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Russian Government Plans New Service Exposing 'Fake News'

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Imago / TASS

Russia's Foreign Ministry is set to wade into the raging debate over "fake news" with a new fact-checking service of its own.

According to the ministry, a section of its website will collect and debunk untruthful news stories — but only from the allegedly dishonest Western press. Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova said the service would fight back in the ongoing "information war" waged by the U.S. and European nations.

Zakharova did not to comment on allegations that Russian state news outlets had published several "fake stories," including dishonest reports intended to undermine foreign politicians.

Instead, she told journalists that the Russian government saw a clear media campaign targeting Kremlin-funded news outlets Sputnik and RT.

“I don't think [the West] even understands that all this is very obvious,” Zakharova said.

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It's not the first time that Russia has proposed launching an "alternative" government agency when faced with critical coverage.

In September 2016, officials suggested founding a Russia-led human rights monitoring group in the former Soviet bloc. The proposed Eurasian Human Rights Group was set to be styled on organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, while being less "politically engaged," the Russian media reported.

The plan followed a damning report by Humans Rights Watch, which claimed that the Russian government had “further intensified harassment and persecution of independent critics."

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