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Russia Leading 'Assault' on Freedom of Expression — HRW

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Russian authorities have clamped down on Internet freedoms and introduced "invasive surveillance" online, under the pretext of fighting extremism, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in a report published today.

The report criticizes Russia for unjustly imprisoning dozens of people based on their activity online and for introducing new laws that give the government tools to "restrict access to information, carry out unchecked surveillance and sensor information the government designates as 'extremist.'"

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"Russia's authorities are leading an assault on free expression," HRW researcher Yulia Gorbunova said. "These laws aren't just about introducing tough policies, but also

about blatant violation of human rights."

Related article: 6 Signs There's No Such Thing as Internet Freedom in Russia

In its report titled "Online and On All Fronts: Russia's Assault on Freedom of Expression," HRW advised the Russian government "to repeal the repressive legislation, stop prosecuting critics under the guise of fighting extremism, and uphold its international obligations to safeguard free expression."

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