

# Moscow will respond immediately if Washington moves against Russian media - Putin

Russia will swiftly implement tit-for-tat measures if the US imposes restrictions on Russian media, President Vladimir Putin said.

*"We will act only symmetrically and quite swiftly," Putin said. "As soon as we see concrete steps limiting the activities of our mass media [in the US], a tit-for-tat response will follow immediately."*





The Russian leader made the comments at the Valdai forum in Sochi, while responding to a question from Margarita Simonyan, the editor-in-chief of RT and Sputnik, about the US pressure on the Russian media.

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What’s happening to the Russian media in the US is confusing to say the least, Putin said. *“It has nothing to do with democracy,”* the president added.

*“We’ve been told all the time that it’s absurd and undemocratic to put pressure on any legally operating media outlets,”* Putin said.

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*“There’s only one democratic method to fight what you don’t like – be it the authorities or the opposition – it is to express your own view, but in such a bright, imaginative, talented fashion as to make people believe your point of view, follow your position, join your position. Everything else is undemocratic,”* he added.

The contractor that supplies various services for RT America, including TV production and operations, in September received a letter from the Department of Justice, claiming it was obliged to register as a foreign agent, under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). The Act was adopted in the late 1930s to counter pro-Nazi agitation and serves the goal of informing *“the people of the United States ... of the source of information (propaganda) and the identity of persons attempting to influence US public opinion, policy, and laws.”*

While the contemporary list of *“foreign agents”* has some 400 entries, none of them are media outlets, as they have always been exempted from the effects of the Act, due to the freedom of the press, which is one of the cornerstones of US society. If the contractor fails to comply, it might face the seizure of its assets and even the arrests of its employees, which would effectively destroy RT America’s ability to broadcast.

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