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Armenia Blocks Pro-Kremlin TV Host's Shows

March 29, 2024



Russian TV host Vladimir Solovyov. **er.ru**

Armenia has blocked pro-Kremlin Russian TV host Vladimir Solovyov's shows on its territory over "continuous violations," the South Caucasus nation's state broadcasting regulator announced Friday.

The shows "Evening With Vladimir Solovyov" and "Sunday Evening With Vladimir Solovyov" were pulled off the air in Armenia based on a Russian-Armenian mass telecommunications cooperation agreement.

The regulator, the Television and Radio Broadcasting Network of Armenia, said the violations that Solovyov's programs committed were related to articles 5 and 6 of the agreement but did not elaborate further.

Article 5 ensures "the exclusion of programs with offensive content against peoples and national values" and "the exclusion of interference in election campaigns and domestic political life."

Meanwhile, article 6 establishes "respect for rules during national holidays and commemorations" and "observance of general rules during martial law and states of emergency."

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On Thursday, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Armenia of trying to rupture increasingly strained ties between the two countries.

Moscow's longtime ally Armenia has grown increasingly frustrated with Russia over its failure to intervene in neighboring Azerbaijan's offensive last year to retake the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Yerevan has recently floated the possibility of leaving the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a security bloc that includes a handful of other former Soviet countries.

In a sign of its ambition for new security guarantees, Yerevan has been forging partnerships with Western countries — mainly France and the United States.

AFP contributed reporting.

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