

# Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zakharova Sued By Russian News Site For Libel

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Maria Zakharova **Anton Novoderezhkin / TASS**

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova is set to appear in court after being [sued by a Regnum, a Russian news outlet](#).

Zakharova claimed in a weekly press briefing in December that a Regum journalist had described Belarus as a “pseudo-state.” The journalist had been arrested by the Belarusian authorities alongside two colleagues for “inciting hatred or enmity.”

Zakharova implied that the journalist had been detained after using the offensive terms to [describe Belarus in a report](#). “It’s obscene for people who influence public opinion to use words such as ‘pseudo-state’ or ‘puppet government,’” she said.

Regum denies that its reporter used the words in a published report and filed to sue Zakharova for libel. She maintains that the case is a PR stunt.

**Related article:** [Russia's Dancing Diplomats: Zakharova Dances the Kalinka](#)

Zakharova enjoys popularity in Russia far beyond her remit as a government spokesperson. Alongside her official appearances, the official is active on social media and is notorious for performing a traditional Russian folk dance for journalists at an international conference in 2016.

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