

Russia Shuts Down German Broadcaster Deutsche Welle's Moscow Office

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The Foreign Ministry also said it will start the procedure to label DW a “foreign agent.” **Fkraft-ew (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

Russia on Thursday said it will shut down German broadcaster Deutsche Welle's Moscow bureau in response to Berlin's ban on the German-language channel of Russian state TV network RT.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said in a [statement](#) that it will strip all DW staff of their accreditation and "terminate the satellite and other broadcasting (output) of Deutsche Welle" on Russian territory.

The ministry also said it will start the procedure to label DW a “foreign agent,” a designation given to individuals and organizations deemed to receive foreign funding.

DW Director Peter Limbourg called the decision incomprehensible and absurd.

"The measures of the Russian authorities are in no way comprehensible, and a complete

overreaction," he said, adding that the channel protests "against this absurd reaction of the Russian government."

The broadcaster also vowed to keep reporting from its Moscow bureau until the Russian order is officially served.

"Even if we were to close it eventually, that will not affect our coverage of Russia — rather, we will significantly boost our coverage," Limbourg said.

Related article: [Moscow Vows to Retaliate for RT Ban in Germany](#)

The unprecedented move will likely further strain relations between Russia and Germany amid growing Western fears over Russia's plans to invade neighboring Ukraine.

Russia earlier in the day said it would respond to Germany's broadcasting regulator's decision on Wednesday to ban the transmission of the state-run channel RT DE over its lack of a broadcasting license.

The broadcaster was blocked last year from Europe's satellite network at the request of German authorities less than a week after going on air, but was still available over the internet and via a mobile app. The head of Russian state broadcaster RT on Wednesday said the network's German-language channel would continue to operate despite the ban.

The decision to ban DW comes after a number of foreign journalists lost the right to work in Russia.

In August 2021, the Kremlin expelled veteran BBC correspondent Sarah Rainsford in retaliation for what it called discrimination against Russian media in Britain. Russian authorities in November revoked the residence permit for Tom Vennink — a longtime Dutch correspondent for the daily *de Volkskrant* — over past minor legal infractions.

AFP contributed reporting.

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