

Russia Designates Stand-Up Comedian Denis Chuzhoi ‘Foreign Agent’

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Denis Chuzhoi. **Julik78**

Authorities in Russia [designated](#) the exiled stand-up comedian Denis Chuzhoi as a “foreign agent” on Friday.

Russia’s Justice Ministry accused Chuzhoi, who used to write for comedy shows on Russian television, of opposing the full-scale invasion of Ukraine — or what the Kremlin insists on calling a “special military operation.” The Justice Ministry used his real last name Alesin in its designation.

The 36-year-old comedian fled Russia after receiving death threats over his public opposition to the war in Ukraine and later relocated to Germany, where he received an artist visa.

In exile, Chuzhoi has started performing some of his stand-up routines in English. He is currently touring cities in Europe and the United States as part of a stand-up show called “Second Class Citizen.”

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Russia's Justice Ministry on Friday also designated Chechen opposition blogger Tumso Abdurakhmanov, editor of the Mediazona independent news website Dmitry Treshchanin and the independent news outlet Govorit NeMoskva as "foreign agents."

All of the designees, including Chuzhoi, were accused of spreading "inaccurate information" about government policy and disseminating the content of other "foreign agents." The creators of Govorit NeMoskva, Abdurakhmanov and Treshchanin all "reside outside Russia," the Justice Ministry said.

Russia uses the "foreign agent" label to target individuals and organizations they view as enemies of the state. Those hit with the designation are required to submit rigorous financial reports to the Justice Ministry, as well as display "foreign agent" disclaimers in publications and social media posts.

Russian courts issue fines for those found guilty of failing to comply with "foreign agent" laws.

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