The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Bans UK Think Tank Chatham House

April 08, 2022

The exterior of Chatham House. **donald judge (CC BY 2.0)**

Russia has blacklisted U.K. foreign affairs think tank Chatham House as an “undesirable organisation,” the country’s Prosecutor-General's Office announced Friday.

The authorities believe the organization presents "a threat to the constitutional order and security of Russia."

The designation, which already applies to groups like U.S. think tank Atlantic Council and independent Russian media outlet Proekt, will force Chatham House to disband operations within Russia.

Under a 2015 law, Russians who “collaborate” with the organization could face fines or jail terms.

“Everybody within the Chatham House Russia program that has expressed an opinion is enormously proud of this endorsement,” said Keir Giles, a Russia expert at Chatham House.

“It comes as confirmation that the program’s work is both effective and heading in the right direction. For those old enough, it is reminiscent of times under the Soviet regime, when a denunciation in Pravda would be the ultimate recognition that you had annoyed the USSR by doing the right thing", he said. “We will continue to support Ukraine, and there will be absolutely no effect on Chatham House’s work promoting peace and security in Europe."

Chatham House is the informal name for the London-based Royal Institute of International Affairs.

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