

Peskov Defends Russia's Media Crackdown as Part of 'Information War'

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Mikhail Grebenshchikov / RBC / TASS**

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov defended Russia's wartime censorship in an [interview](#) with the business magazine *Expert*, describing the suppression of critical information as a justified response to what he called an era of information warfare against the country.

Peskov acknowledged that Russian authorities have imposed an "unprecedented" crackdown on the media since the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a period marked by the closure of independent outlets and the mass exodus of journalists from the country.

"But we shouldn't lose sight of the bigger picture. We are living in a time of wartime censorship, something unprecedented in our country," the spokesman said in the interview published on Friday.

"The war is being fought not just on the battlefield but also in the information space," Peskov said, adding that it would "be wrong to turn a blind eye to media outlets that are deliberately working to discredit Russia." Therefore, he argued, the media crackdown is "justified."

Since February 2022, the Kremlin has outlawed virtually all forms of public dissent, banned several independent media outlets, including The Moscow Times, and expanded the use of punitive laws targeting critics of the war against Ukraine.

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Peskov specifically called out Meduza, the exiled Latvia-based news outlet that Russia has labeled both a “foreign agent” and an “undesirable organization,” as portraying Russia in an exclusively negative light.

“We’ll take stock of past mistakes,” Peskov said. “We don’t want to end up back in the days of the more hysterical outlets like Meduza, which seemed to publish either only bad news about Russia or nothing at all.”

Despite his defense of current censorship, Peskov suggested the media environment in Russia may eventually liberalize, allowing for more “neutral” outlets that “speak honestly about both the country’s problems and its achievements.”

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