

RIA Novosti Closes Athens Bureau After Greece Allegedly Denies Press Accreditation

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Greece's Foreign Ministry. **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

Russia's state-run news agency RIA Novosti [said](#) Wednesday that its Athens bureau would shut down after the Greek authorities refused to renew the press accreditation for its chief correspondent.

According to the news agency, Greece's Foreign Ministry declined to renew bureau chief Gennady Melnik's 2025 accreditation without explanation. Melnik's 2024 accreditation was renewed with delays, RIA Novosti said.

Greece's Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to The Moscow Times' request for comment.

RIA Novosti established its Athens bureau ahead of the 2004 Summer Olympics. The agency is among several Russian state media outlets [sanctioned](#) by the EU for spreading "propaganda"

related to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

The news agency claimed that the Greek authorities have restricted its journalists from covering certain events over the past three years.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said Greece in May 2022 [terminated](#) the operations of the Sputnik news agency, which is part of the state-funded media group Rossiya Segodnya, alongside RIA Novosti and the broadcaster RT.

Rossiya Segodnya called the decision a “gross violation of free speech.”

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