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Russia Accuses U.S. of Election Meddling Over Navalny

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Maria Zakharova (Mikhail Dzhaparidze / TASS)

Russia’s Foreign Ministry has accused the United States of election meddling after criticism of Russia's decision to bar opposition leader Alexei Navalny from taking part in the 2018 presidential elections.

A U.S. State Department spokesman expressed concern over "restrictions on independent voices" after Navalny was barred from running by Russia's Central Election Commission on Tuesday, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

Related article: Navalny's Bid for Presidency Shut Down by Russia's Election Commission

“This State Department statement, which I’m sure will be repeated, is a direct interference in our electoral process and internal affairs,” Russia’s Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria

Zakharova wrote on Facebook.

Zakharova called out the U.S. for perceived hypocrisy, citing the required registration of the Kremlin-run RT news network as a foreign agent last month.

“The funniest thing is that these are the same people who just tagged RT and Sputnik as foreign agents, who are harassing Russian media around the world and who are investing huge amounts of money into ‘countering Russian propaganda,’ which is how they label anyone who they disagree with," she wrote.

“And these people expressed outrage over alleged Russian ‘interference’ in their electoral process for an entire year?!"

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