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Russia's RT Stripped of U.S. Congress Press Credentials

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An association of journalists who report on the U.S. Congress has voted to revoke the press credentials of the Kremlin-funded RT news channel.

The production company behind RT America reluctantly registered as a foreign agent in the U.S. this month. The U.S. intelligence community suspects the state-run network of playing a key role in Russia's alleged interference in the 2016 presidential election.

U.S. officials claimed that RT's registration under the 1938 Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) would not limit the network's ability to report in the country. Washington also said that Moscow's retaliatory legislation was not comparable to RT's FARA registration.

Related article: What You Need to Know About RT's Pending Foreign Agent Registration

The Radio and Television Correspondents' Association (RTCA) informed RT America's production company on Wednesday that it had voted unanimously to revoke the network's news credentials early last week.

“The rules of the [Congressional Radio-Television Correspondents'] Galleries state clearly that news credentials may not be issued to any applicant employed ‘by any foreign government or representative thereof,’” the association wrote.

RT’s editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan mocked “the self-righteous defenders of ‘freedom of speech’” in response to the association’s demand for RT America to give up its credentials.

“Withdrawal of Congressional credentials speaks much louder than empty platitudes," she said in comments published on the networks’ website.

“Something tells me that American media will be left without State Duma and Federation Council credentials today,” Simonyan wrote on her Telegram channel Wednesday.

Russian deputies were preparing a bill in retaliation to the measures, Federation Council member Igor Morozov was cited as saying by RIA Novosti news agency.

“This decision shows that the war against Russia is continuing and that the pressure against Russian journalists is increasing,” he said.

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