

Russia to Start Registering Media 'Foreign Agents' This Week

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Russia's Justice Ministry will reportedly begin listing international media outlets as "foreign agents" this week.

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law last month that allows the government to designate news outlets receiving funding from abroad as "foreign agents" and to block the websites of so-called "undesirable organizations."

The law was seen as retaliation against a U.S. move to label the American branch of the Kremlin-funded RT channel as a "foreign agent" last month.

Related article: [After Foreign Agent Law, Russia Moves in on International Newspapers](#)

A presidential decree [published](#) Monday states that the Justice Ministry will "create a registry of foreign media organizations that perform the functions of foreign agents."

According to the decree, the Justice Ministry will be responsible for deciding which media outlets would be included in the registry.

A source in the Federation Council [told](#) the state-run RIA Novosti news agency on Monday that nine U.S. media outlets will be registered, including Voice of America and Radio Liberty.✕✕

When the bill first passed in November, State Duma vice speaker Pyotr Tolstoy [told](#) The Moscow Times that the United States had forced Russia's hand.

"I don't know what people expect from us," he said, "but Russia is not a country that will go without a response."

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has [criticized](#) the measure as being "incompatible with fundamental standards on free speech."

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