

By The Moscow Times

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The logo of the United Nations atop the building in Bonn.

The United Nations has asked Russia to amend the country's so-called "foreign agent law," the TASS news agency reported Monday.

"I continue to urge the [Russian] authorities to follow recommendations from UN bodies and to amend the law in accordance with Russia's international human rights obligations," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said in a session in Geneva.

The foreign agent law was introduced by President Vladimir Putin in 2012, and requires organizations involved in political activities while receiving money from abroad to register as "foreign agents."

The term is seen as highly negative and was used in Soviet era to refer to spies and other enemies of the state. Several organizations have been fined or forced to close for refusing to

use the label.

The Russian president signed a bill in June specifying political activity to include the organization or participation in meetings, the evaluation of officials' work, or the study the public opinion.

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