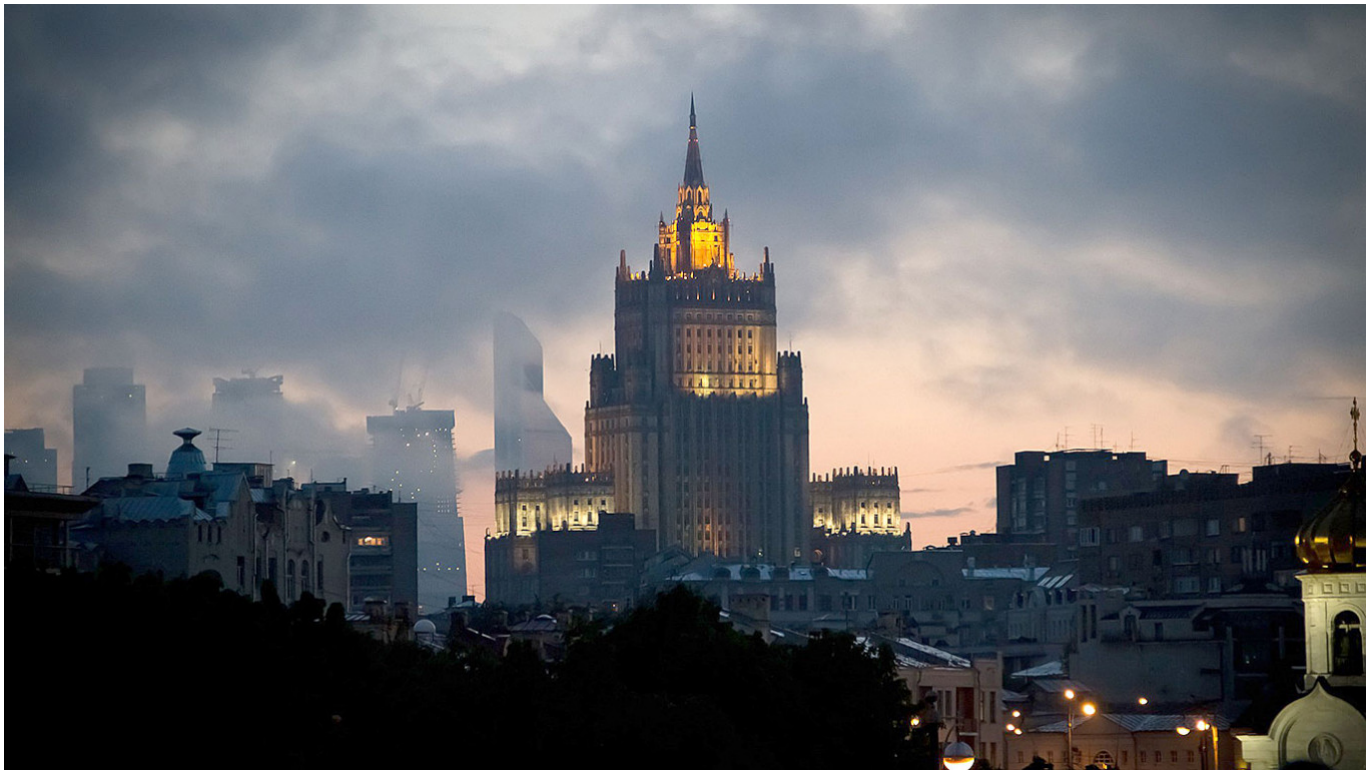
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia to Invest $1M in Independent Media in Developing Countries

August 02, 2021



The Foreign Ministry in Moscow. **Nikolay Frolochkin / pixabay**

Russia has allocated $1 million to an international program that promotes free media in developing countries over the next five years, its Foreign Ministry announced.

The investment comes amid criticisms that Russia is stifling dissent at home in the lead-up to this fall's parliamentary elections by blacklisting independent news sites and raiding and detaining journalists with increasing frequency.

The funds will go toward UNESCO's International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC) at $250,000 per year in Africa, Latin America and Asia, as well as in post-Soviet countries, from 2022-2025, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement Thursday.

Related article: Journalists Worldwide Urge Russia to Stop Persecuting Independent Media

"The key areas of work will be increasing journalists' safety in armed conflict zones,

improving journalistic education and professional ethics, combating disinformation and ‘fake news,’ including about the coronavirus pandemic,” the ministry said.

It described IPDC as “the only intergovernmental forum within the UN system focused on protecting freedom of expression and supporting independent media in developing countries.”

“Our country stood at the origin of [IPDC] established by the UNESCO General Conference in 1980 in the interests of building a more just and democratic ‘new international order’,” the Foreign Ministry said.

The United States quit UNESCO — the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization — in 1984, claiming corruption and gross mismanagement. The U.S. rejoined the organization in 2003.

“It’s expected that leading Russian media and journalistic associations will take part in the implementation of specific initiatives,” the Foreign Ministry added in its statement.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/08/02/russia-to-invest-1m-in-independent-media-in-developing-countries-a74668