



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 31, 2025

Case No. FL-2023-00013

Reed Rubinstein
America First Legal Foundation
611 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, #231
Washington, DC 20003

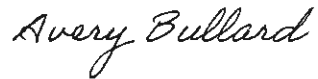
Dear Mr. Rubinstein:

As we noted in our letter dated December 31, 2024, we are processing your request for material under the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552. The Department of State (“Department”) has identified 72 additional responsive records subject to the FOIA. Upon review, we have determined that 66 records may be released in part, 5 records may be released in full, and 1 record must be withheld in full.

An enclosure explains the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made redactions, the applicable FOIA exemptions are marked on each record. The record withheld in full is exempt from release pursuant to FOIA Exemption 5, 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(4). The document identification number for the record withheld in full is A-00000748722. Where applicable, the Department has considered the foreseeable harm standard when reviewing these records and applying FOIA exemptions. All non-exempt material that is reasonably segregable from the exempt material has been released and is enclosed.

We will keep you informed as your case progresses. If you have any questions, your attorney may contact Kevin Bell, U.S. Department of Justice Trial Attorney, at kevin.k.bell@usdoj.gov and (202) 305-8613. Please refer to the case number, FL-2023-00013, and the civil action number, 22-cv-03386, in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Avery Bullard".

Avery Bullard
Supervisory Government Information Specialist
Litigation and Appeals Office

Enclosures: As stated.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC 552)

FOIA Exemptions

- (b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:
- 1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
 - 1.4(b) Foreign government information
 - 1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
 - 1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
 - 1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
 - 1.4(g) Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
 - 1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction
- (b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- (b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| ARMSEXP | Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c) |
| CIA PERS/ORG | Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g) |
| EXPORT CONTROL | Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c) |
| FS ACT | Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004 |
| INA | Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f) |
| IRAN | Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505 |
- (b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information
- (b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
- (b)(6) Personal privacy information
- (b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:
- (A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
 - (B) deprive a person of a fair trial
 - (C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
 - (D) disclose confidential sources
 - (E) disclose investigation techniques
 - (F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
- (b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
- (b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

Other Grounds for Withholding

- NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

Vladimir Putin's Historical Disinformation

MAY 6, 2022

For decades, Russian President Vladimir Putin has attempted to appropriate and exploit history to further his geopolitical aims. After the 1990 collapse of communism in Europe and the 1991 break-up of the Soviet Union, one of the remaining sources of national pride for the people of Russia was the USSR's victory over fascism in "the Great Patriotic War" – the evocative name Russians use to refer to the portion of the Second World War fought in Europe between 1941 and 1945. Owning and controlling Russia's collective memory of this war is one of Putin's greatest obsessions.

World War II had profound economic and cultural impact on Russia and other countries in the region, including stories of trauma, sacrifice, and heroism. Tens of millions of Soviet soldiers (including ethnic Ukrainians and others) and tens of millions of civilians in the USSR were killed during World War II. Today, through speeches and articles, Putin, along with his disinformation and propaganda ecosystem, invokes World War II imagery to justify expanding his autocratic powers at home and Russia's aggression toward neighboring countries' democratic and Euro-Atlantic connections and aspirations. This includes Ukraine, where Putin repeatedly invokes false narratives of World War II as a justification for his full-scale invasion. Indeed, Putin – and by extension the Kremlin – often claim those in Ukraine, including democratically elected leaders, who oppose Russia's invasion of their country are "Nazis" and "fascists." Lacking any legitimate reason to justify his unprovoked war against Ukraine, Putin and his disinformation machine use imagery from World War II to manufacture pretexts.

Putin attempts to manipulate history to alter the future. He uses visceral imagery of World War II to tap into deep-seated emotions for his disinformation campaign about Ukraine in order to achieve geopolitical goals. Carnegie Moscow Senior Fellow Andrei Kolesnikov wrote, "The regime seeks to restore the country's lost empire—in the public mind at least—through these historical reimaginings." Experts and historians agree the Kremlin's portrayal of history is often misleading and attempts to serve its current political agenda.

Memorial: Accurate History as a Threat

A notable example of the Putin regime's attempt to suppress and censor history for its own ends is the Kremlin's relentless repression of Memorial, a respected Russian NGO that documented crimes against humanity committed in the Soviet Union (especially during Stalin's rule) and the Kremlin's contemporary abuses (including present-day political prisoners and conditions in the North Caucasus region). In December 2008, masked men broke into Memorial's St. Petersburg office with a warrant signed by the city's prosecutor's office and seized computer hard drives and other materials representing 20 years of archives on Soviet repression, including during World War II. In December 2021, just two months before Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia's courts ruled two key legal entities that constituted the core of Memorial must close, in a move that Russian and international human rights organizations decried as politically motivated, incommensurate to the alleged offenses, and a grave blow to independent civil society in Russia. Controlling the historical memory of Stalin, Russia's leader during World War II, is critical for Putin's own identity.

Putin's Article on World War II

To mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in 2020, Putin published an article attempting to reframe the events of the war to suit his current political goals. His lengthy article tried to absolve the Soviet Union of blame for its collaboration with Nazi Germany under the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which divided most of Eastern Europe into German and Soviet spheres of influence. There were striking differences between the Kremlin's interpretation of the war and those of independent historians. The governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania all spoke out against Putin's suggestion that they willingly relinquished their sovereignty to occupying Soviet forces. Poland called out Putin's claim it was responsible for its own invasion by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in 1939.

The Russian Embassy in Berlin later emailed multiple historians suggesting they "use Vladimir Putin's article when preparing future lectures on history." Many German historians spoke out against the Kremlin's attempts to distort historical truth. One historian suggested the article could instead be used as a primary source to teach students about "Putin's exploitation of history and for his clumsy and shameless attempt to force historians into his service."

Putin's Article on Russia-Ukraine Relations

In July 2021, Putin wrote a 5,000 word article elaborating on his long-stated belief that Ukrainians and Russians are "one people." The article stated that Ukrainian soldiers fought alongside Russians for "their great common Motherland" during World War II, but Putin provided no evidence the Red Army's Ukrainian soldiers ever believed Russians and Ukrainians are the same people. His article also demeaned Ukraine's persistent independence movements, which Soviet leaders were unable to stamp out for decades. Many notable historians and scholars denounced the article as a flawed and amateurish recounting of history, with the sole purpose of advancing Putin's geopolitical goals. Historian Anne Applebaum called the article "essentially a call to arms," and researcher Anders Åslund deemed it "one step short of a declaration of war [on Ukraine]." Just seven months later, Putin's forces followed through and launched an all-out, brutal war against Ukraine. The falsehoods about Ukraine and Ukrainians that Putin trumpeted in his article played an important role in his justification for Russia's full-scale invasion.

Putin Uses World War II Imagery to Justify His War of Aggression Against Ukraine

To rationalize his current war of choice against Ukraine, Putin invoked the language and imagery of World War II, specifically the words "Nazi," and "genocide" (a term coined by Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish lawyer who studied in Lviv, in what is now western Ukraine) to evoke the Nazi Party's policy of systematic murder of Jews and other groups targeted for annihilation. The Kremlin has turned the word "Nazi" into a catchall for anyone who disagrees with Putin and his regime, insulting the memory of all those who suffered and died at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators.

In his February 24 speech declaring his war of choice against Ukraine, Putin falsely asserted, "the purpose of this operation is to protect people who, for eight years now, have been facing humiliation and *genocide* perpetrated by the Kyiv regime. To this end, we will seek to demilitarize and *denazify* Ukraine." Invoking his discredited "one people" narrative, Putin directly addressed members of Ukraine's military, stating, "your fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers did not fight the Nazi occupiers and did not defend our common Motherland to allow today's neo-Nazis to seize power in Ukraine."

Russia's officials have even used the word "Nazi" against Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine's Jewish president, whose family members were killed by Nazis. Experts on genocide, Nazism, and World War II voiced their strong opposition to Putin's attempt to compare Ukraine and its democratically elected government to that of Nazi Germany. Hundreds of historians and scholars signed a letter condemning the Russian government's "cynical abuse of the term genocide, the memory of World War II and the Holocaust, and the equation of the Ukrainian state with the Nazi regime to justify its unprovoked aggression." The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum also released a statement saying that "Vladimir Putin has misrepresented and misappropriated Holocaust history by claiming falsely that democratic Ukraine needs to be 'denazified.'"

Russia's Disinformation and Propaganda Ecosystem Pushes Putin's False History

Putin is just one player in Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem. While he may be the main supplier of false narratives about World War II, others within that ecosystem amplify his statements.

- **State-Funded Global Messaging:** RT and Sputnik News, two Kremlin state-funded media outlets, have repeatedly pushed the narrative that modern Ukraine is a Nazi state. For example, the Arabic language version of RT pushed the conspiracy theory that it was Ukrainian Nazis, not Russian forces, who were guilty of murdering people in Bucha, and has made accusations that Ukraine's schools teach Nazi beliefs.
- **Cultivation of Proxy Sources:** Multiple proxy websites also disseminate narratives that invoke World War II imagery, serving as unofficial mouthpieces of the Kremlin. Some proxy sites have direct links to Russia's intelligence services, some are firmly enmeshed in Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem, and others are more loosely connected. The connections are often intentionally murky. For example, the website News Front, linked to Russian intelligence, pushed the same RT Arabic false narrative about Ukrainian Nazis participating in murders in Bucha.
- **Weaponization of Social Media:** Russian social media accounts have promoted fake photos showing Ukrainian soldiers holding Nazi paraphernalia or photos of Hitler. The number of Russia-linked tweets linking Ukraine to Nazis significantly increased after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began.
- **Cyber-Enabled Disinformation:** Attribution for cyber activities takes time. That said, experts have already identified multiple deep-fakes, cyber hacks, and defaced-websites with malware for which Russia is considered to be responsible.

The Future of Russia's Understanding of World War II

While Putin has not been successful in changing the opinions of experts and historians, he continues his attempts to institutionalize his historical revision of World War II and Ukraine's identity. In April 2022, Putin signed a law imposing up to 15-day detention and fines for anyone drawing parallels between the actions of the USSR and Nazi Germany or denying the decisive role and humanitarian mission of the USSR during World War II. Russia's Minister of Education also announced in April a policy to teach children a new official, government-approved version of history, starting in first grade. The minister stated that, when teaching history in Russia, "we will never allow it [to be written] that we somehow treated other nations – our fraternal nations of Ukraine and Belarus – poorly. We will do everything in our power so that historical memory is preserved."

This means that schools in Russia will not be able to teach accurate information about Putin's current war against Ukraine, or about historic atrocities and abuses against Ukrainians, including those associated with the Stalin-era man-made famine known as Holodomor.

Conclusion

On May 9, 2022, Vladimir Putin led Russia's celebration of Victory Day, the 77th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. He did so even as he continues his brutal war of aggression against Ukraine – a war that has killed at least two survivors of the Holocaust and thousands of other civilians in Ukraine. Putin continues to try to twist history to serve his own political goals, but he cannot change the truth. In the end, history will judge Putin for bringing the horrors of war back to Europe on a scale not seen since World War II. Putin's campaign of disinformation to justify his war against Ukraine is an egregious manipulation of history and a violation of the sacred memory of the many people who suffered, died, and fought against tyranny in that war.

From: "Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Upcoming GEC release
Date: Wed, 14 Oct 2020 16:09:23 +0000

Hi, (b)(6)

I'm a national security reporter with The Washington Post covering election security, among other things. I understand the GEC is doing a release of more declassified Russian disinformation soon. Can you give me a call about that?

Many thanks,

Ellen

(b)(6) cell

Ellen Nakashima

National Security reporter

The Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/people/ellen-nakashima/>

Sender: "Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: "Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Trying to reach you re GEC
Date: Fri, 16 Oct 2020 14:40:54 +0000

Hi, (b)(6)

I'm a reporter with The Washington Post. Just left a message on your cell phone. I'm trying to reach you about what I hear are some upcoming releases by the GEC. Can you be in touch? I'm at (b)(6)

Many thanks,

Ellen

Ellen Nakashima

National Security reporter

The Washington Post

(b)(6) (work)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/people/ellen-nakashima/>

Sender: "Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: Alanna Dvorak <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Traveling Re: Reconnecting: State/Poynter
Date: Fri, 17 Jun 2022 06:27:16 -0700

Thanks for reaching out.

I am currently traveling for a series of back to back conferences. I will be checking my email, but replies may be more delayed than usual.

Best,
Alanna

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Alanna Dvorak

International Training Manager/IFCN

The Poynter Institute

ph: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@poynter.org

www.poynter.org

Sender: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: (h)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: SVTR
Date: Tue, 20 Oct 2020 23:15:17 +0000

1)

<https://www.mcafee.com/blogs/enterprise/security-operations/the-deepfakes-lab-detecting-defending-against-deepfakes-with-advanced-ai/>



2)

How do we ensure a future in which trustworthy news is easily recognized and valued?

Study the trends today that will help us build it.

A global survey to be released Wednesday by Ipsos Global Research and the Trust Project grapples with this problem. Survey questions grew out of a scenario-planning session with Trust Project news partners, who also helped with analysis. We found:

- A whopping 82% of adults surveyed globally said they seek out trustworthy news.
- 27% said they are willing to pay for it.
- Yet two out of three people only access news they can get for free.

As paywalls shoot up, this leaves a large group vulnerable to deceptive "news" sites and poor-quality operations. In general, the survey found low awareness of the threat of deliberate misinformation campaigns, along with rising populism and nativism.

These results give me hope and also present a challenging picture. How do we build on willingness to pay, while also serving those who need their information free? We will continue to wrestle with such questions as a collaborative network, sharing ideas and innovations.

Our report, to be available free at <https://www.ipsos.com/en/trust-misplaced>, features

country-by-country and aggregate details from 40,000 people in nearly 30 nations, plus commentary by Ipsos experts and Trust Project publishers. Please email Matt Carmichael at Ipsos (matt.carmichael@ipsos.com) if you'd like an embargoed copy. If you're a member of ONA, we invite you to our [session](#) on Wednesday afternoon in which we discuss the results.

My thanks to Craig Newmark Philanthropies, the Democracy Fund, Facebook, Google, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, who support our work.

My gratitude as well to all our news partners, who play a vital role in shaping a world in which trustworthy news is central.

3)

<https://www.eipartnership.net/policy-analysis/platform-policies>

4)

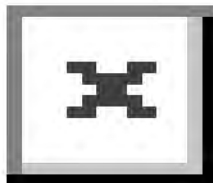
<https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-donald-trump-politics-media-misinformation-7a60e1e6005c8b3b967c9ad337cb1a6a>

5)

https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cambridge-university-releases-fake/?mc_cid=ff69ae3ab1&mc_eid=05c5822b7d

6)

<https://mediaengagement.org/research/social-media-influencers-and-the-2020-election/>



Social Media Influencers and the 2020 U.S. Election: Paying 'Regular People' for Digital Campaign Communication

The Center for Media Engagement's propaganda research team reports on the phenomenon of social media influencers as an avenue for political campaign communications, describes the challenges this issue poses to platforms and governments, and briefly explores solutions.

mediaengagement.org

7)

https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cambridge-university-releases-fake/?mc_cid=ff69ae3ab1&mc_eid=05c5822b7d

8)

<https://twitter.com/twittersafety/status/1316525303930458115?s=11>

9)

<https://twitter.com/craigsilverman/status/1316523353738444801?s=11>



Craig Silverman on Twitter

"An all-star cast of researchers has published a new version of the Debunking Handbook. This is "a short, accessible summary of the science of misinformation and debunking." It's great resource. Get the PDF here: <https://t.co/Kk9weqxYGv>"

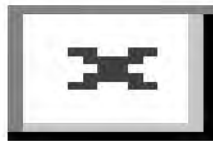
twitter.com

10)

<https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/case-studies/2020/10/14/testing-twitters-methods-of-restricting-blocked-links-and-domains/>

11)

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90564299/one-of-the-strongest-ways-to-fight-misinformation-will-soon-be-right-in-your-phone>



One of the strongest ways to fight misinformation will soon be right in your phone

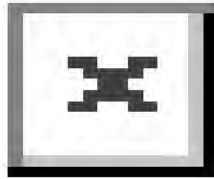
www.fastcompany.com

12)

<https://securingdemocracy.gmfus.org/debating-the-debates-how-russian-chinese-and-iranian-state-backed-media-covered-the-u-s-first-presidential-and-vice-presidential-debates/>

13)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-15/u-s-intelligence-official-says-social-media-big-vulnerability>



US Intelligence Official Evanina Says Social Media 'Big Vulnerability' - Bloomberg

A top U.S. intelligence official said disinformation on social media is a "big vulnerability" and warned of an "existential threat" to democracy and elections.

www.bloomberg.com

14)

TikTok Tightens Crackdown On QAnon, Will Ban Accounts That Promote Disinformation

<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/18/925144034/tiktok-tightens-crackdown-on-qanon-will-ban-accounts-that-promote-disinformation>

TikTok Tightens Crackdown On QAnon, Will Ban Accounts That Promote Disinformation

The action hardens the video-sharing app's previous enforcement against QAnon that targeted specific hashtags on the app but let the videos remain.

www.npr.org

15)

<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/16/justice-department-google-antitrust-democrats-429983>

16)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/russia-cyberattacks-election-interference/2020/10/19/51a84208-1208-11eb-bc10-40b25382f1be_story.html

17)

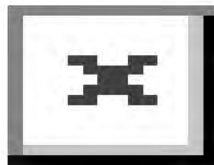
<https://thehill.com/homenews/news/521694-pompeo-dangerous-for-twitter-to-take-non-viewpoint-stance>

18)

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/interview-pompeo-says-twitter-blocking-new-york-posts-hunter-biden-story-is-dangerous>

19)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-10-18/facebook-twitter-google-can-t-be-good-censors-of-politics>



Facebook, Twitter, Google Can't Be 'Good Censors' of Politics - Bloomberg

The main problem with social media isn't political bias or market share, it's that Big Tech is still coddled by legal protections from the dawn of the internet era.

www.bloomberg.com

20)

<https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2020/10/us/manipulated-media-tech-fake-news-trnd/>

21)

<https://firstdraftnews.org/dashboard-insights/>



US 2020 Dashboard: Live insights on disinformation

Misinformation from the frontline: Colorado and Florida. COLORADO: This Saturday rally in Loveland, CO, for an 8-year-old bullied by other kids because of her Trump fandom might be something to watch. Comments on the event have been unkind. FLORIDA: Florida's state voter registration system encountered problems on Monday, prompting theories of voter suppression and Russian hacking.

firstdraftnews.org

EVENTS:

A

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/9116026209753/WN_KIQybhtmRyWWw5U18MHkUA



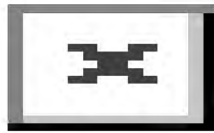
Welcome! You are invited to join a webinar: Virtual Book Launch Event - Striking Back: Overt and Covert Options to Combat Russian Disinformation. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the webinar.

The Jamestown Foundation is proud to present a virtual event to mark the release of a new book, Striking Back: Overt and Covert Options to Combat Russian Disinformation, by Thomas Kent, to take place on Friday, October 23, at 10:00 AM. Significant attention has been given to Russian disinformation operations and their corrosive effect on the United States and other democratic governments. The Western responses have thus far been weak and uncoordinated, according to Thomas Kent, former president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty who is currently a Jamestown Senior Fellow and adjunct associate professor at Columbia University. He proposes an energetic new strategy to confront this threat: aggressive messaging to combat Russian information operations, while promoting the values of democracy that too many in the West have lost faith in. One form of messaging Kent advocates is more Western communication with Russia's own citizens. What would this messaging to Russia look like? What could it accomplish, what wou

zoom.us

B

<https://www.state.gov/secretary-pompeo-to-host-pre-recorded-virtual-conference-on-combatting-online-anti-semitism/>

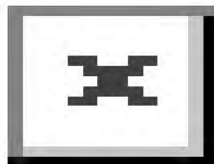


Secretary Pompeo to Host [pre-recorded] Virtual Conference on Combatting Online Anti-Semitism - United States Department of State

Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo will host and deliver opening remarks during the first-ever U.S. Government conference focused on combatting online anti-Semitism. Organized by the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, the virtual conference aims to explore the threats posed by anti-Semitism on the internet and social media and to consider practical responses for ...

www.state.gov

<https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-of-the-special-envoy-to-monitor-and-combat-anti-semitism/>



Office of the Special Envoy To Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism - United States Department of State

The Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism advances U.S. foreign policy on anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is discrimination against or hatred toward Jews. The Special Envoy develops and implements policies and projects to support efforts to combat anti-Semitism. Special Envoy to Monitor and ...

www.state.gov

C

<https://www.alamoafcea.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1430218>

Alamo AFCEA

« Go to Upcoming Event List : Abstract Across the National and Defense enterprise, agencies and organizations are reprioritizing and reorganizing to more effectively compete in a competitive and complex global information environment.

www.alamoafcea.org

D)

Election 2020: Digital democracy, disinformation, and Black voters

Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. EDT

Online: <https://www.brookings.edu/events/election-2020-digital-democracy-disinformation-black-voters/>

[RSVP to
watch](#)

The 2020 election is awash with misinformation, disinformation, and social media manipulation. It is crucial to counter these efforts to ensure a fair contest and public confidence in the election results. This challenge is particularly urgent for Black Americans, who U.S. intelligence officials confirm were targeted by disinformation campaigns in 2016 and are targets again this year. As Election Day nears, what more can be done to ensure Americans receive accurate information about the candidates and the election processes?

On October 28, Governance Studies at Brookings and Howard University will cohost a webinar focusing on Black voters, disinformation, and digital democracy in 2020. Expert panelists will discuss how misinformation is disseminated, what campaigns and election officials can do to support targeted groups, and why marginalized communities and their rights should be prioritized when developing new rules for communication technology used in political and governance processes.

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor, Technology Engagement Team
Global Engagement Center | U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)@state.gov

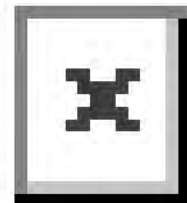
Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Gabrielle(Potts), Lea (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Special Envoy's Daily Briefing, 21 October 2020
Date: Wed, 21 Oct 2020 11:23:14 +0000

Good Morning Special Envoy Gabrielle,

Please find your daily propaganda and disinformation news briefing, below and attached.

Special Envoy's Daily Brief Oct. 21, 2020



Trending Propaganda and Disinformation News

FBI has taken possession of Hunter Biden's laptops

MSN

The FBI has seized Hunter Biden's laptop and has confirmed the former vice president's son's emails are 'authentic', while dispelling earlier claims that they are part of a Russia disinformation campaign. Senior federal officials told Fox News on Tuesday that the bureau is now in possession of the computer allegedly containing emails that could purportedly implicate Joe Biden in his son's international business dealings during his time as VP. Insiders said both the FBI and the Department of Justice have concurred with National Intelligence John Ratcliffe's assessment on Monday that there is no evidence to support the files are part of a Russian disinformation scheme.

Readership: 69,463,713

Espionage in Australia at higher levels than Cold War, spy chief warns

Daily Mail U.K.

Espionage in Australia had eclipsed Cold War levels, the country's spymaster told parliament on Tuesday, in a speech warning that citizens were being monitored and harassed by foreign powers. Several politicians across the ideological spectrum have become embroiled in investigations into suspected overseas influence operations -- most notably from China. Australia's normally tight-lipped spy chiefs have become increasingly outspoken about the threat. "There are more foreign spies and their proxies operating against Australian interests than there were at the height of the Cold War," said Australian Security Intelligence Organisation chief Michael Burgess.

Readership: 23,966,759

To Fight Deepfakes, Adobe Releases Photoshop Authentication Tool - Bloomberg

Bloomberg

Adobe Inc. debuted a software tool to help media creators prove their images are real, the latest move by the maker of Photoshop to combat the spread of deepfake technology. An attribution tool for Photoshop and Behance, a social-media service owned by Adobe, will be available for testing in the coming weeks and generally released in 2021, the San Jose, California-based company said Tuesday in a statement. The software feature will let creators tag pictures with their names as well as the history and location of edits, to provide more transparency to a public growing increasingly skeptical of digital images.

Readership: 12,813,037

Trending Adversary Narratives

EU calls on Russia and USA to prolong New START before February 2021

TACC

BRUSSELS, October 20. /TASS/. The EU is calling on Russia and the USA to prolong the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) before February 2021, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell stated on Tuesday during a plenary session of the European Parliament in Brussels. "We strongly call for the extension by the US and Russia of the New START Treaty before February 2021, and we will encourage negotiations for a broader future agreement," he said. The New START Treaty will expire at the beginning of 2021 unless Moscow and Washington agree to renew it.

Readership: 6,941,203

Independent Afghanistan Requires Severance of all Ties with the US

Kayhan International

Without the least doubt Afghanistan needs peace and stability while the Afghan people who have been plagued by incessant wars over the past 42 years since the communist coup toppled the last independent government in Kabul, have the right to progress and prosperity, but would the American occupiers allow this to happen? This is the million-dollar question being asked by patriotic Afghan citizens who are not so optimistic about the supposed peace agreement between the government in Kabul and the Taliban militia that was recently brokered – ironically by the US, the destroy-in-chief of Afghanistan and the enemy number one of the Afghan people.

Readership: 51,743

GEC Mentions

Nothing Significant to Report

Sources and Methods

The bullets above are compiled from four Boolean searches from TrendKite. The precise searches can be modified to fit business needs.

Today's search revealed 2486 artifacts based on the queries above, from which we parsed out what we found to be the most meaningful stories for the GEC's leadership and mission by readership. Search criteria are based on USG leadership profiles.

v/r,

(b)(6)

Analytics and Research Team
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Affiliate
State HST Desk: (b)(6)



Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Gabrielle(Potts), Lea (b)(6)@state.gov>

Special Envoy's Daily Brief

Oct. 21, 2020



Trending Propaganda and Disinformation News

FBI has taken possession of Hunter Biden's laptops

MSN

The FBI has seized Hunter Biden's laptop and has confirmed the former vice president's son's emails are 'authentic', while dispelling earlier claims that they are part of a Russia disinformation campaign. Senior federal officials told Fox News on Tuesday that the bureau is now in possession of the computer allegedly containing emails that could purportedly implicate Joe Biden in his son's international business dealings during his time as VP. Insiders said both the FBI and the Department of Justice have concurred with National Intelligence John Ratcliffe's assessment on Monday that there is no evidence to support the files are part of a Russian disinformation scheme.

Readership: 69,463,713

Espionage in Australia at higher levels than Cold War, spy chief warns

Daily Mail U.K.

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Readership: 12,813,037

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Readership: 6,941,203

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Readership: 51,743

GEC Mentions

Nothing Significant to Report

Sources and Methods

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Today's search revealed 2486 artifacts based on the queries above, from which we parsed out what we found to be the most meaningful stories for the GEC's leadership and mission by readership. Search criteria are based on USG leadership profiles.

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<https://www.wsj.com/articles/russian-disinformation-campaign-aims-to-undermine-confidence-in-pfizer-other-covid-19-vaccines-u-s-officials-say-11615129200>

◆ WSJ NEWS EXCLUSIVE | NATIONAL SECURITY

Russian Disinformation Campaign Aims to Undermine Confidence in Pfizer, Other Covid-19 Vaccines, U.S. Officials Say

Websites linked to Russian intelligence services publish false information questioning vaccines' safety, efficacy



The Russians have used online publications to question the safety of Western Covid-19 vaccines, including Pfizer's.

PHOTO: JULIA RENDLEMAN/REUTERS

By *Michael R. Gordon* and *Dustin Volz*

March 7, 2021 10:00 am ET



Listen to this article

9 minutes

WASHINGTON—Russian intelligence agencies have mounted a campaign to undermine confidence in Pfizer Inc.'s and other Western vaccines, using online publications that in recent months have questioned the vaccines' development and safety, U.S. officials said.

An official with the State Department's Global Engagement Center, which monitors foreign disinformation efforts, identified four publications that he said have served as fronts for Russian intelligence.

The websites played up the vaccines' risk of side effects, questioned their efficacy, and said the U.S. had rushed the Pfizer vaccine through the approval process, among other false or misleading claims.

Though the outlets' readership is small, U.S. officials say they inject false narratives that can be amplified by other Russian and international media.



The Sputnik V vaccine being administered at a site in Saint Petersburg, Russia, last month.

PHOTO: ANTON VAGANOV/REUTERS

“We can say these outlets are directly linked to Russian intelligence services,” the Global Engagement Center official said of the sites behind the disinformation campaign.

“They’re all foreign-owned, based outside of the United States. They vary a lot in their reach, their tone, their audience, but they’re all part of the Russian propaganda and disinformation ecosystem.”

In addition, Russian state media and Russian government Twitter accounts have made overt efforts to raise concerns about the cost and safety of the Pfizer vaccine in what experts outside the U.S. government say is an effort to promote the sale of Russia’s rival Sputnik V vaccine.

“The emphasis on denigrating Pfizer is likely due to its status as the first vaccine besides Sputnik V to see mass use, resulting in a greater potential threat to Sputnik’s market dominance,” says a forthcoming report by the Alliance for Securing Democracy, a nongovernmental organization that focuses on the danger that authoritarian governments pose to democracies and that is part of the German Marshall Fund, a U.S. think tank.

The foreign efforts to sow doubts about the vaccine exploit deep-seated anxieties about the efficacy and side effects of vaccines that were already prevalent in some communities in the U.S. and internationally. Concern about side effects is a major reason for vaccine hesitancy, according to U.S. Census Bureau data made public last month.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov denied that Russian intelligence agencies were orchestrating articles against Western vaccines and said U.S. officials were mischaracterizing the broad international debate over vaccines as a Russian plot.

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Get an early-morning briefing about the coronavirus each weekday and a weekly Health newsletter when the crisis abates.

PREVIEW

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“It’s nonsense. Russian special services have nothing to do with any criticism against vaccines,” Mr. Peskov said in a telephone interview from Moscow. “If we treat every negative publication against the Sputnik V vaccine as a result of efforts by American special services, then we will go crazy because we see it every day, every hour and in every Anglo-Saxon media.”

The State Department GEC official said that four publications had direct links to Russian intelligence and were used by the Russian government to mislead international opinion on a range of issues.

New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review, the official said, are directed and controlled by the SVR, or Russia’s foreign intelligence service. They present themselves as academic publications and are aimed at the Middle East, Asia and Africa, offering comment on the U.S.’s role in the world. The State Department said in an August report that New Eastern Outlook was linked to “state-funded institutions” in Russia.

Another publication, News Front, is guided by the FSB, a security service that succeeded the KGB, the official said. It is based in Crimea, produces information in 10 languages, and had nearly nine million page visits between February and April 2020, the official added. In

August, the State Department was less explicit, saying that News Front reportedly had ties to Russia security services and Kremlin funding.

Rebel Inside, the fourth publication, has been controlled by the GRU, which is an intelligence directorate of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff. It covered riots and protests and now appears dormant, the GEC official said.

The State Department had previously not gone so far as to say that these outlets were controlled or guided by Russian intelligence agencies—an assertion that generally relies on U.S. classified intelligence.

A State Department spokesman didn't provide specific evidence linking the publications to Russian intelligence but said the assessment was “a result of a joint interagency conclusion.”

“Russian intelligence services bear direct responsibility for using these four platforms to spread propaganda and lies,” the spokesman said. “From the very beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic last year, we have seen Russia’s disinformation ecosystem develop and spread false narratives around the crisis.”

News Front, New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review didn't respond to requests for comment.

Social-media accounts affiliated with the four websites have largely been removed from Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and [Pinterest](#), though some non-English-language accounts remained active earlier this year.

Highlighting reports in the international media, a January article in News Front played up the risk that a person who receives the Pfizer or [Moderna](#) Inc. vaccines could contract Bell's palsy, in which facial muscles are paralyzed, while a February article focused on a man in California that it said tested positive for Covid-19 after receiving the Pfizer vaccination.

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

[EU Blocks Export of AstraZeneca Vaccine to Australia](#)[Novartis to Help Make CureVac Covid-19 Vaccine](#)[Latest Updates](#)

In each case, the Russian outlets were repeating actual news reports but overlooking contrary information about the general safety of the vaccine. Numerous studies and real-world data have shown the Food and Drug Administration-approved vaccines to be safe and effective, and hospitalizations and deaths have begun to plummet in places like Israel where shots have been widely administered, though a small number of side effects have been reported.

“To date, millions of people have been vaccinated with our vaccine following the endorsement of regulators in multiple countries,” said Pamela Eisele, a spokeswoman for Pfizer, who added that individuals who have questions should consult [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#) or their healthcare provider.

A spokeswoman for Moderna didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

A November article in New Eastern Outlook said that the Pfizer vaccine’s use of [mRNA gene editing](#) was “radical experimental technology” that lacked “precision” and said it was rushed through the approval process with the help of billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates and Anthony Fauci, President Biden’s chief medical adviser for the Covid-19 pandemic, both of whom the article accused of “playing fast and loose with human lives in their rush to get these experimental vaccines into our bodies.”

Some New Eastern Outlook articles have been republished by blogs and purported international news sites. One article from January alleged that the U.S. has biological labs around the world that may lead to outbreaks of infectious disease. The article was republished in full or part by websites in Bangladesh, Italy, Spain, France, Iran, Cuba and Sweden, which were reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

The U.S. has long accused Moscow of carrying out disinformation on medical issues. Judy Twigg, a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University who is an expert on global

health issues, said that the Soviet KGB had accused the CIA of spreading dengue fever in Cuba and malaria in Pakistan.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Have you encountered any disinformation on the Covid-19 vaccines? What did it look like? Join the conversation below.

“A persistent KGB campaign claimed that the U.S. Army’s former biological weapons labs at Fort Detrick had unleashed the AIDS epidemic,” she said. Soviet officials denied responsibility for this disinformation.

Thomas Rid, an expert on Russian disinformation at Johns Hopkins University who reviewed the websites cited by the State Department, said the articles were generally in line with Russia’s “rich history” of using communications technology to deceive both international and domestic audiences. He urged the U.S. government to do more to publicly explain how it has concluded the websites are controlled by specific Russian intelligence agencies.

With Russia and China seeking to sell their vaccines abroad, overt efforts to denigrate Pfizer have been well documented. The forthcoming German Marshall Fund report, which was reviewed by the Journal and is to be issued Monday, analyzed more than 35,000 Russian, Chinese and Iranian government and state media tweets on vaccine themes from early November to early February. “Russia provided by far the most negative coverage of Western vaccines,” it states, “with a remarkable 86% of surveyed Russian tweets mentioning Pfizer and 76% mentioning Moderna coded as negative.”

—Ann Simmons contributed to this article.

Investigating the Origin of Covid-19

MARCH 6, 2020
How It All Started: China’s Early Coronavirus Missteps

MAY 12, 2020
On the Ground in Wuhan, Signs of China Stalling Probe of Coronavirus Origins

FEB. 10, 2021
Possible Early Covid-19 Cases in China Emerge During WHO Mission

FEB. 12, 2021
China Refuses to Give WHO Raw Data on Early Covid-19 Cases

FEB. 18, 2021
In Hunt for Covid-19 Origin, WHO Team Focuses on Two Animal Types in China

FEB. 19, 2021
Covid-19 Was Spreading in China Before First Confirmed Cases, Fresh Evidence Suggests

FEB. 26, 2021
Patient Zero Points to Second Wuhan Market

MARCH 1, 2021
Covid-19 Virus Studies Yield New Clues on Pandemic’s Origin

Write to Michael R. Gordon at michael.gordon@wsj.com and Dustin Volz at dustin.volz@wsj.com

Would you like more stories like this?

YES

NO

From: (b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@accenturefederal.com>;
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>
Subject: RU Top Keywords 2020-10-02
Date: Fri, 2 Oct 2020 20:47:15 -0500

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(b)(6)

(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com

www.yonder-ai.com

Sender: (b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@accenturefederal.com>;
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>;
(b)(6)@yonder-ai.com>

From: GEC-PROGRAMS <GEC-PROGRAMS@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@poynter.org <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Subject: Results Notification SAPP0067119 Poynter Institute
Date: Wed, 29 Jun 2022 17:26:50 +0000

Good morning Alanna Dvorak,

The decision regarding your referenced application to SFOP0008566 Support to Fact-Checking Networks is attached.

Thank you for submitting your application for review, and we look forward to your response.

Best regards,
GEC Programs

Sender: GEC-PROGRAMS <GEC-PROGRAMS@state.gov>
Recipient: (b)(6)@poynter.org <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

From:	Washington Post Customer Care <help@washpost.com>
To:	(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject:	Response to Ticket #[2512669] Re: RE: WashPost Invite: In-person climate change event with Sen. Brian Schatz, Patagonia CEO Ryan Gellert and more, 9/20 [Response Requested]
Date:	Fri, 16 Sep 2022 18:44:48 +0000

##- Please type your reply above this line -##

Charles (Washington Post Customer Care)

Sep 16, 2022, 2:44 PM EDT

Thank you for letting us know.

(b)(6)

Sep 16, 2022, 2:07 PM EDT

Katherine,

Thank you for the invitation. Unfortunately, I have another obligation immediately adjacent to the time-slot and cannot make it work. Please keep me in mind for future events.

Best,

(b)(6) senior adviser, GEC Iran Team, All Native Group contractor, (b)(6)
(b)(6)

From: Katherine O'Hearn <washpostlive@washpost.com>

Sent: Friday, September 16, 2022 2:02 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: WashPost Invite: In-person climate change event with Sen. Brian Schatz, Patagonia CEO Ryan Gellert and more, 9/20 [Response Requested]

Hello,

I'm following up on the invitation I sent for Washington Post Live's upcoming event, **Protecting Our Planet**, which will be held on Tuesday, September 20 at The Post's headquarters.

In order to reserve your seat, please make sure that you register [here](#) by Friday, September 16.

We hope to see you at the event this Tuesday.

Kathy and Marisa

Katherine O'Hearn
Executive Producer
Washington Post Live

Marisa Fariña
Managing Director
Washington Post Live

Washington Post Live would like to offer you an exclusive invitation to **Protecting Our Planet**, where speakers such as **Sen. Brian Schatz** (D-Hawaii), Patagonia CEO **Ryan Gellert**, Black Girl Environmentalist founder **Wanjiku "Wawa" Gatheru**, Climate Cardinals executive director **Sophia Kianni** and Novoloop CEO **Miranda Wang** join Washington Post Live in person for a series of conversations about the human, environmental and economic consequences of climate change and the efforts to combat them.

In a segment presented by SK Group, Chief Executive Officer and Board Member of SK Growth Opportunities Corporation **Richard Chin** discusses the importance of sustainable business strategies and investment across the clean energy landscape. This segment will explore how SK is investing in next-generation clean energy technologies, products, and services to enhance sustainable growth and value for all stakeholders.

The event is at The Post's D.C. headquarters and invitations are limited, but we would like to give you priority access. **Please RSVP here to reserve your spot by Friday, September 16.**

Date & Time

Tuesday, September 20, 2022
Doors open for coffee reception at 8:15 a.m. ET.
Program 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. ET

Location

The Washington Post
1301 K Street, NW

Speakers

Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)
Ryan Gellert, CEO, Patagonia Works and Patagonia, Inc.
Wanjiku "Wawa" Gatheru, Climate Justice Advocate & Founder, Black Girl Environmentalist
Sophia Kianni, Founder & Executive Director, Climate Cardinals and U.S. Representative on UN Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change
Miranda Wang, CEO & Co-Founder, Novoloop

Content from SK:

Richard Chin, Executive Officer & Board Member, SK Growth Opportunities Corporation

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. We look forward to having you join us.

Best,

Kathy and Marisa

Katherine O'Hearn
Executive Producer
Washington Post Live

Marisa Fariña
Managing Director
Washington Post Live

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Recipient: (b)(6) @state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: What we don't need...
Date: Wed, 2 Dec 2020 19:05:15 +0000

Geez. Thanks for flagging!

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 1:57 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: What we don't need...

FYSA. CM

https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-army/2020/12/01/this-retired-three-star-falsely-claims-us-soldiers-died-attacking-a-cia-facility-in-germany-tied-to-election-fraud/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2012.02.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief

(b)(6)
USEUCOM J39 Liaison, Russia Team
(Booz Allen Hamilton Contractor)
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
State SA-5 Desk: (b)(6)
OpenNet: (b)(6)@state.gov | ClassNet: (b)(6)@state.sgov.gov



Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Vonda Wolcott (h)(6)@iwpr.net>;
Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ferdi Ozsoy (h)(6)@poynter.org>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis
Date: Wed, 21 Oct 2020 23:52:15 +0000

Hi Baybars

HAICA is considered politically independent and a leader in the space, so we think that it fits the bill.

Is there an issue with Poynter reaching out to HAICA directly in order to gain an understanding of their activities and practices? Ultimately, you need to feel comfortable with the organization's orientation vis a vis Poynter's mission.

Best regards,

(b)(6)
Counselor for Public Affairs
U.S. Embassy Tunis
(b)(6)@state.gov
Cell (b)(6)
Office (b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 3:43 PM

To: (b)(6) (Tunis)

Cc: (b)(6) Vonda Wolcott; Alan Davis; (h)(6); Ferdi Ozsoy; (h)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for the response.

I was wondering if you can elaborate a bit more on your feedback regarding HAICA's independency vis-a-vis their constitutional status given our criteria for membership eligibility seeks fact-checking organizations to be independent of any political influence.

I'm sharing the specific two criterions to provide more context

"If the organization receives funding from a local or foreign state or political sources, it provides a statement on its site setting out to the satisfaction of the IFCN, how it ensures its funders do not influence the findings of its reports"

"The applicant is not as an organization affiliated with nor declares or shows support for any party, any politician or political candidate, nor does it advocate for or against any policy positions on any issues save for transparency and accuracy in public debate."

Given your knowledge on HAICA and our requirements, do you think they would be a good fit?

Thanks a lot

Baybars

On Mon, Oct 19, 2020 at 6:26 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars

I hope that you are doing well. As (b)(6) noted, HAICA appears to be a great fit. Is there anything specific that you need from Embassy Tunis in order to move forward? If not, what is your current timeline and your planned next steps, knowing that COVID may require adjustments?

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Counselor for Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy Tunis

(b)(6)@state.gov

Cell (b)(6)

Office (b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 6:44 PM

To: (b)(6) (Tunis)

Cc: (b)(6) Vonda Wolcott; Alan Davis; (b)(6) Ferdi Ozsoy; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for sharing those with me.

Hope you have completed your transition smoothly.

(b)(6)

I'd be more than happy to jump on a call and discuss about this to know more about their fitness to our program.

Would that be possible to do it next week?

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Oct 7, 2020 at 1:26 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Baybars,

I am transitioning out of post, so I will leave my colleagues (b)(6) to respond to this officially. I think the HAICA proposal looks promising and that it is worth serious consideration. (My only issue with the proposal is that they have the Covid timeline in Tunisia wrong.) It appears to dovetail with another project supported by the Embassy / GEC on Counter disinformation and propaganda on the Covid-19 pandemic in Tunisia. Our grantee is the Grande Ecole de la Communication (GEC) which is working with the Tunisian Ministry of Health.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 3:21 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (h)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis

(b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (h)(6)@poynter.org>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hello again,

Hope this finds you in a good health.

Just wanted to kindly remind my inquiry about your thoughts on HAICA from Tunisia as a potential local partner for our training engagement in the country.

I'm sharing two documents that I've received about the organization (via UNDP) and kindly asking your feedback on their status and eligibility to be a good partner for this project.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 25, 2020 at 10:35 AM Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:
Hello everyone,

Just wanted to get a quick feedback on haica.tn and their collaborative initiative <https://tunisiachecknews.com/>

UNDP and Council of Europe seem to be supporting them

I'm aware that HAICA is a constitutional body set up after the revolution and is not a private organization, however, wondering if they are more independent than similar organizations around the world.

Thanks a lot!

Baybars

On Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 12:42 PM Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:
Hi (b)(6)

Hope you had a great weekend!

Just wanted to kindly check in since I have not received an invite yet.

I believe we are still confirmed for tomorrow 11am EDT.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 9:25 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Super!

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 2:22 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Sure thing! Please kindly feel free to send an invite with your preferred method of communication.

Looking forward to it!

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 9:16 AM Price, (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Baybars,

That's great. Would it be possible to push the moving back to 11 am Tampa / 4 pm Tunis? That better suits a key person on our side. We can set the meeting up via Teams or Zoom. Let us know your preference and we'll send a link by Monday am our time.

Thanks again,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 2:07 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Yes, that works for me.

Looking forward to it!

Baybas

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 5:53 AM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Hi Baybars,

Tuesday morning (Eastern time) works well for us too. Are you available around 10 am Tampa / 3 PM Tunis?

Thanks,

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From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 5:35 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

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Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Great to hear from you!

Next week would be very ideal for me!

I'm based in Florida, Eastern Time Zone

My Tuesday morning (EDT) seems flexible. I hope that would work for you given the time difference and your schedule.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Thu, Sep 17, 2020 at 12:31 PM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Dear Baybars,

It is a pleasure to meet you. Perhaps we can meet next week over Zoom. Please let me know where you are based so that we can work out a date and time. I would like to include out incoming PAO, (b)(6) and our new press officer, (b)(6) in the call.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org

Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:52 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net; (b)(6)@state.gov; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org

Subject: Fwd: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Dear (b)(6) and all,

Hope this email finds you well.

Thanks a lot for this introduction, (b)(6) Happy to be connected.

(b)(6) we are lacking a trainee organization in Tunisia to kick off the trainings. Dogruluk Payi from Turkey will be our regional partner in those trainings, therefore will be providing guidance and support throughout the implementation of the engagement.

We like to hear your thoughts and guidance on identifying a Tunisian newsroom and/or non-profit organization to engage with and train them to be eligible for the International Fact-Checking Network's Code of Principles.

I'll be more than happy to connect with the colleagues at the embassy to seek help in our search for a partner in the country.

Available for a call at your convenience.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

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From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 5:35 PM

Subject: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

To: (b)(6)@poynter.org, (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>, Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>, (b)(6)@state.gov>

Baybars,

I hope you are doing well! I'm touching base with you regarding the Tunisia portion of your IFCN program. I understand from your recent amendment that Poynter still seeks a local Tunisian organization with whom to partner.

May you provide our public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis with an update on where things stand regarding Tunisia **by open of business tomorrow (Thursday)**? Her name is (b)(6) (b)(6) and her email is (b)(6)@state.gov. She is already aware that you and IWPR will reach out with an update and to begin coordinating on potential local implementers. The embassy likely can assist you in your search.

Please cc myself, Vonda, Alan, and (b)(6)@state.gov from our Near Eastern Affairs Bureau on your email. I ask with urgency because (b)(6) is leaving her position within the next several days. She would like to brief her successor on all pending projects to avoid any disconnect or confusion that the transition may cause. It would also be useful for you

to mention that you've identified Doğruluk Payı -- the Turkish fact-checking organization -- as the one who will be connected with the Tunisian organization TBD.

Thank you again, and I do hope you and your family are remaining healthy these days.

Kindly,

(b)(6)

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)@state.gov

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ferdi Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis
Date: Mon, 1 Feb 2021 09:45:54 -0500

Dear (b)(6)

Thank you so much! Happy new year to you too!

We, unfortunately, haven't been able to identify the local beneficiary for Tunisia, The conversation with HAICA stalled, showing a lack of motivation from HAICA's side. We were already a bit hesitant to identify them as our local beneficiaries in this project, therefore currently looking for other outlets which might be a better fit.

We would be more than happy to hear your thoughts and suggestions while we keep looking for a newsroom/media outlet in the country.

All the best-

Baybars

On Fri, Jan 29, 2021 at 2:24 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars and (b)(6)

Happy New Year. I'm checking in to see if you have any updates on the Poynter Tunisia project. I look forward to your feedback.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

(b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 11:27 PM
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Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

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Best regards,

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Counselor for Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy Tunis

(b)(6)@state.gov

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To: (b)(6) Tunis)

Cc: (b)(6); Vonda Wolcott; Alan Davis; (b)(6) Ferdi Ozsoy; (b)(6)
(b)(6) Tunis)
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for sharing those with me.

Hope you have completed your transition smoothly.

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I'd be more than happy to jump on a call and discuss about this to know more about their fitness to our program.

Would that be possible to do it next week?

Looking forward to hearing from you!

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Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hello again,

Hope this finds you in a good health.

Just wanted to kindly remind my inquiry about your thoughts on HAICA from Tunisia as a potential local partner for our training engagement in the country.

I'm sharing two documents that I've received about the organization (via UNDP) and kindly asking your feedback on their status and eligibility to be a good partner for this project.

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UNDP and Council of Europe seem to be supporting them

I'm aware that HAICA is a constitutional body set up after the revolution and is not a private organization, however, wondering if they are more independent than similar organizations around the world.

Thanks a lot!

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I believe we are still confirmed for tomorrow 11am EDT.

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Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

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Looking forward to it!

Best-

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That's great. Would it be possible to push the moving back to 11 am Tampa / 4 pm Tunis? That better suits a key person on our side. We can set the meeting up via Teams or Zoom. Let us know your preference and we'll send a link by Monday am our time.

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Cc: Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>, Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>, (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

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Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

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Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
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(b)(6)@state.gov>

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Ferd Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis
Date: Thu, 4 Mar 2021 22:21:57 -0500

Hi there,

Hope this email finds you well.

Just wanted to give you an update to share that we have agreed with GEC (Les Grandes Ecoles de Communication) to provide our trainings.

Really appreciate the introduction!

I'll share more updates as the weeks move forward.

All the best-

Baybars

On Tue, Feb 2, 2021 at 8:11 PM Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:
Dear all,

(b)(6) thanks a lot for those kind words! We are grateful for such an acknowledgment of our work as the fact-checking community, even though that's a very early stage in such an unparalleled process.

Hi (b)(6)

That would be great to be connected with them and hear more about them + explore a possible partnership for our Tunisian engagement.

Please kindly feel free to set up an introduction.

All the best-

Baybars

On Mon, Feb 1, 2021 at 9:48 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon (b)(6)

I defer to Baybars from Poynter and Vonda from IWPR (who manages this sub-award for GEC). From the latest IWPR monthly report I received, Poynter is preparing to roll out its initial trainings in February in select countries, although it is unclear when Tunisia activities will occur.

To note, Poynter's International Fact-Checking Network received a 2021 Nobel Peace Prize nomination. We are thrilled to support Baybars on such impactful work.

Kindly,

(b)(6)

Sent from my iPhone

On January 29, 2021 at 02:24:51 EST, (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:

Hi Baybars and (b)(6)

Happy New Year. I'm checking in to see if you have any updates on the Poynter Tunisia project. I look forward to your feedback.

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Cell (b)(6)

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Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 5:35 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Tunis) <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Great to hear from you!

Next week would be very ideal for me!

I'm based in Florida, Eastern Time Zone

My Tuesday morning (EDT) seems flexible. I hope that would work for you given the time difference and your schedule.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Thu, Sep 17, 2020 at 12:31 PM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Dear Baybars,

It is a pleasure to meet you. Perhaps we can meet next week over Zoom. Please let me know where you are based so that we can work out a date and time. I would like to include out incoming PAO, (b)(6) and our new press officer, (b)(6) in the call.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:52 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Subject: Fwd: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Dear (b)(6) and all,

Hope this email finds you well.

Thanks a lot for this introduction, (b)(6) Happy to be connected.

(b)(6) we are lacking a trainee organization in Tunisia to kick off the trainings. Dogruluk Payi from Turkey will be our regional partner in those trainings, therefore will be providing guidance and support throughout the implementation of the engagement.

We like to hear your thoughts and guidance on identifying a Tunisian newsroom and/or non-profit organization to engage with and train them to be eligible for the International Fact-Checking Network's Code of Principles.

I'll be more than happy to connect with the colleagues at the embassy to seek help in our search for a partner in the country.

Available for a call at your convenience.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 5:35 PM

Subject: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

To: (b)(6)@poynter.org <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>, Alan Davis <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>, (b)(6)@state.gov>

Baybars,

I hope you are doing well! I'm touching base with you regarding the Tunisia portion of your IFCN program. I understand from your recent amendment that Poynter still seeks a local Tunisian organization with whom to partner.

May you provide our public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis with an update on where things stand regarding Tunisia **by open of business tomorrow (Thursday)**? Her name is (b)(6) and her email is (b)(6)@state.gov. She is already aware that you and IWPR will reach out with an update and to begin coordinating on potential local implementers. The embassy likely can assist you in your search.

Please cc myself, Vonda, Alan, and (b)(6)@state.gov from our Near Eastern Affairs Bureau on your email. I ask with urgency because (b)(6) is leaving her position within the next several days. She would like to brief her successor on all pending projects to avoid any disconnect or confusion that the transition may cause. It would also be useful for you to mention that you've identified Doğruluk Payı -- the Turkish fact-checking organization -- as the one who will be connected with the Tunisian organization TBD.

Thank you again, and I do hope you and your family are remaining healthy these days.

Kindly,

(b)(6)

Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
(b)(6)@state.gov

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
[@baybarsorsek](#) / [@factchecknet](#)

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;

Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>;

Recipient: Alan Davis <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ferdı Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
Ferdinand Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>
Subject: RE: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis
Date: Tue, 2 Feb 2021 23:43:27 +0000

Hi Baybars and Ferdi

We have another organization that Embassy Tunis would like to recommend for the factchecking project. Last spring the Embassy received funding from GEC to combat fake news related to COVID. The implementing partner in Tunisia is Les Grandes Ecoles de Communication (ironically, also GEC), which is a small NGO that has successfully implemented two MEPI local grants. The Embassy believes that this could be the right fit because the team has already proven to be responsive and capable partner, and they would benefit from additional training. I provided additional information on the current GEC-funded project below. Please let me know if you would like us to arrange an introduction.

This project aims to support the MoH to implement a Communication of Crisis and Risks and disseminate information ensuring Community Engagement -- by creating a platform to check facts and news during the COVID-19 crisis and training social media influencers in 24 governorates.

Les Grandes Ecoles de Communication (GEC) plans to select and train 240 social influencers in the 24 governorates by starting to engage established social media influencers with large pools of followers, which will help the project gain visibility and credibility.

The project will be working on achieving two main objectives:

1. Launch a Fact Check platform to provide accurate information to media outlets, government officials, and social influencers to counter the Disinformation on the Covid-19
2. 240 youth are trained to be social influencers or descramblers promoting accurate information in their local communities to help the Ministry of Health MoH disseminate The Crisis and Risks Communication plan related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
Cell (b)(6)

Office (b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 3:49 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Cc: Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Good afternoon (b)(6)

I defer to Baybars from Poynter and Vonda from IWPR (who manages this sub-award for GEC). From the latest IWPR monthly report I received, Poynter is preparing to roll out its initial trainings in February in select countries, although it is unclear when Tunisia activities will occur.

To note, Poynter's International Fact-Checking Network received a 2021 Nobel Peace Prize nomination. We are thrilled to support Baybars on such impactful work.

Kindly,

(b)(6)

Sent from my iPhone

On January 29, 2021 at 02:24:51 EST, (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Baybars and (b)(6)
Happy New Year. I'm checking in to see if you have any updates on the Poynter Tunisia project. I look forward to your feedback.

(b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov

Cell (b)(6)
Office (b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 11:27 PM
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi Baybars

I hope that you are doing well. As (b)(6) noted, HAICA appears to be a great fit. Is there anything specific that you need from Embassy Tunis in order to move forward? If not, what is your current timeline and your planned next steps, knowing that COVID may require adjustments?

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Counselor for Public Affairs
U.S. Embassy Tunis

(b)(6)@state.gov

Cell (b)(6)
Office (b)(6)

I am currently teleworking

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 6:44 PM

To: (b)(6) (Tunis)

Cc: (b)(6) Vonda Wolcott; Alan Davis; (b)(6) Ferdi Ozsoy; (b)(6)
(Tunis); (b)(6) K (Tunis)

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for sharing those with me.

Hope you have completed your transition smoothly.

(b)(6)

I'd be more than happy to jump on a call and discuss about this to know more about their fitness to our program.

Would that be possible to do it next week?

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Oct 7, 2020 at 1:26 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

I am transitioning out of post, so I will leave my colleagues (b)(6) to respond to this officially. I think the HAICA proposal looks promising and that it is worth serious consideration. (My only issue with the proposal is that they have the Covid timeline in Tunisia wrong.) It appears to dovetail with another project supported by the Embassy / GEC on Counter disinformation and propaganda on the Covid-19

pandemic in Tunisia. Our grantee is the Grande Ecole de la Communication (GEC) which is working with the Tunisian Ministry of Health.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 3:21 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hello again,

Hope this finds you in a good health.

Just wanted to kindly remind my inquiry about your thoughts on HAICA from Tunisia as a potential local partner for our training engagement in the country.

I'm sharing two documents that I've received about the organization (via UNDP) and kindly asking your feedback on their status and eligibility to be a good partner for this project.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 25, 2020 at 10:35 AM Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:
Hello everyone,

Just wanted to get a quick feedback on haica.tn and their collaborative initiative <https://tunisiachecknews.com/>

UNDP and Council of Europe seem to be supporting them

I'm aware that HAICA is a constitutional body set up after the revolution and is not a private organization, however, wondering if they are more independent than similar organizations around the world.

Thanks a lot!

Baybars

On Mon, Sep 21, 2020 at 12:42 PM Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:

Hi (b)(6)

Hope you had a great weekend!

Just wanted to kindly check in since I have not received an invite yet.

I believe we are still confirmed for tomorrow 11am EDT.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 9:25 AM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Super!

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 2:22 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net; Alan Davis
(b)(6)@iwpr.net; (b)(6)@state.gov; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org;
(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Sure thing! Please kindly feel free to send an invite with your preferred method of communication.

Looking forward to it!

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 9:16 AM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Baybars,

That's great. Would it be possible to push the moving back to 11 am Tampa / 4 pm Tunis? That better suits a key person on our side. We can set the meeting up via Teams or Zoom. Let us know your preference and we'll send a link by Monday am our time.

Thanks again,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 2:07 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Yes, that works for me.

Looking forward to it!

Baybas

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 5:53 AM Price, (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Baybars,

Tuesday morning (Eastern time) works well for us too. Are you available around 10 am Tampa / 3 PM Tunis?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 5:35 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi (b)(6)

Great to hear from you!

Next week would be very ideal for me!

I'm based in Florida, Eastern Time Zone

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Looking forward to hearing from you.

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Baybars

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Dear Baybars,

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Best regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:52 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net; Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net; (b)(6)@state.gov; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Subject: Fwd: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

Dear (b)(6) and all,

Hope this email finds you well.

Thanks a lot for this introduction, (b)(6) Happy to be connected.

(b)(6) we are lacking a trainee organization in Tunisia to kick off the trainings. Dogruluk Payi from Turkey will be our regional partner in those trainings, therefore will be providing guidance and support throughout the implementation of the engagement.

We like to hear your thoughts and guidance on identifying a Tunisian newsroom and/or non-profit organization to engage with and train them to be eligible for the International Fact-Checking Network's Code of Principles.

I'll be more than happy to connect with the colleagues at the embassy to seek help in our search for a partner in the country.

Available for a call at your convenience.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Date: Wed, Sep 16, 2020 at 5:35 PM

Subject: Update on Poynter and Tunisia -- Connecting with U.S. Embassy Tunis

To: (b)(6)@poynter.org (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>, Alan Davis <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>, (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>

Baybars,

I hope you are doing well! I'm touching base with you regarding the Tunisia portion of your IFCN program. I understand from your recent amendment that Poynter still seeks a local Tunisian organization with whom to partner.

May you provide our public affairs officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis with an update on where things stand regarding Tunisia **by open of business tomorrow (Thursday)**? Her name is (b)(6) and her email is (b)(6)@state.gov. She is already aware that you and IWPR will reach out with an update and to begin coordinating on potential local implementers. The embassy likely can assist you in your search.

Please cc myself, Vonda, Alan, and (b)(6)@state.gov from our Near Eastern Affairs Bureau on your email. I ask with urgency because (b)(6) is leaving her position within the next several days. She would like to brief her successor on all pending projects to avoid any disconnect or confusion that the transition may cause. It would also be useful for you to mention that you've identified Doğruluk Payı -- the Turkish fact-checking organization -- as the one who will be connected with the Tunisian organization TBD.

Thank you again, and I do hope you and your family are remaining healthy these days.

Kindly,

(b)(6)

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)@state.gov

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;

Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>;

Alan Davis (b)(6)@iwpr.net>;

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>

From: "Nakashima, Ellen" <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
CC: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Ukraine's information campaign - request to speak with Daniel Kimmage
Date: Wed, 16 Mar 2022 13:25:00 +0000

Many thanks, (b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Nakashima, Ellen <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Ukraine's information campaign - request to speak with Daniel Kimmage

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Hello Ellen,

We were happy to help with your article by arranging for you to speak with Daniel Kimmage. We are glad that it worked out.

Please feel free to contact us again in the future with any other press inquiries.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State

All Native Group Contractor

Office: (b)(6)



From: Nakashima, Ellen (b)(6) [REDACTED]@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:05 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Ukraine's information campaign - request to speak with Daniel Kimmage

Hello,

I'm a national security reporter with The Washington Post and have covered information operations, cyber and intelligence issues.

We're working on a story with a quick turnaround (needs to be edited by tomorrow afternoon) that assesses the strengths and potential pitfalls of Ukraine's remarkable information campaign during its war with Russia.

I understand that Daniel Kimmage is researching a related topic at NDU —on Russian and Soviet disinformation, and he's a noted expert on the subject.

Could you arrange for me to speak with him —even on background—so that our readers may have the benefits of his insights —even if not attributed to him by name?

We would be ever so grateful.

Thank you,
Ellen Nakashima

(b)(6) [REDACTED]

Sender:	"Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6) [REDACTED]@washpost.com>
Recipient:	GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
Subject: Re: Story as PDF and link (in case you can't get through paypal)
Date: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 17:36:36 +0000

Hi Michael,

Sending my thanks as well!

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 9:46 AM
To: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Story as PDF and link (in case you can't get through paypal)

Hi Michael,

Thanks for sending this yesterday. I have enjoyed our interaction over this one.

Best,

J.T.

From: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 10:18 AM
To: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Story as PDF and link (in case you can't get through paypal)

https://wsj-articles-preview.sc.onservo.com/okta/articles/SB_PREVIEW_03062021211500?tesla=y&noredirect=true&httpsredirect=none

Michael Gordon
National Security Correspondent
The Wall Street Journal
(b)(6) (cell, WhatsApp, Signal)
(b)(6)@wsj.com (work email)
(b)(6)@protonmail.com (encrypted email)
Book site: michaelrgordon.com

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Gordon, Michael (b)(6)@wsj.com>

From: (b)(6) @State.gov
To: (b)(6)
Subject: Re: Sanctioning Russia-linked Disinformation Network for its Involvement in Attempts to Influence U.S. Election
Date: Mon, 11 Jan 2021 16:31:15 +0000

Well no kidding. They're behind many of the Hunter Biden narratives.

From: (b)(6) @state.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 11:15 AM
To: (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6) @state.gov>
Subject: Re: Sanctioning Russia-linked Disinformation Network for its Involvement in Attempts to Influence U.S. Election

...They have made repeated public statements advancing malicious narratives that U.S. Government officials have engaged in corrupt dealings in Ukraine...

From: (b)(6) @state.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 11:12 AM
To: GEC-Russia Team <GEC-RussiaTeam@state.gov>
Subject: Fw: Sanctioning Russia-linked Disinformation Network for its Involvement in Attempts to Influence U.S. Election

From: U.S. Department of State <usstatebpa@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 11:07 AM
To: (b)(6) @state.gov>
Subject: Sanctioning Russia-linked Disinformation Network for its Involvement in Attempts to Influence U.S. Election

You are subscribed to Collected Releases for U.S. Department of State. This information has recently been updated, and is now available.

Sanctioning Russia-linked Disinformation Network for its Involvement in Attempts to Influence U.S. Election

01/11/2021 10:57 AM EST

Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State

Today, the United States is imposing sanctions on seven individuals and four entities that are part of a Russia-linked foreign influence network associated with Andrii Derkach, who was designated on September 10, 2020, pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13848 for his attempt to influence the 2020 U.S. Presidential election. Derkach, a member of the Ukrainian parliament, has been an active Russian agent for more than a decade, maintaining close connections with Russian intelligence services.

Former Ukraine Government officials Konstantin Kulyk, Oleksandr Onyshchenko, Andriy Telizhenko, and current member of the Ukrainian parliament Oleksandr Dubinsky, have publicly appeared with or affiliated themselves with Derkach through the coordinated dissemination and promotion of fraudulent or unsubstantiated allegations involving a U.S. political candidate. They have made repeated public statements

advancing malicious narratives that U.S. Government officials have engaged in corrupt dealings in Ukraine. These efforts and narratives are consistent with or in support of Derkach's objectives to influence the 2020 U.S. presidential election. As such, these individuals have been designated pursuant to E.O. 13848 for having directly or indirectly engaged in, sponsored, concealed, or otherwise been complicit in foreign influence in an attempt to undermine the 2020 U.S. elections.

NabuLeaks, Era-Media, Only News, and Skeptik TOV are media front companies in Ukraine that disseminate false narratives at the behest of Derkach's and his associates. They are being designated pursuant to E.O. 13848 for being owned or controlled by Derkach or his media team. Today's action also includes the designation of Petro Zhuravel, Dmytro Kovalchuk, and Anton Simonenko for having materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, Derkach.

For more information about today's actions, please see the Department of the Treasury's [press release](#).

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Sender:

(b)(6)

Recipient:

@State.gov

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

To: Shesgreen, Deirdre <(b)(6)@usatoday.com>

Subject: Re: Russian disinformation/vaccines

Date: Mon, 8 Mar 2021 21:10:32 +0000

Hi Deirdre,

Thanks for your message. Please see the following, attributable On Background to a State Department Spokesperson:

- The Department of State can confirm that the Global Engagement Center (GEC) has identified four Russian platforms that are directed by Russian intelligence services and spread disinformation. These four platforms are: **News Front**, which is guided and tasked by the Federal Security Service; **New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review**, directed and controlled by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service; and **Rebel Inside**, controlled by the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. These sites all vary in their reach, tone, and audience – but they all are spreading Russian propaganda and disinformation. The State Department's finding of a link between these sites and Russian Intelligence is a result of a joint interagency conclusion.
- Three of these outlets (News Front, New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review) spread many types of disinformation, including about both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, as well as international organizations, military conflicts, protests, and any divisive issue that they can exploit. Rebel Inside has been largely dormant for the past year.
- The Department will continue to expose Russia's nefarious activities online.
- We will also continue to work closely with our allies and partners to provide a global response to countering disinformation.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)

✕

From: Shesgreen, Deirdre [(b)(6)]@usatoday.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 4:16 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Russian disinformation/vaccines

Hi,

I'm a reporter with USA TODAY, and I'm hoping to confirm the Wall Street Journal's reporting on Russia's efforts to undermine confidence in the COVID vaccines. Would someone be available to call me today on this? I can be reached at [(b)(6)]

Thanks,
Deirdre

Deirdre Shesgreen
Foreign Affairs Reporter
USA TODAY
Cell/Signal/WhatsApp: [(b)(6)]
[(b)(6)]@usatoday.com
@dshesgreen



Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Recipient: Shesgreen, Deirdre [(b)(6)]@usatoday.com>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Kimmage, Daniel <(h)(6)@state.gov>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Response to Taken Questions
Date: Thu, 14 Jan 2021 14:57:51 +0000

Hi Daniel,

Please find the compiled document attached. I will keep you updated as soon as I hear anything in regards to attribution and timing.

 [Release Remarks WSJ 11421.docx](#)

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



From: Kimmage, Daniel <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 9:26 AM
To: (h)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Response to Taken Questions

Thanks, (b)(6) If you could put everything in one document, that would be great. I'm heading in to the office after our 0930 call, doing a SVTC 1100-1200, and then I'll have some time to review. Thanks!

From: (h)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 14, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Kimmage, Daniel <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Fw: Response to Taken Questions

Hi Daniel,

(b)(5)

Very best

(b)(6)

From: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 3:35 PM
To: Lee, Matthew <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: Response to Taken Questions

Hi Matt,

Following up on the conversation last week, below are GEC's responses to the two taken questions.

These responses are provided on deep background.

Q1. How are people getting to these sites? Google? Etc

The majority of users accessing these four sites go to the site directly. For greater context, we have outlined the traffic for each of the four sites below. This data captures traffic for the full month of September from SimilarWeb, a publicly available tool.

Definitions:

Direct traffic occurs when a visitor arrives directly on a website by typing in the website's URL, without having clicked on a link on another site or using a search engine.

Referral traffic describes the people who come to a domain from other sites, without using a search engine.

Search traffic refers to the visitors who arrive at a website by clicking search results leading to that particular website (mostly after searching keywords or phrases).

Social traffic is traffic from social media outlets.

- **NEO:** 79% direct traffic; 8.5% referral traffic (mostly from other alternative media); 7.7% traffic from search; 3.7% social traffic (43.6% from Facebook)
- **Oriental Review:** 55.5% direct traffic; 13.3% referral traffic (83% from news aggregator Inoreader); 21.4% from search traffic; 9.7% social traffic (56% from Twitter)
- **News Front:** 63.9% direct traffic; 13.5% referral traffic (33% from Russian search engine Yandex; other traffic from news aggregators and websites); 5.9% from search traffic; 9.8% social traffic (56.8% VKontakte)

- **Rebel Inside:** Not available on SimilarWeb.

Q2. Are we seeing lots of Spanish speaking audiences targeted from these sites?

News Front is the only one of the four entities we outlined that directly targets Spanish speaking audiences. News Front has a dedicated Spanish-language proxy site and claims that the site's editorial branch is based in Spain. In addition, we see that News Front targets Spanish speaking audiences on the Russian social media platform VKontakte. The page self identifies as being located in Madrid, Spain and has 1,633 followers. News Front's Spanish-language no longer has any pages on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube because they all have been suspended by the platforms.

Happy to discuss any proposal to move something to "on background."

Finally, could you give some idea about when you are looking to publish?

Best,

J.T.

John T. Ice

Deputy Spokesperson

United States Department of State

Office: +1.202.647.9986 | Cell: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

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Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Kimmage, Daniel (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	"Ice, John T" (b)(6)@state.gov>
To:	Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>
CC:	(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject:	Re: Response to Taken Questions
Date:	Mon, 2 Nov 2020 16:34:34 +0000

Hi Matt,

I hope that you are at least somewhat recovered from the trip. Bumping this up to the top of your email queue.

Best,

J.T.

From: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 3:35 PM
To: Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Response to Taken Questions

Hi Matt,

Following up on the conversation last week, below are GEC's responses to the two taken questions.

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- **Rebel Inside:** Not available on SimilarWeb.

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Happy to discuss any proposal to move something to "on background."

Finally, could you give some idea about when you are looking to publish?

Best,

J.T.

John T. Ice

Deputy Spokesperson

United States Department of State

(b)(6)

✉: (b)(6)@state.gov

Sender: "Ice, John T" (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: "Ice, John T" <(b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Response to Taken Questions
Date: Wed, 4 Nov 2020 22:14:47 +0000

Hi Matt,

Off the record, realizing there is a lot going on, we wanted to touch base on this. Are you still looking to put something together? If not, let us know and we will begin to look at other options.

Best,

J.T.

From: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 2, 2020 11:34 AM
To: Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Response to Taken Questions

Hi Matt,

I hope that you are at least somewhat recovered from the trip. Bumping this up to the top of your email queue.

Best,

J.T.

From: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 3:35 PM
To: Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Response to Taken Questions

Hi Matt,

Following up on the conversation last week, below are GEC's responses to the two taken questions.

These responses are provided on deep background.

Q1. How are people getting to these sites? Google? Etc

The majority of users accessing these four sites go to the site directly. For greater context, we have outlined the traffic for each of the four sites below. This data captures traffic for the full month of September from SimilarWeb, a publicly available tool.

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- **Rebel Inside:** Not available on SimilarWeb.

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Happy to discuss any proposal to move something to "on background."

Finally, could you give some idea about when you are looking to publish?

Best,

J.T.

John T. Ice
Deputy Spokesperson
United States Department of State

Office: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov

Sender: "Ice, John T" (b)(6)@state.gov>

Lee, Matthew (b)(6)@ap.org>;

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	Steven Lee Myers <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
To:	GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject:	Re: Response for interview request with State Department's Global Engagement Center
Date:	Fri, 26 Aug 2022 10:28:57 -0700

Sure, I think so. Best time for me might be later this afternoon, say around 4 or 5 eastern?

The New York Times

Twitter: @stevenleemyers

Facebook: StevenLeeMyersNYT

What'sApp and Signal, +(b)(6)

On Fri, Aug 26, 2022 at 10:18 AM GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:
Good afternoon Mr. Myers,

Thanks for getting back to us.

Could you do a Microsoft Teams call?

(b)(6)

From: Steven Lee Myers <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, August 26, 2022 12:46 PM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Response for interview request with State Department's Global Engagement Center

Thank you very much. I am free today (on Pacific coast time) at (b)(6)

Best

Steve

The New York Times

Twitter: @stevenleemyers

Facebook: StevenLeeMyersNYT

What'sApp and Signal, +(b)(6)

On Fri, Aug 26, 2022 at 6:44 AM GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:
Good morning Mr. Myers,

I'm reaching out from the State Department's Global Engagement Center. We received notice that you would like to speak to an official at the Department regarding Russian disinformation operations.

I believe that your deadline is 5:00pm today. We have someone available to speak with you between 1:30 and 5 today - please let us know if this works for you.

We ask that the interview be on background and attributed to a State Department official.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor

x]

Sender: Steven Lee Myers <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Recipient: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

From: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Reconnecting: State/Poynter
Date: Fri, 8 Jul 2022 13:08:35 -0400

Perfect, look forward to speaking with you guys then.

On Fri, Jul 8, 2022 at 10:54 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Alanna - looks like 2PM will work for all of us next Friday. I'll send around a calendar invite with dial-in information that we can use.

Looking forward to it,

(b)(6)
From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 6, 2022 4:16 PM
To: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Reconnecting: State/Poynter

Alanna - great to reconnect with you. Let me convene with (b)(6) and we will iron out some times for later this month. It'll be a pleasure to brainstorm with you.

Best,

(b)(6)
From: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 10:29 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Reconnecting: State/Poynter

Hi (b)(6)

After a whirlwind two weeks that included our GlobalFact 9 Conference, in which we welcomed 500 fact-checkers, and some personal time trekking around Scandinavia, I am back in the office and getting caught up.

I would love to touch base with both of you. To save from the usual going back and forth on our availability, I can just throw my Calendly out here, which has my schedule. Looking forward to speaking with you all!

Best,
Alanna

On Fri, Jun 17, 2022 at 9:27 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Alanna,

Thank you for an excellent panel presentation at yesterday's IAF event! Just sending a quick note so that you have my contact information again. It would be great to set up something later in July between myself and (b)(6) (from State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy) to get a better sense of your footprint in the MENA region.

Separately, I also recommended to (b)(6) that he encourage the U.S. Embassy in Tunis to apply against the internal small grant funding opportunity that I spoke about yesterday. You mentioned that post did not have funding to continue supporting local Tunisian partners - this is at least a potential option for them. That application window closes next Friday at midnight - no action needed from your side since post will need to be the one to submit the proposal.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Foreign Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
(b)(6)@state.gov

--

Alanna Dvorak
International Training Manager/IFCN
The Poynter Institute
ph: (b)(6)
(b)(6)@poynter.org
www.poynter.org

--

Alanna Dvorak
International Training Manager/IFCN
The Poynter Institute
ph: (b)(6)
(b)(6)@poynter.org
www.poynter.org

Sender: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: "Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
To: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>
CC: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: re-upping last little question
Date: Wed, 16 Mar 2022 12:45:26 +0000

Beautiful and thanks again.

From: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:20 AM
To: Nakashima, Ellen (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: re-upping last little question

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Ok here

From: Nakashima, Ellen (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:18 AM
To: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: re-upping last little question

Ok to say this?

A State Department official knowledgeable about foreign disinformation

From: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:32 PM
To: Nakashima, Ellen (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes

From: Nakashima, Ellen <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

Great and thank you, Ned! That's on-background to a State Department official?

From: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Nakashima, Ellen <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes, I signed off w doing it on background.

From: Nakashima, Ellen <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:13 PM
To: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: just double-checking

Hi, Ned,

Just double-checking on my request to speak with the GEC's Daniel Kimmage, who is on leave at NDU, for a story about Ukraine's information campaign.

Would that be okay with you –and under what ground rules –on record or on background?

Many, many thanks!
Ellen Nakashima
The Washington Post
(b)(6)

Sender: "Nakashima, Ellen" <(b)(6)@washpost.com>
Recipient: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>;
GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:
Date: Thu, 4 Feb 2021 15:57:31 -0500

We have about 30 to 60 before goes into final edits/publication. Precise timing unclear.

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 3:46 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

We still plan to respond today, let us know if you can hold just a bit longer. Sorry for the delay.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 3:13 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Checking in

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 10:42 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

I think it should be very shortly.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 10:39 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: Re:

Will you be able to get back to me today?

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 9:44 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

Can you give us a little more time? We should be able to get back with you shortly.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 3, 2021 5:22 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject:

(b)(6)

Looks like the story I was helping my colleague could go as early as tomorrow afternoon. Not sure if there is anything you will be able to share Thursday morning. Give a ring when you can

(b)(6)

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

--

+ (b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp

Sender: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: Re:
Date: Tue, 9 Nov 2021 16:02:01 +0000

Great. See also attached excerpts from Larry Bittman, former deputy chief of the "special operations" (active measures) department of the Czechoslovak state security intelligence service from 1964 to 1966.

Excerpts from The Deception Game explain the basic technique of SOV/RU AM (active measures). Last graf of UPI interview explains how they scan the West for ideas of what prop/disinfo themes to circulate.

See also for recent examples of how RU use fringe voices in the West and elsewhere:

- #6: Using Pseudo-Academic Online Journals to Amplify Fringe Voices, September 28, 2020
 - How the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) uses a pseudo-academic online journal, the Strategic Culture Foundation, to amplify the views of fringe voices in the West
- #7: Building an International Disinformation Network, November 10, 2020
 - How the SVR-directed Strategic Culture Foundation partnered with Global Research, a far-left website in Canada, and The 4th Media, an obscure website in Beijing, to begin to build an international disinformation system in the early 2010s.

From: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:46 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Excellent, thanks so much (b)(6) will peruse these before we speak
All best, thanks again, Jim

On Tue, Nov 9, 2021 at 10:43 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Anytime from 2-6 pm is good. Agree there is lots to discuss; very interesting topic.

You may have seen already Doug Selvage's very interesting article, Operation "Denver": The East German Ministry of State Security and the KGB's AIDS Disinformation Campaign, 1985–1986 (Part 1) [attached for reference]. Search for Shively to see discussion of origins of AIDS disinfo story -- I have more to add on this. See also p. 12-23 in 1988 report I wrote, found at <http://insidethecoldwar.org/sites/default/files/documents/Soviet%20Active%20Measures%2>

0in%20the%20Era%20of%20Glasnot%20March%201988.pdf, which discusses SOV "Ethnic Weapons" disinfo, which apparently was picked up by Shively and others, per Doug's article. (Doug told me you are speaking with him tomorrow).

This is likely a mashup of SOV disinfo plus delusions/conspiracy theories of local fringe elements, including fellow travelers and useful idiots. Can explain more.

See also original article in US Army's Military Review, which led to "ethnic weapons" disinfo; two versions attached.

All for now.

(b)(6)

From: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:28 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Hi (b)(6)

Looking forward to speaking today -- so much to discuss, and I really appreciate getting some of your time.

Just making sure -- 4:30/1630 est ok time to call?

Thanks again, Jim

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 3:02 PM Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com> wrote:
Ok great advice thanks! Catch you tomorrow and thanks on all

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 2:56 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Tomorrow from 1430-1800 is good.

There was an excellent article in the WSJ in September about COVID safety when flying. The most dangerous time is when you (and others) take your mask off to eat. They recommend turning up the forced air in the controls above your seat and pointing the nozzle at your face when your mask is off to scatter any COVID particles away.

I got permission to speak you on the terms we discussed. Will send you a couple of articles later today.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Jim Rutenberg <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 2:40 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Thanks (b)(6), sounds good
I'm boarding a plane and don't land till around 6/6:30
Is there an ok time tomorrow to try you?
Thanks again much obliged

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 2:37 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Jim:

Let's just discuss between you and me and I'll fill the others in as needed. I'll give you a call. My cell is (b)(6) Home landline: (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 11:55 AM
To: Jim Rutenberg <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: Re:

Jim:

checking with my colleagues on when is a good time. Any times good or not good for you today or tomorrow?

Thanks.

(b)(6)

From: Jim Rutenberg <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 11:46 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
<(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Sure, let me know if there's a good time to connect and I can fill you and whoever else is interested in on the arc of the book

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 10:04 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Jim:

Yes, I think if we had a better sense of what you are trying to address and accomplish in the book, that would help a lot.

Thanks.

(b)(6)

P.S. - (b)(6)

From: Jim Rutenberg <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, November 5, 2021 6:29 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re:

Thanks (b)(6) and thanks, all.

(b)(6) came highly recommended and would be a great help. I'm happy to fill you all in more on the general sweep of the book if you would like.

Thanks and all the best, Jim

On Fri, Nov 5, 2021 at 6:11 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

(b)(6)

Please let me know if you need any more information to make a decision on this request for what would likely be several discussions/interviews on the phone and via email with NYT reporter Jim Rutenberg, who, per his email below, is writing "a narrative history book ... about information warfare at home and abroad, from roughly 1970 to now." He is particularly interested in speaking with me about "the successful Soviet operation to plant false stories that AIDS was invented in the US Laboratory at Fort Detrick ... [and] how that story got picked up and elaborated upon in the publications of fringe political movements here in the US."

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Please call me (b)(6) I already feel old enough w/o being addressed as Mister.

I'd be glad to help on your very interesting project provided my bosses in the Global Engagement Center and Public Affairs agree. I'm looping in my immediate supervisor and the GEC person who handles media requests to start this process.

If my bosses and PA agree, I think it would be best to talk and share information with you on a background or deep background basis meaning that you are free to use the material but without attributing it to the Department of State, with some exceptions in which I would be glad to go on the record or be described as a State Department expert on disinformation, in particular when we are speaking about established Soviet and Russian disinformation and propaganda practices. I think it's best to do that on a case-by-case basis provided my bosses at GEC and Public Affairs agree.

I am certainly willing to discuss other topics than the AIDS disinformation campaign, if I get permission to speak with you, but I strongly prefer to stick to topics that I know well. From 1987 to 1996, I followed rumors of child organ trafficking very closely, which the Soviets repeated and which also circulated on their own as an urban legend, and paid attention to prominent Soviet disinformation claims (prior to 1992), often helping U.S. Information Agency (USIA) posts overseas respond to Soviet disinformation claims in the local media in their countries. I was at USIA from 1987 to 1996, before it was absorbed into State in 1999 and have been at State since 2003, working to counter misinformation and disinformation most of that time.

Also, many thanks for attaching your excellent 2017 NYT Magazine article, which I had missed. It is an excellent treatment of this topic, enlivened by interviews with Simonyan, Peskov, and other key actors. I will read it carefully.

Many thanks for your inquiry.

Best,

(b)(6)

Senior Counter-Disinformation Adviser
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Contractor: Accenture/Datastrong

(b)(6)@state.gov

From: Jim Rutenberg <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, November 5, 2021 5:15 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject:

Hello (b)(6)

My name is Jim Rutenberg and I'm a reporter at the New York Times.

I'm doing some research for a narrative history book I'm writing about information warfare at home and abroad, from roughly 1970 to now. I was wondering whether I could check in with you about the work you did on the Active Measures team in the Reagan years. I am looking into the successful Soviet operation to plant false stories that AIDS was invented in the US Laboratory at Fort Detrick. While this is now a fairly well-told tale, I am particularly interested in how that story got picked up and elaborated upon in the publications of fringe political movements here in the US. That labor intensive and onerous work on behalf of the Soviet disinfo

agents of the 1980s will stand in contrast to later portions of the book, when their successors will have a much easier time penetrating the American information stream of the social media and cable tv era. Also, I was interested to see in one of your team's reports an assessment that Russian disinformation would be far more effective if they ever figured out how to produce better television, which, of course, they would later go on to do (see <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/13/magazine/rt-sputnik-and-russias-new-theory-of-war.html>), so I'd also want to range a little bit beyond the AIDS operation if you're game. I am writing the book for Penguin Press and am not yet sure of the publication date (I would expect it to go to market in roughly a year and a half). It is possible that some of what I learn will feed my reporting for The Times, but there are no such plans as of now. If you are amenable then we can discuss the terms of our discussion, but please know that I am comfortable doing this on a background and deep background basis. Of course, I would always be happy to have anything on the record that you are willing to bring onto the record.

Thanks and all best, Jim

Jim Rutenberg
Writer at Large
The New York Times

(b)(6)

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: Re:
Date: Mon, 8 Nov 2021 19:58:12 +0000

Can't do anything in the AM. Booked solid from 0900-1400, very unusually. After 1430 should be good

From: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 2:55 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Re:

Ok thanks — how's morning for you? 10-ish?

On Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 2:41 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
No room for messages on your voicemail, so I couldn't leave one. I'm around this afternoon, although I need to run one errand. Will have my cell. Busy tomorrow before 1300. Best, Todd
From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 8, 2021 2:37 PM

To: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: Re:

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Best,

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Senior Counter-Disinformation Adviser
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Contractor: Accenture/Datastrong

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(see <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/13/magazine/rt-sputnik-and-russias-new-theory-of-war.html>), so I'd also want to range a little bit beyond the AIDS operation if you're game.

I am writing the book for Penguin Press and am not yet sure of the publication date (I would expect it to go to market in roughly a year and a half). It is possible that some of what I learn will feed my reporting for The Times, but there are no such plans as of now. If you are amenable then we can discuss the terms of our discussion, but please know that I am comfortable doing this on a background and deep background basis. Of course, I would always be happy to have anything on the record that you are willing to bring onto the record.

Thanks and all best, Jim

Jim Rutenberg

Writer at Large

The New York Times

(b)(6)

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Jim Rutenberg (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

From: "Atwood, Kylie" (b)(6)@cnn.com>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>;
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;
Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Q on Startlink hardware transfer from GEC
Date: Fri, 30 Sep 2022 17:45:58 +0000

Got it- thanks!

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Date: Friday, September 30, 2022 at 1:44 PM
To: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>, NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>, GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>, Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>, Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Q on Startlink hardware transfer from GEC

EXTERNAL SENDER: Caution opening links or attachments

Hi Kylie, I have the following for you, attributable to a State Department spokesperson:

- As a general matter, we don't comment on Congressional correspondence.
- In general, the U.S. Government is committed to helping the Iranian people freely access information via the internet. In furtherance of this commitment, which the Iranian government has consistently denied to its people, last Friday OFAC issued General License (GL) D-2 to expand the scope of authorized exports to Iran of software and services incident to the exchange of communication over the internet.
- We are holding discussions with a wide range of U.S. technology companies on an urgent basis so that they can understand what the General License means and to take their questions, but we're not able to share details of those conversations at this time.

From: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2022 12:39 PM
To: NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>; Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Q on Startlink hardware transfer from GEC

Hi –

Two members of congress are urging the State Department to help “facilitate the transfer” of Starlink satellite internet terminals to Iran in order to get internet up and running in the country amid widespread protests and internet shutdowns by the Iranian government.

"We believe the Global Engagement Center within the Department of State can help facilitate the transfer of their terminals to non-governmental organization partners to ensure the Iranian people have the freedom to communicate with each other and share their concerns to the world," wrote Republican Reps Michael Waltz and Maria Salazar in a joint letter to Secretary of State Tony Blinken this week.

Does State have a response to the letter? Is it possible for the GEC to do this?

Thanks!

Sender: "Atwood, Kylie" (b)(6)@cnn.com>
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>;
Recipient: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;
Price, Edward C (h)(6)@state.gov>;
Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>;
NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>;
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;
Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Q on Startlink hardware transfer from GEC
Date: Fri, 30 Sep 2022 17:08:17 +0000

Thanks, Kylie, we'll get back to you.

(b)(6)

From: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2022 12:40 PM
To: NEA-Press <NEA-Press@state.gov>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>; Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Q on Startlink hardware transfer from GEC

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Recipient: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;
Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Patel, Vedant (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Public Diplomacy - Poynter IFCN Connection
Date: Tue, 26 Oct 2021 12:44:22 +0000

Thank you for the introduction, (b)(6)

Hi Baybars,

Great to e-connect with you! My colleague (b)(6) and I were discussing with (b)(6) on possible resources/training that may be available for some of our public affairs posts in East Asia Pacific that work with a small press corp. They are particularly interested in ways to connect local journalists with resources that help in fact checking, combating mis/disinformation, and access to other journalist/news networks.

It would be great to hear some of the projects IFCN is working on and if there may be opportunities we can work together to help some of our smaller posts.

Thanks again for your help.

Best,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Public Diplomacy Country Coordinator for Maritime Southeast Asia
Bureau of East Asian & Pacific Affairs

(b)(6)@state.gov

I am teleworking and can be reached at (b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 8:29 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Public Diplomacy - Poynter IFCN Connection

Dear (b)(6)

Thanks a lot for the introduction and apologies for the late reply. I was buried down with our annual Global Fact conference last week.

Looking forward to hearing more and discussing how we can help.

All the best-

Baybars

On Tue, Oct 19, 2021 at 1:53 PM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Dear Baybars,

Hoping this finds you well. A few colleagues from our Office of Public Diplomacy within the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP), (b)(6) cc'd, reached out to our team at GEC on an ongoing discussion to coordinate a potential upcoming November engagement within Southeast Asia.

I wanted to connect you two due to IFCN's leading experience in this space generally, but also, I understand Poynter may have supported a Google News Lab training in Singapore in 2018 that received GEC support -- this seems like a natural nexus and if you might be able to provide some insights to my colleagues and their questions I'd be much obliged.

I hope this connection is fortuitous for you all. I'll leave it to my EAP colleagues to take it from here. (b)(6) over to you.

V/r,

(b)(6)

Program Analyst

GEC | DOS | Alutiiq Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Subject: Re: Poynter-GEC intro connection re training resources
Date: Tue, 9 Nov 2021 19:21:27 +0000

Hi Alanna,

No problem. Please suggest a few available time slots for the next week. I guess 30 minutes should be more than enough. I look forward to chatting with you.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)
China Division | Global Engagement Center
Regional Program Lead, South and Central Asia (SCA)
U.S. Department of State
Contractor - Alutiiq Information Management, LLC
(b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov, (b)(6)@america.gov



"Mission: To direct, lead, synchronize, integrate, and coordinate efforts of the Federal Government to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and foreign non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts aimed at undermining or influencing the policies, security, or stability of the United States, its allies, and partner nations."

From: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:59 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Poynter-GEC intro connection re training resources

Hi (b)(6)

Sorry the delay! This sort of got buried in my inbox amidst the IWPR project, the launch of our Facebook programs and two private MENA trainings.

I'm slogging through my final reports for IWPR, so would a meeting next week work for you?

Best,
Alanna

On Wed, Nov 3, 2021 at 1:32 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Vonda,

Thanks for the introduction.

Alanna: Please let me know your availability for a 15-30 minutes call sometime this week and I will send you an invitation to the MS Teams.

Thanks and I look forward to chatting with you.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)
China Division | Global Engagement Center
Regional Program Lead, South and Central Asia (SCA)
U.S. Department of State
Contractor - Alutiiq Information Management, LLC
(b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov, (b)(6)@america.gov



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From: Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 12:31 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Alanna Dvorak <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Subject: Poynter-GEC intro connection re training resources

Good morning all:

(b)(6) I wanted to introduce you to Alanna, who has been leading the project's training activities, including in the SCA region. She works with all training resources, even beyond the IFCN-related work she is doing in connection with our project. She can best answer questions about all of Poynter's training resources and other support.

Thanks!

--

Vonda Wolcott
Sr. Program Manager
Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
1156 15th Street, NW
Suite 329
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: +(b)(6)

This electronic mail message and any attached files are intended solely for the named recipients and may contain confidential and proprietary business information of the Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR) and its affiliates. If you are not the named addressee, you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail.

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--

Alanna Dvorak
Interactive Training Manager/IFCN
The Poynter Institute
ph: (727) 553-4212
(b)(6)@poynter.org
www.poynter.org

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>



From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Baybars Orsek (h)(6)@poynter.org>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: (h)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response
Date: Fri, 5 Feb 2021 04:34:49 +0000

Hi Baybars,

Yes, the DS1909 needs to be signed by the proper person at Poynter who has authority to sign for grants. Once they sign, please send back to me.

We are excited about reviewing the online course materials. We originally scheduled January for the first review. Are you still okay with the current period of performance (ending July 31) to accomplish all activities/outputs?

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 11:19 PM
To: (h)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (h)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov> (Bangkok)
(h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks! I confirm the receipt of the DS1909.

Do you want this to be signed by us? I can send it to you after asking our VP of Finance and Business signs it.

On the other hand, we are ready to deliver the training.

How should we proceed to schedule them?

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Sun, Jan 31, 2021 at 9:21 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Can you please confirm receipt of the DS1909?

Thank you,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 2:50 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

As promised, here is the new DS1909 and the new Award Provisions, which contains a detailed description of the grant's balance of payments and budget. Please review the provisions and have the DS1909 signed by one of the directors at Poynter (Wendy Wallace signed the last one).

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 1:37 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

The grant has already been extended. Do you need more time to deliver the training? Do you still stand by the earlier commitment to give us a product this month?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:22 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Yes! The content is ready therefore we are good to go and deliver the trainings.

Looking forward to receiving the paperwork.

Thanks

Baybars

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 8:17 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Just another ping to see if everything is going well on your side. Everything on track to produce online course content?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 8:30 AM

To: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

Hope you had a nice New Year holiday. Just wanted to drop a note to let you know we look forward to receiving the course outline this month. Let me know if you need to discuss

anything. In the meantime, I will work on some of the required documents to reformat the grant.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 11:48 AM
To: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6) (Bangkok)
<(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov; (h)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)
(h)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

When I return after Christmas we will do some paperwork outlining these initiatives more formally in the grant. For now, please proceed designing the online course and designing the virtual training.

Congrats again on the new family member.

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 8:39 PM
To: (h)(6)@state.gov
Cc: (h)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6) (Bangkok)
(b)(6)@state.gov; (h)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov; (b)(6)M@state.gov; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for this!

Please kindly feel free to share if there is any paperwork we should focus on for the amendment if you need it to be done before your break.

Otherwise, happy to keep up the conversation with GEC and Wow.

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Dec 2, 2020 at 12:08 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars –

Thank you for replying that you're interested in continuing the grant in the separate email. We understand completely about parental leave, and many congratulations to you on the new family member!

I'd like to keep the conversation going in this thread here as there are additional stakeholders cc'ed. I have initiated an extension of the grant out to July 31, 2021 just to give us buffer room. I will be on much needed R&R from Dec 7-25, so we will pick up this conversation again when I return. While I am out, please feel free to continue discussions with GEC, and (b)(6) (b)(6) on my staff. I have copied elements of your separate email, which looks fine to me, below.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

--email Dec 2, 2020 from Baybars --

Given we are heading to the end of the year and the winter break here, can we aim the following timeline for the amendment?

Late January: Poynter provides online course outline to Embassy for review (in English). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Mid February: Poynter provides online course version 2 to Embassy (in English or Thai). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Early March: Poynter provides final version of online course to Embassy (in Thai). Embassy and TJA make final checks.

Late March: Virtual Training + Kickoff Press Conference at TJA to introduce the new online course.

---##---

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:01 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Baybars Orsek

(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

(b)(6) adding in (b)(6) from my team.

Best, (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 4:04 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) <(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

Final check. Do you want to amend this grant?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Monday, November 23, 2020 12:23 PM

To: 'Baybars Orsek' (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars – how are you? Shall we proceed with the grant amendment?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 11:18 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

I'll be going on leave soon and want to amend the grant as soon as possible.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 2:49 PM

To: 'Baybars Orsek' (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok) <(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

I hope you are well. I'm sure that election season is an exciting time for the fact checking community!

Given the many challenges of Covid we appreciate your willingness to be flexible in this project. My team and I have reviewed the Google Doc and we generally like the plan. We are wondering if you can make two changes. One, to be less ambitious, we recommend 1 (one) not three virtual training sessions. Also, is there any way to increase the payment to TJA for their services? Their work as implementing partner will be very important.

To review, the two major components of the grant are 1) virtual training and 2) development of an online course. Here is a rough sketch of timings we think are realistic:

Mid November: Poynter provides online course outline to Embassy for review (in English). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Mid December: Poynter provides online course version 2 to Embassy (in English or Thai). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Early January: Poynter provides final version of online course to Embassy (in Thai). Embassy and TJA make final checks.

Late January: Virtual Training + Kickoff Press Conference at TJA to introduce the new online course.

Sound okay?

Kind Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 10:45 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Just wanted to follow up on this to see if we would be able to do this before the end of this year or move to 2021.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 25, 2020 at 4:04 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

<(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Thanks Baybars,

COVID has certainly been a challenge for grants. Glad to hear your team is engaging on elections! Important topic for fact checking!

Our team will look at the Doc and get back to you soon.

Hope all is well!

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 9:59 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Sorry about the delay. We had been buried down with an election focused project, our new chatbot on WhatsApp around the US elections.

Sharing this document to get your feedback and discuss it over the document if needed.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lBhFi4s0XnHOVICcq6UZ0nqFlPmwGdlYAKyjypauzk/edit>

I just had to adjust the dates in this timeline.

Also copying the budget notes in that document as well.

I suggest having a call with TJA as soon as possible to start planning and executing the trainings!

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Aug 18, 2020 at 12:34 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

We have a few ideas for how to move the grant forward. Let us know what you think, and please provide an estimate of the cost.

1. **Three Online Training Sessions** for the Thai Journalists Association (TJA is the main professional association for journalists in Thailand. We would recommend you pay TJA as the implementing partner so they can procure simultaneous translation, and naturally you would provide them with admin fees etc so they can help you organize the sessions.
 - a. Session 1 - September 3. Fact-Checking and Misinformation (broad overview for journalists and editors)
 - b. Session 2 – Mid-September. Fact-Checking for News Rooms (for news room editors)
 - c. Session 3 – October. Fact-Checking: U.S. Election Watch (20-30 media and academics.
2. **Online Course for Thai Journalists.** This would be an online course with quizzes and a final test in the Thai language. The goal is to promote journalism standards, fact-checking, and accuracy. Thai journalists who complete the course with a passing score would receive a certificate which could read “This is to certify that –NAME – has received IFCN Certification in News-Room Fact-Checking” or something similar. This would be a morale booster for the journalists, and something they can put on a resume.
 - a. Phase 1. September – IFCN submits course outline and structure to the Embassy which will seek comment from TJA and may adjust the outline to meet the needs of the Thai environment.
 - b. Phase 2. December – IFCN submits full course in Thai language to Embassy for review.
 - c. Phase 3. January – IFCN Launches course with joint press releases, social media postings, and an online event with TJA and IFCN.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Acting Spokesperson
Social Media Director
U.S. Embassy, Bangkok



From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:31 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6),

Great to hear from you! I'm all good, safe, and interesting in Istanbul for a few weeks. I wanted to take the liberty of working from Istanbul for a month or so to stay a bit away from Florida and be closer to the family.

The immigration process has been going very well despite the whole unpredictability and currently waiting for our green cards to be printed and sent to our lawyer. We are currently permanent residents as of today but waiting our cards to be printed :)

I've heard that Jillian is now in another heaven like place in Earth after lovely Thailand and hoping she invites me to Hawai at some point to do a training there! :)

Since the Global Fact is over and I've been able to recover a bit, I'm now able to send you a proposal on our engagement in Thailand.

Would that be possible to send it in a week or two and we then start acting assuming we confirm the new scope of the program.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Mon, Jul 20, 2020 at 12:03 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Greetings from Thailand, where we have had very low cases of the virus. I hope you are well! Has the U.S. citizen paperwork been going okay? (b)(6) has moved to Hawaii for a year at the East West Center.

I'm writing to see if we can move the grant forward and somehow safely train/certify Thailand's first IFCN fact-check organization.

Any and all ideas are on the table – including virtual training.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 10:28 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) <(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Hope all is well on your end too and you are all doing well and healthy!

It's been a crazy week not only workwise but also personally as well for all of us so please accept my apologies for the late response.

I just wanted to share that I'll share the proposal with you before the end of the week. I couldn't do that yet because there has been an enormous workload on our e-learning department as everything is being migrated to online, therefore I had wait a bit to have my turn with them.

Once I have the costs and timeline from them, I'll share it with you and will look forward to moving forward!

Stay healthy and safe!

Best-

Baybars

On Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 11:37 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Hope all is well in these rapidly evolving times. Number one priority is health, of course. Looking forward to your proposal on a virtual version of activities that still gives Thai organizations a good shot at becoming certified by IFCN. I'm also open to hearing any other suggestions you have. Again, health is number one at this point.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2020 6:02 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok)(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

It was great to talk to you as well!

I agree with you. I think it will be wiser to design the extension/modification relying only on virtual teaching and a limited notion of bringing two Thai participants to Oslo.

I'll have a meeting with related faculty people at Poynter and then share the possibilities and ideas around localizing our training materials to Thai and creating new modules from scratch.

I should be able to send that email to you by Monday if that's not too late.

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Mar 3, 2020 at 10:27 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Was great talking to you the other day. I'm looking forward to seeing your revised proposal on how we can best utilize the remaining funds in the current environment. Thailand's Ministry of Public Health is now raising its alert level for other nations new experiencing a rise in cases, including European countries. It will also be important to note the rise in cases in the U.S. and to see if that could impact Thai travel to the U.S. Department of State

Given the rapidly evolving situation and potential risks, I'd ask you to think about virtual programming and have an annex to your proposal that has a fully virtual (no travel) scenario. This could include mass translation of web based courses into Thai, Web based virtual training, etc etc.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2020 9:57 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

No worries! It will be 9pm Sunday eve here and I should be able to take the call.

How should we connect? Can you send me dial-in instructions?

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Feb 25, 2020 at 4:37 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Great! I can do 9am on Monday March 2, but unfortunately no other day this week.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Monday, February 24, 2020 10:26 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Dear (b)(6)

Hope this email finds you well.

It's great to hear from you, (b)(6) I really missed that beautiful place! Hope you had a great break!

My suggestion for the rest of the project based on your feedbacks are;

- To organize a Skype call Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP as per Tom's suggestion and discuss their progress and provide feedback before their application.
- Schedule a call this or next week to;
 - Set the date and the content for the video conference from Florida
 - Fix the scope and the date for Thai's delegation visit to St. Petersburg, FL
 - Decide who to bring to Global Fact in Oslo from Thailand (possibility from other Mekong countries as well)

Once we kick the ball rolling, this will be a lot easier to move.

Looking forward to hearing from you for your ideal day to have a 9am Bangkok time call.

Best-

Baybars

On Mon, Feb 24, 2020 at 2:59 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Baybars! I'm just back from the Gulf of Thailand... you know, honeymoonland. Hope all is well.

How shall we proceed? I think it's time we get something down in writing – dates for a video conference from Florida, dates for a visit by a few to Florida, and then a total number of Thais to Oslo. Let's look at the budget and the planning, get something approved, and determine when you might be able to get back out here as well!

I depart Thailand mid June, so would love to be sure we have everything rolling before I go!

All best,

(b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 3:38 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

Hope all is well. The virus is still making news here but seems to be contained, for now.

Would you be willing to do the Skype connection with Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP to discuss their efforts toward certification? We know they would love to have the opportunity to talk with you on Skype. Any further thought to (b)(6) second question below as well?

Best,

(b)(6)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 2:47 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Thank you Baybars. I can understand that many don't want to travel to the region considering the international declarations.

We are facing a battle here of information and misinformation. We'll very much like to see what you are doing in that space.

Meanwhile, let me talk to (b)(6). I think we would like to reformat the grant a bit and include some new elements. Would you be willing to (in addition to some international travel for Thais), do the following:

1. DVC with Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP to discuss their efforts toward certification. We can do that in February on the planned dates, or we can look to a convenient time in the next month.
2. Come back to Thailand after you can travel again, and after Oslo?

Once we know the answer to those, (b)(6) can work with you to amend the grant.

Thanks!

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:22 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Greetings from DC! I just organized a day-long event at the Washington Post in partnership with Google and been working on the side for the programming in Bangkok.

I've just seen the news on Reuters that Thailand confirms the first human-to-human coronavirus transmission. The virus has been a big focus for the fact-checkers lately as we keep publishing our reports on the misinformation around the disease.

I've also heard that Splice Beta is canceled/postponed due to WHO's declaration on public health emergency of international concern.

All those considered, can we officially amend the project with no travel to Bangkok in February and discuss alternative options such as bringing people either to the US or Oslo? We can multiply the impact of the engagement with such options

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Thanks

Baybars

On Wed, Jan 29, 2020 at 4:17 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Thanks for all of this, Baybars. Our inclination is to have your deputy/trainer come in February and I hope they're still available. Our Thai partners are eager. We're just negotiating with Washington about how to spend the rest of the money, i.e. if there will be US and/or Oslo travel. We will get back to you ASAP to confirm February and also what else lies in store. Sound ok?

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020 1:11 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Thank you so much! I really appreciate it! Fingers crossed! Once again, thank you so much for your understanding.

Eoghan Sweeney, German trainer who is one of the leading experts on Open Source Intelligence Tools for fact-checking & verification. More about him and his works are available here > <https://www.osintessentials.com/> He can do great work by providing the training in those two days.

Having said that and putting more thought into it, my suggestion will be to try to invite senior and non-senior Thai to Florida and use the remaining resources to bring Thai and some other regional participants to Oslo for the Global Fact between 24-27 June. By doing these two - not doing the Bangkok training in February - we can achieve;

- having one-to-one time with leading figures of the Thai media and journalists in the steer of their newsrooms
- offering Poynter's renowned teaching resources to the participants and merging ethics & newsroom management seminars with our fact-checking training

- following up with some of the participants in Florida tour in Oslo during the Global Fact and having them (Shure and Share + others) exposed to 60+ different sessions in 3.5 days

Once the Global Fact 7 is over, Shure and Share along with other potential Thai partners can apply to the network thanks to the training they had (Bangkok/October + Florida/Spring + Oslo/June) in three different settings and the remote consulting I had been providing and will keep providing until they are evaluated by our advisory board.

If those don't sound a terrible idea to you, I can send a draft template over the weekend for what we can cover in 2-3 days in Florida for the first group. Also, the attached program of the last Global Fact which took place in Cape Town, South Africa can also give a better sense of what will most likely await the Thai & regional journalists in Oslo.

One way or another, I'll make sure we will share our know-how with the invested participants and support the practitioners in the country. I remain committed to making this effort helping the non-partisan Thai media landscape.

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Jan 22, 2020 at 9:53 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Great to speak with you and we wish you and your family all the best (b)(6)

(b)(6)

I found the bio of Christina on the Poynter site, but would love to hear from you what you propose for the activities/deliverables going forward. Also, could you kindly send the bio of the trainer who would accompany Christina to Bangkok?

Though you may have more ideas, the activities we wrote down from the call were:

- Sending Thais (could be a mix of senior and working level) to Poynter in Florida
- Christina and trainer come to Thailand in place of Baybars and trainer
- Sending Thais (and perhaps other journalists from Mekong/Indo-Pacific countries) to Oslo, June 24-27

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 8:31 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Good morning!

What's the best way to connect? Whatsapp call works?

Talk to you soon!

Baybars

On Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 8:00 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6) wrote:

Perfect. We have a call here 8-9am, so just after our 9am works well.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 7:57 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

How about anytime tomorrow (Tuesday) evening Eastern time? Sometime between 9-11 am (Wednesday) Bangkok time?

On Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 6:28 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Absolutely- when works well for you? We can make it work to suit your schedule.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 2:31:05 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Important issue to discuss

Dear (b)(6),

There are some developments on my end that I need to talk to you about as soon as possible regarding our plans.

May I kindly ask for a call at your earliest convenience this week?

Thanks a lot

--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Baybars Orsek (h)(6)@poynter.org>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Recipient: (h)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>;
(h)(6)M@state.gov>;
(h)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response
Date: Thu, 11 Feb 2021 01:33:28 +0000

Received with thanks!

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2021 2:51 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Please kindly find the counter signed version attached.

All the best-

Baybars

On Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 10:35 PM (b)(6)@state.gov>
wrote:
Thanks Baybars - totally understand.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 9:42 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Thank you so much! We will be providing another update to Wow next week.

I've just reminded our VP of Finance and Business again for her signature.

Poynter is having its National Advisory Board meeting this week so she must have been swamped but will take care of that before the end of the week for sure.

Thanks a lot for your understanding.

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 8:52 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

So glad to see you and (b)(6) discussing the way forward. Just a quick reminder that we hope to receive the DS 1909 soon. Hope all is well in your neck of the woods.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 11:19 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks! I confirm the receipt of the DS1909.

Do you want this to be signed by us? I can send it to you after asking our VP of Finance and Business signs it.

On the other hand, we are ready to deliver the training.

How should we proceed to schedule them?

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Sun, Jan 31, 2021 at 9:21 PM (b)(6)@state.gov>

wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Can you please confirm receipt of the DS1909?

Thank you,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 2:50 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (h)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(h)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(h)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)

(h)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

As promised, here is the new DS1909 and the new Award Provisions, which contains a detailed description of the grant's balance of payments and budget. Please review the provisions and have the DS1909 signed by one of the directors at Poynter (Wendy Wallace signed the last one).

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 1:37 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (h)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

The grant has already been extended. Do you need more time to deliver the training? Do you still stand by the earlier commitment to give us a product this month?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:22 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Yes! The content is ready therefore we are good to go and deliver the trainings.

Looking forward to receiving the paperwork.

Thanks

Baybars

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 8:17 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Just another ping to see if everything is going well on your side. Everything on track to produce online course content?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, January 5, 2021 8:30 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

Hope you had a nice New Year holiday. Just wanted to drop a note to let you know we look forward to receiving the course outline this month. Let me know if you need to discuss

anything. In the meantime, I will work on some of the required documents to reformat the grant.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 11:48 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6) @poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>

Subject: RE: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi Baybars,

When I return after Christmas we will do some paperwork outlining these initiatives more formally in the grant. For now, please proceed designing the online course and designing the virtual training.

Congrats again on the new family member.

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6) @poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 8:39 PM

To: (b)(6) @state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6) @state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6) @state.gov>

Subject: Re: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks for this!

Please kindly feel free to share if there is any paperwork we should focus on for the amendment if you need it to be done before your break.

Otherwise, happy to keep up the conversation with GEC and (b)(6)

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Dec 2, 2020 at 12:08 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars –

Thank you for replying that you're interested in continuing the grant in the separate email. We understand completely about parental leave, and many congratulations to you on the new family member!

I'd like to keep the conversation going in this thread here as there are additional stakeholders cc'ed. I have initiated an extension of the grant out to July 31, 2021 just to give us buffer room. I will be on much needed R&R from Dec 7-25, so we will pick up this conversation again when I return. While I am out, please feel free to continue discussions with GEC, and Worawan "Wow" Thanamongkol on my staff. I have copied elements of your separate email, which looks fine to me, below.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

--email Dec 2, 2020 from Baybars --

Given we are heading to the end of the year and the winter break here, can we aim the following timeline for the amendment?

Late January: Poynter provides online course outline to Embassy for review (in English). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Mid February: Poynter provides online course version 2 to Embassy (in English or Thai). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Early March: Poynter provides final version of online course to Embassy (in Thai). Embassy and TJA make final checks.

Late March: Virtual Training + Kickoff Press Conference at TJA to introduce the new online course.

---##---

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 9:01 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>; Baybars Orsek

(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Poynter Grant Amendment - For Baybars response

(b)(6) adding in (b)(6) from my team.

Best, (b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 4:04 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

Final check. Do you want to amend this grant?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Monday, November 23, 2020 12:23 PM

To: 'Baybars Orsek' (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars – how are you? Shall we proceed with the grant amendment?

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 11:18 AM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

I'll be going on leave soon and want to amend the grant as soon as possible.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) (Bangkok)

Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 2:49 PM

To: 'Baybars Orsek' (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

I hope you are well. I'm sure that election season is an exciting time for the fact checking community!

Given the many challenges of Covid we appreciate your willingness to be flexible in this project. My team and I have reviewed the Google Doc and we generally like the plan. We are wondering if you can make two changes. One, to be less ambitious, we recommend 1 (one) not three virtual training sessions. Also, is there any way to increase the payment to TJA for their services? Their work as implementing partner will be very important.

To review, the two major components of the grant are 1) virtual training and 2) development of an online course. Here is a rough sketch of timings we think are realistic:

Mid November: Poynter provides online course outline to Embassy for review (in English). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Mid December: Poynter provides online course version 2 to Embassy (in English or Thai). Embassy and TJA provide feedback.

Early January: Poynter provides final version of online course to Embassy (in Thai). Embassy and TJA make final checks.

Late January: Virtual Training + Kickoff Press Conference at TJA to introduce the new online course.

Sound okay?

Kind Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 10:45 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)V@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Just wanted to follow up on this to see if we would be able to do this before the end of this year or move to 2021.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Fri, Sep 25, 2020 at 4:04 AM (b)(6) Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Thanks Baybars,

COVID has certainly been a challenge for grants. Glad to hear your team is engaging on elections! Important topic for fact checking!

Our team will look at the Doc and get back to you soon.

Hope all is well!

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2020 9:59 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok)(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Sorry about the delay. We had been buried down with an election focused project, our new chatbot on WhatsApp around the US elections.

Sharing this document to get your feedback and discuss it over the document if needed.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lBhFi4s0XnHOVICcq6UZ0nqFlPmwGdlYAKyjypauzk/edit>

I just had to adjust the dates in this timeline.

Also copying the budget notes in that document as well.

I suggest having a call with TJA as soon as possible to start planning and executing the trainings!

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Aug 18, 2020 at 12:34 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

<(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

We have a few ideas for how to move the grant forward. Let us know what you think, and please provide an estimate of the cost.

1. **Three Online Training Sessions** for the Thai Journalists Association (TJA is the main professional association for journalists in Thailand. We would recommend you pay TJA as the implementing partner so they can procure simultaneous translation, and naturally you would provide them with admin fees etc so they can help you organize the sessions.
 - a. Session 1 - September 3. Fact-Checking and Misinformation (broad overview for journalists and editors)
 - b. Session 2 – Mid-September. Fact-Checking for News Rooms (for news room editors)
 - c. Session 3 – October. Fact-Checking: U.S. Election Watch (20-30 media and academics.
2. **Online Course for Thai Journalists.** This would be an online course with quizzes and a final test in the Thai language. The goal is to promote journalism standards, fact-checking, and accuracy. Thai journalists who complete the course with a passing score would receive a certificate which could read “This is to certify that –NAME – has received IFCN Certification in News-Room Fact-Checking” or something similar. This would be a morale booster for the journalists, and something they can put on a resume.
 - a. Phase 1. September – IFCN submits course outline and structure to the Embassy which will seek comment from TJA and may adjust the outline to meet the needs of the Thai environment.
 - b. Phase 2. December – IFCN submits full course in Thai language to Embassy for review.
 - c. Phase 3. January – IFCN Launches course with joint press releases, social media postings, and an online event with TJA and IFCN.

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

Acting Spokesperson
Social Media Director

U.S. Embassy, Bangkok



From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2020 6:31 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Great to hear from you! I'm all good, safe, and interesting in Istanbul for a few weeks. I wanted to take the liberty of working from Istanbul for a month or so to stay a bit away from Florida and be closer to the family.

(b)(6)

I've heard that (b)(6) is now in another heaven like place in Earth after lovely Thailand and hoping she invites me to Hawaii at some point to do a training there! :)

Since the Global Fact is over and I've been able to recover a bit, I'm now able to send you a proposal on our engagement in Thailand.

Would that be possible to send it in a week or two and we then start acting assuming we confirm the new scope of the program.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best-

Baybars

On Mon, Jul 20, 2020 at 12:03 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Greetings from Thailand, where we have had very low cases of the virus. I hope you are well! Has the U.S. citizen paperwork been going okay? (b)(6) has moved to Hawaii for a year at the East West Center.

I'm writing to see if we can move the grant forward and somehow safely train/certify Thailand's first IFCN fact-check organization.

Any and all ideas are on the table – including virtual training.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 10:28 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Hope all is well on your end too and you are all doing well and healthy!

It's been a crazy week not only workwise but also personally as well for all of us so please accept my apologies for the late response.

I just wanted to share that I'll share the proposal with you before the end of the week. I couldn't do that yet because there has been an enormous workload on our e-learning department as everything is being migrated to online, therefore I had wait a bit to have my turn with them.

Once I have the costs and timeline from them, I'll share it with you and will look forward to moving forward!

Stay healthy and safe!

Best-

Baybars

On Sun, Mar 15, 2020 at 11:37 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Hope all is well in these rapidly evolving times. Number one priority is health, of course. Looking forward to your proposal on a virtual version of activities that still gives Thai

organizations a good shot at becoming certified by IFCN. I'm also open to hearing any other suggestions you have. Again, health is number one at this point.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2020 6:02 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(Bangkok) (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

It was great to talk to you as well!

I agree with you. I think it will be wiser to design the extension/modification relying only on virtual teaching and a limited notion of bringing two Thai participants to Oslo.

I'll have a meeting with related faculty people at Poynter and then share the possibilities and ideas around localizing our training materials to Thai and creating new modules from scratch.

I should be able to send that email to you by Monday if that's not too late.

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Mar 3, 2020 at 10:27 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Was great talking to you the other day. I'm looking forward to seeing your revised proposal on how we can best utilize the remaining funds in the current environment. Thailand's Ministry of Public Health is now raising its alert level for other nations new experiencing a rise in cases, including European countries. It will also be important to note the rise in cases in the U.S. and to see if that could impact Thai travel to the U.S. Department of State

Given the rapidly evolving situation and potential risks, I'd ask you to think about virtual programming and have an annex to your proposal that has a fully virtual (no travel) scenario. This could include mass translation of web based courses into Thai, Web based virtual training, etc etc.

All best,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, February 25, 2020 9:57 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

No worries! It will be 9pm Sunday eve here and I should be able to take the call.

How should we connect? Can you send me dial-in instructions?

Best-

Baybars

On Tue, Feb 25, 2020 at 4:37 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Great! I can do 9am on Monday March 2, but unfortunately no other day this week.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Monday, February 24, 2020 10:26 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Dear (b)(6)

Hope this email finds you well.

It's great to hear from you, (b)(6) I really missed that beautiful place! Hope you had a great break!

My suggestion for the rest of the project based on your feedbacks are;

- To organize a Skype call Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP as per (b)(6) suggestion and discuss their progress and provide feedback before their application.
- Schedule a call this or next week to;
 - Set the date and the content for the video conference from Florida
 - Fix the scope and the date for Thai's delegation visit to St. Petersburg, FL
 - Decide who to bring to Global Fact in Oslo from Thailand (possibility from other Mekong countries as well)

Once we kick the ball rolling, this will be a lot easier to move.

Looking forward to hearing from you for your ideal day to have a 9am Bangkok time call.

Best-

Baybars

On Mon, Feb 24, 2020 at 2:59 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Baybars! I'm just back from the Gulf of Thailand... you know, honeymoonland. Hope all is well.

How shall we proceed? I think it's time we get something down in writing – dates for a video conference from Florida, dates for a visit by a few to Florida, and then a total number of Thais to Oslo. Let's look at the budget and the planning, get something approved, and determine when you might be able to get back out here as well!

I depart Thailand mid June, so would love to be sure we have everything rolling before I go!

All best,

(b)(6)

~~—SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED—~~

~~—SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED—~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 3:38 PM

To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Hi Baybars,

Hope all is well. The virus is still making news here but seems to be contained, for now.

Would you be willing to do the Skype connection with Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP to discuss their efforts toward certification? We know they would love to have the opportunity to talk with you on Skype. Any further thought to (b)(6) second question below as well?

Best,

(b)(6)

~~—SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED—~~

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 2:47 PM
To: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: Important issue to discuss

Thank you Baybars. I can understand that many don't want to travel to the region considering the international declarations.

We are facing a battle here of information and misinformation. We'll very much like to see what you are doing in that space.

Meanwhile, let me talk to (b)(6) I think we would like to reformat the grant a bit and include some new elements. Would you be willing to (in addition to some international travel for Thais), do the following:

1. DVC with Yo/Sure and Share, and SONP to discuss their efforts toward certification. We can do that in February on the planned dates, or we can look to a convenient time in the next month.
2. Come back to Thailand after you can travel again, and after Oslo?

Once we know the answer to those, (b)(6) can work with you to amend the grant.

Thanks!

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 10:22 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Greetings from DC! I just organized a day-long event at the Washington Post in partnership with Google and been working on the side for the programming in Bangkok.

I've just seen the news on Reuters that Thailand confirms the first human-to-human coronavirus transmission. The virus has been a big focus for the fact-checkers lately as we keep publishing our reports on the misinformation around the disease.

I've also heard that Splice Beta is canceled/postponed due to WHO's declaration on public health emergency of international concern.

All those considered, can we officially amend the project with no travel to Bangkok in February and discuss alternative options such as bringing people either to the US or Oslo? We can multiply the impact of the engagement with such options

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Thanks

Baybars

On Wed, Jan 29, 2020 at 4:17 AM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Thanks for all of this, Baybars. Our inclination is to have your deputy/trainer come in February and I hope they're still available. Our Thai partners are eager. We're just negotiating with Washington about how to spend the rest of the money, i.e. if there will be US and/or Oslo travel. We will get back to you ASAP to confirm February and also what else lies in store. Sound ok?

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020 1:11 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Hi (b)(6)

Thank you so much! I really appreciate it! Fingers crossed! Once again, thank you so much for your understanding.

Eoghan Sweeney, German trainer who is one of the leading experts on Open Source Intelligence Tools for fact-checking & verification. More about him and his works are available here > <https://www.osintessentials.com/> He can do great work by providing the training in those two days.

Having said that and putting more thought into it, my suggestion will be to try to invite senior and non-senior Thai to Florida and use the remaining resources to bring Thai and some other regional participants to Oslo for the Global Fact between 24-27 June. By doing these two - not doing the Bangkok training in February - we can achieve;

- having one-to-one time with leading figures of the Thai media and journalists in the steer of their newsrooms
- offering Poynter's renowned teaching resources to the participants and merging ethics & newsroom management seminars with our fact-checking training

- following up with some of the participants in Florida tour in Oslo during the Global Fact and having them (Shure and Share + others) exposed to 60+ different sessions in 3.5 days

Once the Global Fact 7 is over, Shure and Share along with other potential Thai partners can apply to the network thanks to the training they had (Bangkok/October + Florida/Spring + Oslo/June) in three different settings and the remote consulting I had been providing and will keep providing until they are evaluated by our advisory board.

If those don't sound a terrible idea to you, I can send a draft template over the weekend for what we can cover in 2-3 days in Florida for the first group. Also, the attached program of the last Global Fact which took place in Cape Town, South Africa can also give a better sense of what will most likely await the Thai & regional journalists in Oslo.

One way or another, I'll make sure we will share our know-how with the invested participants and support the practitioners in the country. I remain committed to making this effort helping the non-partisan Thai media landscape.

Best-

Baybars

On Wed, Jan 22, 2020 at 9:53 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Baybars,

Great to speak with you and we wish you and your family all the best in this momentous progress toward (b)(6)

I found the bio of Christina on the Poynter site, but would love to hear from you what you propose for the activities/deliverables going forward. Also, could you kindly send the bio of the trainer who would accompany Christina to Bangkok?

Though you may have more ideas, the activities we wrote down from the call were:

- Sending Thais (could be a mix of senior and working level) to Poynter in Florida
- Christina and trainer come to Thailand in place of Baybars and trainer
- Sending Thais (and perhaps other journalists from Mekong/Indo-Pacific countries) to Oslo, June 24-27

Warm regards,

(b)(6)

From: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2020 8:31 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

Good morning!

What's the best way to connect? Whatsapp call works?

Talk to you soon!

Baybars

On Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 8:00 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Perfect. We have a call here 8-9am, so just after our 9am works well.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 7:57 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Important issue to discuss

How about anytime tomorrow (Tuesday) evening Eastern time? Sometime between 9-11 am (Wednesday) Bangkok time?

On Mon, Jan 20, 2020 at 6:28 PM (b)(6) (Bangkok)

(b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Absolutely- when works well for you? We can make it work to suit your schedule.

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2020 2:31:05 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Important issue to discuss

Dear (b)(6)

There are some developments on my end that I need to talk to you about as soon as possible regarding our plans.

May I kindly ask for a call at your earliest convenience this week?

Thanks a lot

--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
[@baybarsorsek](#) / [@factchecknet](#)

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[Baybars Örsek](#)

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
[@baybarsorsek](#) / [@factchecknet](#)

~~—SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED—~~

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[Baybars Örsek](#)

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Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network

@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
CC: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT: Russian Disinfo
Date: Wed, 25 May 2022 17:06:40 -0400

Another government agency said the same. Off to the FBI

On Wed, May 25, 2022 at 4:57 PM GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:
Hello Julian,

The website in question appears to be connected to a U.S. resident. As the GEC's mandate is limited to analyzing disinformation from foreign actors, we are unable to provide an assessment in this case.

Thank you and apologies for the delayed response,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor
Office (b)(6)

X

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2022 5:07 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT: Russian Disinfo

Thanks (b)(6) Looking forward to talking tomorrow

On Tue, May 24, 2022 at 5:07 PM GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:
Hello Julian,

We are developing a response to your question and will be in touch tomorrow.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 5:13 PM
To: (b)(6)@nytimes.com (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Cc: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT: Russian Disinfo

Good afternoon Julian,

Thank you for reaching out to us. We are currently reviewing your question and will circle back soon.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor
Office: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 2:22 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Fwd: NYT: Russian Disinfo

Okay no more (b)(6) but hopefully GEC Press address still working!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Date: Mon, May 23, 2022 at 2:20 PM
Subject: Re: NYT: Russian Disinfo
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

(b)(6)

Are you still doing press for the Global Engagement group? We are looking at a website called [russia insider](https://russia-insider.com/en). (<https://russia-insider.com/en>)

It may have been at one time US based, though we believe it is now Moscow based. It peddles information from a Russian point of view. But my question is, is it something more. Is this a site like InfoRos, Strategic Culture Foundation, Greyzone.ca that the US government believes is being fed disinformation/propaganda directly from Russian intelligence services? Any background information would be much appreciated.

Julian

Julian E. Barnes

Intelligence, National Security reporter

The New York Times

+1 (b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Tue, Aug 3, 2021 at 8:20 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi Julian,

We can provide the following on background. Please attribute this to a State Department spokesperson:

- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic we've seen false narratives around the virus and pandemic response, including vaccines.
- For example, the State Department's Global Engagement Center has found that Russia and China have promoted their own vaccines through messaging that undermines Western-origin vaccine development programs.
- Such disinformation magnifies the risk of potential side effects associated with Western vaccines and misleads publics by falsely alleging that mRNA vaccines are untested and thus risky.
- The PRC has also suggested that the United States hoards COVID-19 treatments, and prevents other countries from acquiring vaccines, despite evidence to the contrary.
- The truth, however, is clear. We have provided the most funding to support COVAX of any country in the world – with an initial contribution of \$2 billion through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.
- Scientists and manufacturers all over the world are innovating and doing remarkable things to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States continues to focus on the facts and follow the lead of scientists that are working on robust and transparent clinical trials, regulatory processes, and high-quality manufacturing.
- No one should employ and spread disinformation around the pandemic or the safe and effective use of vaccines. Our only goal should be to end the pandemic.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

Accenture Federal Services Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 4:31 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov

Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: Re: NYT: Russian Disinfo

I am currently planning to write a story on Wednesday.

Julian E. Barnes

Intelligence, National Security reporter

The New York Times

+1 (b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 4:29 PM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Hi Julian,

Off the record - Sorry for the delay, what is your timeline?

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

Accenture Federal Services Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, July 30, 2021 10:14 AM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: NYT: Russian Disinfo

(b)(6) GEC

I am working on a story looking at Russia's most recent disinformation efforts around the western vaccines. We are trying to determine if there has been an uptick either coinciding with

the various failures of the Sputnik vaccine or the intensification of the Delta outbreak. NSA has referred us to the GEC. I am hoping you all might have some new information to share.

I am at (b)(6) I am out of pocket 1130 to 1:30 but otherwise available today. But I my deadline is early next week not today.

Julian

Julian E. Barnes

Intelligence, National Security reporter

The New York Times

+1 (b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

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+(b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp

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+(b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp

Sender: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Recipient: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;
GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>



From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Stuart Thompson (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
CC: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT inquiry - Disinformation from Russia
Date: Wed, 9 Mar 2022 21:16:03 +0000

Hi Stuart,

Responses below. You can attribute these on background to a Senior State Department Official. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks!

What propaganda or misleading information are you seeing out of Russia? Do you have examples?

- We took note of Russia's false claims about alleged U.S. chemical and biological weapons labs in Ukraine. We've also seen Chinese officials echo these conspiracy theories.
- To be clear: this is preposterous. It's exactly the kind of disinformation operation we've seen repeatedly from the Russians over the years in Ukraine and in other countries around the world, which have been debunked conclusively, and an example of the types of false pretexts we have been warning the Russians would invent.
- The United States is in full compliance with its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention and does not develop or possess such weapons anywhere.
- It's Russia that has a long and well-documented track record of using chemical weapons, including in attempted assassinations and poisoning of Putin's political enemies like Alexey Navalny. It's Russia that continues to support the Assad regime in Syria, which has repeatedly used chemical weapons. It's Russia that has long maintained a biological weapons program in violation of international law.

- Also, Russia has a track record of accusing the West of the very crimes that Russia itself is perpetrating. Prior to the war, Russia falsely accused the U.S. of deploying contractors with chemical weapons in Ukraine.
- This is all an obvious ploy by Russia to try to justify further premeditated, unprovoked, and unjustified attacks on Ukraine.
- Now that Russia has made these false claims, and China has seemingly endorsed this propaganda, we should all be on the lookout for Russia to possibly use these kinds of chemical or biological weapons in Ukraine, or to create a false flag operation using them. It's a clear pattern, and no one should fall for it.
- In response to increasing media and social media exposure of the Russian military targeting civilians in Ukraine, Russia is also operating "debunking" disinformation campaigns to cover up its actions and label accurate reporting as fake.
- One example is the allegedly state-linked "Война с фейками" or "War with Fakes" website and its affiliated Telegram channel which appeared on February 24, at the outset of Russia's further invasion of Ukraine. The site and channel describe all incriminating videos they showcase as "fakes." "War with Fakes" also amplifies the narrative that Ukrainian forces are to blame for Russia's attacks impacting schools, hospitals, and homes in an attempt to cover up Russia's strikes on or near civilian buildings.
- Another example: Russia's Defense Ministry spokesperson claimed Ukraine was holding a group of Indian students "hostage" to use them as human shields. President Putin repeated this allegation in his March 2 conversation with Indian Prime Minister Modi, offering Moscow's help. However, the Indian Foreign Ministry said it had not received any reports of its citizens being held in this manner.

Can you speak to their overall strategy and goals regarding misinformation/propaganda right now?

- Russia has a long history of manipulating information to pursue its own strategic goals and accomplish its political agenda.
- The Global Engagement Center (GEC) has seen an increase in Russian disinformation operations about Ukraine across the Russian disinformation ecosystem, especially on social media platforms.
- Russia's disinformation ecosystem includes official channels, such as statements from the Kremlin and Russian officials in Moscow and overseas; narratives on state-sponsored media platforms; proxy websites connected to the Russian government; amplification by external actors who echo Kremlin talking points; as well as bots and other tools to push their narratives forward.
- All of these are part of the coordinated effort by Russia's government to spread Kremlin talking points globally, to undermine confidence in Ukraine's government, to shift blame away from the Kremlin, and to cause confusion.

Who are they targeting? Russians, the West, both?

- Pro-Kremlin media and influencers, as well as proxy sites covertly controlled by the Kremlin, continue to spread disinformation as part of ongoing Russian influence operations intended to demoralize Ukraine, globally discredit the United States and other countries supporting Ukraine, and create fissures in relations between Western countries and Ukraine. The Russian government's disinformation efforts are increasingly being used against Russian citizens as well.
- Russian government-backed online influence actors are likely using the following websites and blogs, among others, to promote

Kremlin interests and produce and amplify Russian officials' or state media disinformation targeting Ukraine, NATO, the European Union, and the United States:

- topwar.ru
- army-news.ru
- e-news.su
- medium-info.ru
- pan.bg
- politikus.ru (dormant)
- pravdoryb.info
- Rusonline.org
- westvoices.ru

Can you say anything about the platforms you're seeing used for this purpose? Is it just state-run media or are there other avenues, like social media?

- We know the Russian government tasks and influences many proxy media outlets to publish content that denigrates Ukraine and depicts Ukraine as the aggressor in its ongoing invasion.
- Articles from these proxy outlets make their way to official Russian state-funded media outlets such as RIA Novosti, and to propaganda outlets such as RT and Sputnik, as well as to foreign outlets, where they are at times portrayed as coming from legitimate sources
- Russia's government sows disinformation and propaganda meant to undermine, demoralize, and discredit Ukrainian governmental organizations and personnel.
- State-media accounts, such as RT Arabic, RT Spanish, and others promote this disinformation globally.

Are you aware of any bot activity or similar social media manipulation?

- Yes. Russia has a track record of using bots, false personas and other means of manipulating platform algorithms and amplifying the impact of its disinformation.
- The Department of State has noted that a number of social media companies are taking measures as a result of the further Russian invasion of Ukraine to label Russian state-sponsored media organizations, to suspend those violating their terms of service, and to reduce the opportunity of purveyors of disinformation to manipulate the platform algorithms.

(b)(6)

National Media Strategy | Global Events & Travel
Global Public Affairs | U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: Stuart Thompson (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:16 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: NYT inquiry - Disinformation from Russia

Great, thanks!

Stuart A. Thompson



REPORTER

P: (b)(6)

E: (b)(6)@nytimes.com

A: 620 8th Ave # 1, New York, NY 10018

On Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 6:00 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Stuart,

These answers will be ready tomorrow.

(b)(6)

National Media Strategy | Global Events & Travel
Global Public Affairs | U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 9:12 AM
To: Stuart Thompson <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: NYT inquiry - Disinformation from Russia

Hi Stuart,

Thanks for sending over. We'll do our best to answer your questions ASAP, but want to note our answers might not be ready until Wednesday.

(b)(6)

National Media Strategy | Global Events & Travel
Global Public Affairs | U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: Stuart Thompson <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 8:35 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT inquiry - Disinformation from Russia

Hi (b)(6) thanks! I'm hoping to close this piece by tomorrow.

To the extent you can answer:

- 1) What propaganda or misleading information are you seeing out of Russia? Do you have examples?
- 2) Can you speak to their overall strategy and goals regarding misinformation/propaganda right now?
- 3) Who are they targeting? Russians, the West, both?
- 4) Can you say anything about the platforms you're seeing used for this purpose? Is it just state-run media or are there other avenues, like social media?
- 5) Are you aware of any bot activity or similar social media manipulation?

Thanks so much.

Stuart A. Thompson

(b)(6)

REPORTER

P: (b)(6)

E: (b)(6)@nytimes.com

A: 620 8th Ave # 1, New York, NY 10018

On Sun, Mar 6, 2022 at 12:20 PM (b)(6)@state.gov wrote:
Hi Stuart,

Thanks for reaching out! If you send over written questions, we will certainly get them answered for you this week. What is your deadline?

(b)(6)

National Media Strategy | Global Events & Travel
Global Public Affairs | U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)

From: Stuart Thompson <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, March 4, 2022 1:13 PM

To: PA Press Duty <PAPressDuty@state.gov>

Subject: NYT inquiry - Disinformation from Russia

Hi there, I'm working on a story about Russia's disinformation/propaganda efforts and I'm wondering if I can connect with someone at the State Department to hear about what they've seen in this so far.

If you have any other prepared materials on these efforts, I'd also love to take a look.

Many thanks!

Stuart A. Thompson



REPORTER

P: (b)(6)

E: (b)(6)@nytimes.com

A: 620 8th Ave # 1, New York, NY 10018

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov

Recipient: Stuart Thompson (b)(6)@nytimes.com>;
GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

From: Julian Barnes [(b)(6)]@nytimes.com>
To: [(b)(6)]E@state.gov>
Subject: Re: NYT connection to State Dept GEC
Date: Tue, 2 Feb 2021 13:22:21 -0500

Terrific. Just tried you. Try me at your convenience, [(b)(6)]

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
[(b)(6)] Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Tue, Feb 2, 2021 at 1:19 PM [(b)(6)]@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

Nice to connect. Happy to chat off the record to understand more about your story to see if we have anything to share; or if you have a specific question you can send over email and we can approach it that way.

Very best,

[(b)(6)]

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: [(b)(6)]

x]

From: [(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 1:07 PM
To: 'Julian Barnes' [(b)(6)]@nytimes.com>
Cc: [(b)(6)]@state.gov>; DL USCYBERCOM_PAO (H3C9)
<DLUSCC_J0_PAO@cybercom.mil>; [(b)(6)]
Subject: NYT connection to State Dept GEC

Julian-

Connecting you to [(b)(6)] of the Global Engagement Center-- not sure if they will have something for you on Russian anti-vax disinformation campaign in Spanish, but wanted to make sure you

had a good POC for her.

(b)(6)

V/R,

(b)(6)

U.S. Cyber Command, Public Affairs

COMM: (b)(6)

NSTS: (b)(6)

Personal Cell: (b)(6)

Work Cell: (b)(6)

Sender: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)
To:
CC: NIDC Kyiv (b)(6)
Subject: Re: NIDC Ukraine Daily Media Report 3/12/2020
Date: Thu, 3 Dec 2020 17:30:44 +0200

Compiled by the NATO Information and Documentation Centre, Kyiv
PDD Engagements Section

1. **Russia blocks decision on monitoring of Ukraine-Russia border**
2. **Russia's envoy to UN calls war in Donbas Russian-Ukrainian conflict**
3. **UN countries reject Russia's claim that it acts as mediator within Donbas conflict**
4. **Estonia, UK, U.S. reiterate Russia active participant in Donbas war**
5. **Sweden at OSCE: Conflict in Ukraine concerns Donbas and Crimea**
6. **OSCE Chairperson-in-Office: Conflict settlement in Ukraine should include Crimea**
7. **EU High Representative: Political will by all parties needed to resolve Donbas conflict**
8. **Linkevičius calls on NATO allies to consistently support Ukraine and Georgia**
9. **NATO to step up practical support to Ukraine, Georgia – Stoltenberg**
10. **Ukraine ready to increase contributions to NATO-led operations – Taran**
11. **Ukraine seeks closer interaction with NATO, including in Black Sea region – Kuleba**
12. **Kuleba invites NATO states to take part in Crimean Platform**
13. **Russia seeking "DPR/LPR" legitimization via international platforms – Ukrainian delegation to TCG**
14. **Crimean Platform inter-faction union created in Ukraine parliament – speaker**
15. **Dzheppar: Russia violating UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in occupied Crimea**
16. **Necessary to resume work of commission on Ukraine-U.S. strategic partnership – expert**
17. **Cooperation between Ukraine, U.S. not matter of cooperation with IMF - expert on possible appointment of Markarova as ambassador**
18. **Zelensky enacts decree on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction**

19. Representatives of British Embassy in Ukraine visit administrative border with Crimea - State Border Guard Service

20. Ukraine reports 189 new COVID-19 cases in armed forces as of Dec 3

21. Kyiv reports 1,364 new coronavirus cases

22. Zelensky appoints new Ukroboronprom chief

23. Ukroboronprom will no longer exist in 2021 – new chief

24. Ukroboronprom reports on searches of SBU related to foreign economic contracts

25. Razumkov, G7 ambassadors discuss resumption of effective work of anti-corruption bodies

26. Michael Gentile: Descent into the Mariupol disinformation maelström

Russia blocks decision on monitoring of Ukraine-Russia border

Ukraine and another 33 OSCE participating states have drafted a ministerial decision to establish a permanent monitoring of the areas adjacent to the uncontrolled part of Ukraine-Russia border by the OSCE mission. Russia has blocked the decision.

Speaking at the 27th OSCE Ministerial Council, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba noted that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission continues to record modern Russian weapon systems and Mission's UAVs continue to spot the movement of military trucks across the border from Russia to the sovereign territory of Ukraine.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-defense/3148074-russia-blocks-decision-on-monitoring-of-ukrainerussia-border.html>

Russia's envoy to UN calls war in Donbas Russian-Ukrainian conflict

Russia's envoy to the UN Vasily Nebenzya has publicly called the war in Donbas a political conflict between Russia and Ukraine rather than a domestic conflict in Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian delegation to the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG).

The delegation said this in a statement on its Facebook page following yesterday's "event" organized by Russian representatives in the UN Security Council so as to legitimize representatives of certain districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions (ORDLO).

"Nebenzya stated about the 'conflict in Donbas': it is not a domestic conflict in Ukraine, it is a political conflict between Russia and Ukraine," the Ukrainian delegation quoted Nebenzya as saying.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3147765-russias-envoy-to-un-calls-war-in-donbas-russianukrainian-conflict.html>

UN countries reject Russia's claim that it acts as mediator within Donbas conflict

The position of Russia, which tried to hold discussions at the UN on the implementation of the Minsk agreements, is deceptive. The Russian Federation itself cannot be a mediator, since it instigated and continues to fuel the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

This was said in a joint statement of the United Kingdom, the United States and Estonia on Ukraine, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN Sergiy Kyslytsya wrote on his Facebook page on Wednesday, December 2.

"We strongly reject Russia's premise that it is acting as a mediator within an internal conflict. Russia is an active participant that trains, arms, and leads armed formations in areas outside of Ukrainian government control, supplementing these proxy forces with military personnel and equipment," the statement reads.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3147725-un-countries-reject-russias-claim-that-it-is-acting-as-mediator-within-donbas-conflict.html>

Estonia, UK, U.S. reiterate Russia active participant in Donbas war

The diplomats strongly reject Russia's premise that it is acting as a mediator within an internal conflict.

Read more: <https://www.unian.info/war/donbas-war-estonia-uk-u-s-reiterate-russia-active-participant-11242193.html>

Sweden at OSCE: Conflict in Ukraine concerns Donbas and Crimea

The conflict in Ukraine remains far from over and the settlement should concern both Donbas and Crimea, Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde has said.

She said this during the 27th OSCE Ministerial Council, according to an Ukrinform correspondent.

"Of all the challenges we face, unresolved conflicts are the most serious. The ceasefire in eastern Ukraine is certainly welcome, but it remains fragile. The conflict in and around Ukraine is still far from over. And it concerns eastern Ukraine and the Crimean Peninsula," said the Swedish foreign minister, who will chair the OSCE in 2021.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3148133-sweden-at-osce-conflict-in-ukraine-concerns-donbas-and-crimea.html>

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office: Conflict settlement in Ukraine should include Crimea

The settlement of the ongoing conflict on the territory of Ukraine should include the issue of Russia's occupation of Crimea.

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Prime Minister and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, Edi Rama, said this in his opening address at the 27th OSCE Ministerial Council on December 3.

"At the beginning of the year, I stated that the conflict with respect to Ukraine was of utmost priority of our chairmanship. This has not changed and it cannot change. Some progress has been made, but there is still a long way to go towards a comprehensive and peaceful resolution of the conflict, including with respect to the challenges related to Crimea," he said.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3148052-osce-chairpersoninoffice-conflict-settlement-in-ukraine-should-include-crimea.html>

EU High Representative: Political will by all parties needed to resolve Donbas conflict

The European Union reiterates its unwavering support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, reports UNIAN.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell has said the political will by all parties is needed to resolve the conflict in Donbas.

"We need a long-term political solution to achieve a lasting peace in eastern Ukraine. This will require political will by all parties to the conflict. The full implementation of the Minsk agreements is a key condition in this regard," he said at the 27th OSCE's Ministerial Council on December 3, 2020.

Regrettably, Crimea and the city of Sevastopol are still illegally annexed by Russia, Borrell stressed.

"The European Union reiterates its unwavering support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity," he added.

Linkevičius calls on NATO allies to consistently support Ukraine and Georgia

Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Linas Linkevičius has suggested that NATO allies cooperate more closely with Ukraine and Georgia.

He said this at NATO Foreign Ministers' second session on December 2, the press service of the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry reports.

"We are strongly committed to helping Georgia and Ukraine on the path of their integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. We want to encourage the search for solutions that could strengthen our partners' security as well as our own," Linkevičius said.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3148086-linkevicius-calls-on-nato-allies-to-consistently-support-ukraine-and-georgia.html>

NATO to step up practical support to Ukraine, Georgia - Stoltenberg

NATO appreciates the partnership with Ukraine and Georgia and will continue to step up practical support to both countries in the field of security and defense reform, according to NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

He said this at an online press conference following the second day of meetings of the NATO foreign ministers, according to an Ukrinform correspondent.

"Georgia and Ukraine are valued NATO partners. Who make important contributions to our missions. Today, we restated our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and Ukraine. We discussed their reform programmes. And we are stepping up our practical support. I am pleased that Allies and Georgia approved the updated Substantial NATO-Georgia Package. Stepping up our political support. And Ministers agreed further steps to improve our situational awareness in the region and strengthen our dialogue with both partners," Stoltenberg said.

According to him, the foreign ministers of Georgia and Ukraine joined the meeting of NATO ministers on December 2.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-polytics/3147743-nato-to-step-up-practical-support-to-ukraine-georgia-stoltenberg.html>

Ukraine ready to increase contributions to NATO-led operations - Taran

The Ukrainian Armed Forces are ready to increase national contributions to NATO-led operations and to engage in the planning of the Alliance's early crisis management operations, according to Ukrainian Defense Minister Andriy Taran.

He said this at a briefing for ambassadors, military attaches of NATO member states and representatives of the NATO office in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry's press service reports.

"By joining NATO's Enhanced Opportunities [Partnership] program, we strive to expand the horizons of our partnership with NATO, realizing that it is a 'two-way street': we have better opportunities, but we also have the commitment to achieve common goals," Taran said.

According to him, by developing practical cooperation as part of NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partnership program, Ukraine seeks to increase its contribution to NATO's activities and achieve the maximum level of interoperability.

Taran recalled that Ukraine is the first country among NATO partners to join the NATO Response Force (NRF), and Ukrainian Armed Forces units have been on duty in the NATO Response Force since 2010. Ukraine has already declared a special task force and an Il-76 transport aircraft in NRF 2021.

Taran said that even in the face of Russian aggression, Ukraine is and will remain a reliable partner of the Alliance, participating in NATO-led operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Ukraine seeks closer interaction with NATO, including in Black Sea region - Kuleba

Ukraine is continuing to take steps that may eventually allow it to join NATO and is waiting to receive a membership action plan, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said after a meeting of the alliance's members with Ukraine and Georgia to discuss security in the Black Sea region, writes Interfax – Ukraine.

"We want greater interaction with the alliance, including more NATO exercises in Ukraine. I noted that Ukraine is taking further steps towards its membership in the alliance and is waiting to receive a membership action plan," the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry's press service quoted Kuleba as saying.

The foreign ministers of some NATO countries mentioned Ukraine's Crimean Platform initiative in their speeches and welcomed the granting of Enhanced Operating Partner status to Ukraine, he said.

"A number of ministers also said in their speeches that they tentatively support granting NATO membership to Ukraine," the minister said.

Kuleba invited the NATO states to take an active part in the implementation of the Crimean Platform initiative, which is meant to address security in the Black Sea region, among other issues.

According to Kuleba, he informed the meeting participants about Russia's efforts to militarize the temporarily occupied Crimea.

"There are concrete figures that confirm its [militarization] negative impact on security in the Black Sea region. Furthermore, signs of the peninsula's nuclearization pose a serious threat to nuclear nonproliferation," the minister said.

"The significant deterioration of the situation in the Black Sea region poses a threat not only to the Black Sea littoral states, but also to countries in Southern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. Therefore, I welcome NATO's readiness to become involved in the Black Sea region's security to a greater extent and the strengthening of interaction with Ukraine and Georgia," Kuleba said.

Ukraine's further participation in NATO-led international peacekeeping and security operations and Exercise Coherent Resilience, a Ukraine-NATO joint command and staff exercise due to take place in Odesa in May 2021, will help further deepen interaction between Kyiv and the alliance in responding to different crises and in resisting hybrid threats, Kuleba said.

Kuleba invites NATO states to take part in Crimean Platform

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba has said that a meeting of NATO foreign ministers with the participation of Ukraine and Georgia is a clear signal of NATO's continued support for the reform process and the Euro-Atlantic course of both countries.

"I informed the members of the Alliance in detail about the militarization of the temporarily occupied Crimea by Russia as an occupying state. With specific figures, evidence of its negative impact on the security of the Black Sea region. In addition, signs of nuclearization of the

peninsula pose a serious threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime," Kuleba said after the meeting.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3147768-kuleba-invites-nato-states-to-take-part-in-crimean-platform.html>

Russia seeking "DPR/LPR" legitimization via international platforms – Ukrainian delegation to TCG

According to the diplomats, Russia may unilaterally recognize the so-called "LPR" and "DPR" as "independent republics."

Read more: <https://www.unian.info/politics/tcg-russia-seeking-dpr-lpr-legitimization-via-international-platforms-11242385.html>

Crimean Platform inter-faction union created in Ukraine parliament – speaker

Five MPs became co-chairmen of the union.

Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Dmytro Razumkov says the Crimean Platform inter-faction union has been created in parliament.

He announced this at a parliament meeting on Thursday, December 03, reports UNIAN.

Five MPs became co-chairpersons of the union, namely Rustem Umerov (Holos (Voice) faction), Mustafa Dzhemilev (European Solidarity faction), Akhtem Chygoz (European Solidarity faction), Yelyzaveta Yasko (Servant of the People faction), and Vadym Galaychuk (Servant of the People faction).

Dzheppar: Russia violating UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in occupied Crimea

Russia is violating the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in occupied Crimea and, as an occupying power, is failing to fulfill its obligations to protect civilians amid the pandemic.

First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Emine Dzheppar made a corresponding statement during the 13th session of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The session focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Link: <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/3147990-dzheppar-russia-violates-un-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-in-occupied-crimea.html>

Necessary to resume work of commission on Ukraine-U.S. strategic partnership - expert

It is necessary to resume the work of the Ukraine-U.S. Strategic Partnership commission after Joe Biden, the leader of the presidential race in this country, takes the post of the U.S. president, Director of the Institute of World Policy Yevhen Mahda believes.

"The benchmark is simple - this is the resumption of work of the Strategic Partnership Commission. It existed under the presidency of Kuchma, and was called Kuchma-Gore. Then it was renewed under the presidency of Poroshenko, but not too long, there was a Klimkin-Pompeo commission. What will we get in this case? I would like us to receive, for example, the continuation of modernization of the Ukrainian Armed Forces," Mahda said at a press conference at the Interfax-Ukraine agency in Kyiv on Thursday, December 03.

Link: <https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/press-conference/707541.html>

Cooperation between Ukraine, U.S. not matter of cooperation with IMF - expert on possible appointment of Markarova as ambassador

The decision to focus relations with the United States on cooperation with the IMF, as evidenced by the consideration of the possible appointment of ex-Minister of Finance of Ukraine Oksana Markarova to the post of Ukraine's ambassador to the United States, is a big problem, Yaroslav Bozhko, the head of the Center for Political Studies, has stated.

"Oksana Markarova has no diplomatic work experience, with all due respect to her. And the issue of cooperation with the United States is not only a matter of cooperation with the IMF," Bozhko said at a press conference at the Interfax-Ukraine agency in Kyiv on Thursday, December 03.

"I would say: basically this is not a question of cooperation with the IMF. It is a question of cooperation with the White House, the Pentagon, the Capitol, the Congress, its upper and lower chambers. This is a big problem that Ukraine has now decided to focus all this on cooperation with the IMF, because there are also defense, security and political issues," he stressed.

Zelensky enacts decree on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The Foreign Ministry will act as coordinator for the implementation of the respective UN Security Council resolutions.

Read more: <https://www.unian.info/politics/security-zelensky-enacts-decree-on-non-proliferation-of-weapons-of-mass-destruction-11242070.html>

Representatives of British Embassy in Ukraine visit administrative border with Crimea - State Border Guard Service

A group of diplomatic representatives of the British Embassy in Ukraine led by Defense Attaché, Commodore of the Royal Navy Tim Woods has visited the administrative border with the temporarily occupied Crimea, writes Interfax – Ukraine citing the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

"Accompanied by the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea Anton Korynevych and the head of Kherson border guard detachment,

Colonel Yuriy Chernov, representatives of the British Embassy visited the Chonhar, Kalanchak and Chaplynka checkpoints. The guests were introduced to procedure for carrying out access operations, the infrastructure of the checkpoint and the conditions of service of border guards," the message says.

Also during the meeting, the sides discussed issues of socio-political, defense and security situation both in the region and directly on the administrative border.

Tim Woods said that the international community supports territorial integrity of Ukraine and hopes for an early return of the occupied territories.

Ukraine reports 189 new COVID-19 cases in armed forces as of Dec 3

Some 437 servicemen are now isolated (including self-isolation).

The number of COVID-19 coronavirus cases registered in the Armed Forces of Ukraine rose by 189 as of the morning of December 3.

"As of 10:00 Kyiv time on December 3, some 3,146 people in the Armed Forces of Ukraine had acute respiratory illness COVID-19 caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. In total, 7,533 people have recovered and 27 have died during the pandemic," the press service of the Medical Force Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine wrote on Facebook on December 3. "Some 189 new COVID-19 cases were registered in the past 24 hours."

Of those newly-infected, 21 people have been hospitalized, while another 168 are self-isolating, undergoing treatment at home under doctors' supervision. Currently, their state of health is satisfactory.

Some 437 servicemen are now isolated (including self-isolation). The number of those whose isolation term is expiring in the next three days is 65 people.

Kyiv reports 1,364 new coronavirus cases

Kyiv has confirmed 1,364 new coronavirus cases in the past day, bringing the total to 75,376, according to Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko.

"Some 1,364 new coronavirus patients have been recorded in Kyiv in the past day. Thirty people have died. In total, 1,369 Kyiv residents have died from coronavirus," Klitschko wrote on his Telegram channel.

According to Klitschko, among people who have contracted COVID-19 in Kyiv in the past day are 785 women aged 18-89 years; 63 girls aged between one month and 17 years; 460 men aged 18-91 years; 56 boys aged between one month and 17 years old. In addition, 40 health workers have fallen ill with COVID-19.

Some 512 patients have recovered in Kyiv over the course of the past day. In total, 24,275 Kyiv residents have overcome the disease.

As reported by Ukrinform, a total of 772,760 COVID-19 cases were laboratory confirmed in Ukraine on December 3, including 14,496 new cases reported in the past 24 hours.

Zelensky appoints new Ukroboronprom chief

The president had previously fired Ihor Fomenko as Ukroboronprom Acting CEO.

Read more: <https://www.unian.info/politics/ukroboronprom-zelensky-appoints-new-chief-11242115.html>

More: <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/zelensky-appoints-new-ukroboronprom-director-general.html>

Ukroboronprom will no longer exist in 2021 – new chief

New holdings will be set up on its basis.

Read more: <https://www.unian.info/economics/defense-ukroboronprom-will-no-longer-exist-in-2021-11242511.html>

Ukroboronprom reports on searches of SBU related to foreign economic contracts

On Thursday, officers of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) are conducting searches in the premises of the Ukroboronprom State Concern and the company Ukrspetsexport, which is a member of the Concern, according to the Ukroboronprom Facebook page.

"Searches are related to the implementation of foreign economic contracts and are carried out on the basis of an order of the investigating judge of the Shevchenkivsky District Court of Kyiv. Ukroboronprom and Ukrspetsexport provide maximum assistance to law enforcement agencies and provide all information and documents within the framework of a court order. Both institutions operate normally," the message says.

Razumkov, G7 ambassadors discuss resumption of effective work of anti-corruption bodies

Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Dmytro Razumkov, together with representatives of parliamentary factions and groups, met with the ambassadors of the G7 countries.

"We discussed the restoration of the effective activity of anti-corruption bodies and e-declaration. The parliament has a unified position - as soon as possible to return criminal responsibility for inaccurate declaration," Razumkov wrote on Twitter, writes Interfax – Ukraine.

According to the press service of the Verkhovna Rada, at the meeting, representatives of the parliament said that a working group was created that is working on solving three key issues: resuming responsibility for inaccurate declaration, creating effective mechanisms for the work of anti-corruption bodies and balancing the conditions of activities of the authorities, in particular, the Constitutional Court.

"During the meeting, we discussed the need to quickly adopt a relevant decision. Now work is underway on a single bill that will combine the advantages of the document prepared by the parliamentary working group and the initiative of the president of Ukraine," the report says.

It is noted that the search for a compromise solution will help quickly restore the e-declaration system and minimize the risks of appealing the agreed changes to anti-corruption legislation in the Constitutional Court.

"G7 Ambassadors met today with Speaker Razumkov and Rada faction leaders, encouraging close cooperation with the Office of the President to urgently reinstate with a firm legal basis the anti-corruption provisions recently declared unconstitutional," the U.S. Presidency of the G7 Ambassadors' Support Group said on Twitter.

"In particular, it is important to ensure that penalties for false and unfiled asset declarations will not be weakened and effectively deter corruption, and that the NABU's independence and effectiveness is upheld by legislative amendments by December 16," the report reads.

Michael Gentile: Descent into the Mariupol disinformation maelström

While the Western world is busy overcoming a wave of coronavirus-related false stories, Mariupol has descended into a maelström of anti-Western disinformation and conspiracy theories, the depth of which most Ukrainians.

Link: <https://voxukraine.org/en/descent-into-the-mariupol-disinformation-maelstrom/>

On Thu, Dec 3, 2020 at 9:42 AM (b)(6) (b)(6) wrote:
Compiled by the NATO Information and Documentation Centre, Kyiv
PDD Engagements Section

1. **Russia-occupation forces violate ceasefire three times in Donbas over past day, no casualties - JFO HQ**
2. **Ukraine reports 14,496 new COVID-19 cases, 1,350 more than the day before**
3. **Third of poll participants of Coronavirus-info telegram channel vote for lockdown from Dec 23 to Jan 15**
4. **Kravchuk elaborates on upcoming NSDC meeting on Donbas**
5. **NATO Allies ready to step up support to Ukraine, Georgia – Stoltenberg**
6. **Top Turkish, Ukrainian diplomats meet in Ankara**
7. **Deputies in Siurte village sang anthem of Ukraine, then national prayer - Embassy of Hungary**
8. **Ukraine receives total of EUR 370 mln to fight coronavirus - Shmyhal**
9. **Govt prepares mass testing for coronavirus in regional centers, big cities - Shmyhal**
10. **EU-U.S. cooperation on Russia to remain key, Ukraine is priority partner - EU Ambassador to Ukraine**
11. **Sources: Prosecutor general blocks graft case against Zelensky's deputy chief of staff**
12. **Zelensky appoints ex-head of Kherson regional administration Husev as director of Ukroboronprom - decree**

Russia-occupation forces violate ceasefire three times in Donbas over past day, no casualties - JFO HQ

Over the past day, Russia-occupation forces in Donbas violated the ceasefire regime three times, Ukrainian servicemen were not injured, the press center of the Joint Forces operation headquarters said. "Over the past day, on December 2, the ceasefire regime was observed in most areas of responsibility of Ukrainian units. At the same time, three facts of ceasefire violation by armed formations of the Russian Federation and its fighters were recorded near Vodiane. There the enemy opened fire from an automatic grenade launcher and small arms. In addition, in the same area, the enemy remotely mined the positions of our troops, using several prohibited POM-2 mines. There were no casualties or injuries among the Ukrainian servicemen," the JFO headquarters wrote on Facebook on Thursday.

Since the beginning of this day, Russia-occupation forces have twice violated the ceasefire regime in Donbas. "Since the beginning of this day, on December 3, Russia-occupation forces have twice violated the agreements reached on July 22, 2020. So, not far from Vodiane, the enemy used several 120 caliber mines, and also carried out remote mining of the positions of our troops, using several prohibited POM-2 mines. [...] Fire provocations of the enemy did not pose a threat to our defenders, so the Ukrainian units did not use weapons in response," the JFO headquarters wrote.

Ukraine reports 14,496 new COVID-19 cases, 1,350 more than the day before

Ukraine registered 14,496 new COVID-19 cases and 243 coronavirus-related deaths in the past 24 hours, Ukrainian Health Minister Maksym Stepanov said on Thursday. "We have been observing positive statistics for two days in a row. The number of persons who have recovered from coronavirus in the past 24 hours stands at 15,372. This is more than the number of new COVID-19 cases: Ukraine registered 14,496 cases of the novel coronavirus on December 3, 2020. In particular, the virus was contracted by 745 children and 614 medical workers. Over the past day, 1,739 patients were hospitalized, 243 died, and 15,372 recovered," Stepanov said on Facebook on Thursday morning.

Ukraine reported 13,141 contagions on December 2. As of this date, Ukraine has seen a total of 772,760 COVID-19 cases, including 12,960 deaths.

Third of poll participants of Coronavirus-info telegram channel vote for lockdown from Dec 23 to Jan 15

A third (33%) of the survey participants of the Coronavirus-info telegram channel believe that the lockdown should be introduced in Ukraine from December 23 to January 15, some 27% believe that the lockdown should not be introduced at all.

According to the survey, 19% of respondents believe that a lockdown should be introduced now in order to complete it before the New Year holidays, 10% of respondents believe that a lockdown should operate from January 2 to January 23, while 9% of respondents find it difficult to answer.

In total, 83,223 users took part in the poll of the telegram channel as of Wednesday evening. At

the same time, in a similar survey of the Coronavirus-info telegram channel in Viber, 48% of respondents voted for the introduction of a lockdown from December 23 to January 15, some 29% believe that a lockdown should not be introduced at all, and 11% believe that a lockdown must be imposed now so that it ends before the New Year holidays. The introduction of lockdown from January 2 to January 23 is supported by 4% of respondents, and 4% also found it difficult to answer.

As of Wednesday evening, 189,210 users took part in the Viber poll.

Kravchuk elaborates on upcoming NSDC meeting on Donbas

Ukraine's search for new ways could become a reaction to Russia's constant resistance to peace in Donbas, the delegation chief says.

Read more <https://www.unian.info/politics/donbas-settlement-kravchuk-elaborates-on-upcoming-nsdc-meeting-11241539.html>

NATO Allies ready to step up support to Ukraine, Georgia – Stoltenberg

Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have expressed readiness to further boost practical support to Ukraine and Georgia. That's according to Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg who spoke at an online press conference following a foreign ministers' meeting held via video conference on December 1-2, according to an UNIAN correspondent.

The foreign ministers of Ukraine and Georgia have joined the ministerial addressing the security situation in the Black Sea region, which Stoltenberg said was of "strategic importance." "Russia continues to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine. It continues its military build-up in Crimea. And increasingly deploys forces in the Black sea region," said the secretary general.

NATO is responding, Stoltenberg added, "by strengthening our presence on land, at sea and in the air." He spoke of NATO warship calling at these countries' ports, as well as the growing number of joint drills carried out, and the strengthening of defense capabilities.

NATO is helping Ukraine and Georgia beef up their defense institutions, according to Stoltenberg. "Today, we restated our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and Ukraine," Stoltenberg said, adding that the countries' reform agendas have been discussed.

The Alliance has called for member states to also provide bilateral support to Ukraine and Georgia. "And today the message was very clear – that Allies are ready to further step up in different areas providing more practical support," the secretary general concluded.

In a tweet, Ukraine's top diplomat Dmytro Kuleba has praised NATO's commitment to boost cooperation in the Black Sea region.

Top Turkish, Ukrainian diplomats meet in Ankara

The Turkish foreign minister met on Wednesday his Ukrainian counterpart, he said on Twitter. Mevlut Cavusoglu said he held a "frank meeting" with Dmytro Kuleba in the capital Ankara.

Cavusoglu added that they will continue to strengthen bilateral relations, especially in military cooperation and the defense industry. "We welcome the 'Crimean platform' initiative," he said.

Ukraine has suggested the creation of the platform as an international coordination mechanism to handle the situation in the Crimea region. Russia and Ukraine have been at loggerheads since 2014 when Russia annexed Crimea after a controversial referendum.

Turkey, as well as the UN General Assembly, view the annexation as illegal. Kyiv also blames Moscow for separatist violence in eastern Ukraine, near the border with Russia.

Deputies in Siurte village sang anthem of Ukraine, then national prayer - Embassy of Hungary

Elected deputies of Siurte village in Zakarpattia region, after the inaugural meeting of the board, first sang the national anthem of Ukraine and only after that the national prayer of the Hungarians, which later became the national anthem of Hungary, the Hungarian embassy in Ukraine said.

"It turned out that the person who made the recording and published it with an obviously malicious purpose - who, by the way, is a family member of the politician who was defeated in the elections - deliberately did not record the national anthem of Ukraine, which was played at the end of the session, and only after that those present sang the national prayer of the Hungarians, which is several hundred years old, and which later became the national anthem of Hungary," the embassy said in a statement to Interfax-Ukraine on Wednesday.

The diplomatic mission said that this prayer is part of the cultural heritage and identity of Hungarians living anywhere in the world, like Hungarian national colors (red-white-green). "They are preserved and used by Hungarian communities around the world not as a symbol of Hungary, but as a symbol of belonging to Hungarian nation, as is the case with the Hungarians who live in Ukraine," the statement says. The embassy recalled that Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine On National Minorities in Ukraine, adopted in 1992, guarantees the use of national symbols for these minorities.

Ukraine receives total of EUR 370 mln to fight coronavirus - Shmyhal

Ukraine received a total of EUR 370 million in international support for the fight against coronavirus, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said. "We received quite significant funds at the beginning of pandemic: EUR 190 million from the EU, tranches from \$100,000 to \$50 million from various international partners. Negotiations are underway with the European Investment Bank on a loan for the purchase of vaccines for EUR 50 million and EUR 25 million for vaccines from the World Bank. There was a significant amount of financial aid. If you put everything together, you get almost EUR 370 million," he said in an interview with the

Korrespondent magazine.

Shmyhal said that, in addition to irrevocable assistance of the EU in the amount of EUR 190 million, "there was another \$14.5 million from the United States, the UN and its structures gave EUR 165 million." "Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Germany, South Korea, Canada and many others also helped Ukraine. I thank the leadership of these countries for supporting Ukraine in this difficult period," he said.

Govt prepares mass testing for coronavirus in regional centers, big cities - Shmyhal

The Cabinet of Ministers is developing a project for mass testing for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in regional centers and large cities, Prime Minister of Ukraine Denys Shmyhal said. "The Cabinet is working on a project for total testing for COVID-19. Priorities are Kyiv and the region, regional centers and large cities with a population of more than 100,000 people," he said in an interview with Korrespondent magazine.

Commenting on the COVID-19 vaccination program, Shmyhal said that the government is currently preparing a detailed action plan and is negotiating with suppliers. "We are part of the global COVAX system, under which we will receive a certain amount of vaccines. In addition, the government is negotiating the supply of vaccines with Pfizer and AstraZeneca," he said. "Vaccinations will begin in the second quarter of next year in Ukraine," the Prime Minister said.

EU-U.S. cooperation on Russia to remain key, Ukraine is priority partner - EU Ambassador to Ukraine

The cooperation between the European Union and the United States on issues related to the Russian Federation will remain key, it will include the protection of the territorial integrity and energy security of the Eastern partners, said EU Ambassador to Ukraine Matti Maasikas. "EU-U.S. cooperation on Russia will remain key in particular upholding international law, including protecting the territorial integrity and energy security of Eastern Partners. Ukraine is a priority partner where U.S. support is vital in promoting security and ambitious reform programme," Maasikas wrote on Twitter on Wednesday.

Sources: Prosecutor general blocks graft case against Zelensky's deputy chief of staff

Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova has blocked a graft case against Oleg Tatarov, a deputy chief of staff for President Volodymyr Zelensky, by taking it away from four prosecutors who were in charge of it, sources familiar with the case told the Kyiv Post. The sources spoke on condition of anonymity, as they were not authorized to talk with the media. Other news outlets also reported this, citing their sources.

Read more <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/sources-prosecutor-general-blocks-graft-case-against-zelenskys-deputy-chief-of-staff.html>

Zelensky appoints ex-head of Kherson regional administration Husev as director of Ukroboronprom - decree

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky has appointed former head of Kherson Regional State Administration Yuriy Husev as director of the Ukroboronprom State Concern. "To appoint Husev Yuriy Veniaminovich as director general of the State Concern Ukroboronprom," says the text of decree No. 532/2020 of December 3, published on the website of the head of state.

As reported, Husev served as head of Kherson regional administration since July 13, 2019, and on December 2, 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved a draft presidential decree on his dismissal due to his transfer to another job.

From August 30, 2019 to October 6, 2020, Ukroboronprom was headed by former Minister of Economic Development of Ukraine Aivaras Abromavicius. After his dismissal, Ihor Fomenko became the acting director general of the state concern, who held the position of deputy director general for production at Ukroboronprom.

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(b)(6)

Press Officer

NATO Information and Documentation Centre
NATO Representation to Ukraine (NRU)

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NIDC Kyiv <dl@nato.kiev.ua>

From:	Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>
To:	Ferdi Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
CC:	(b)(6)@state.gov>; Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>; Alanna Dvorak <(b)(6)@poynter.org>; Maria Adelma Montejo <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>
Subject:	Re: M&E for Balkans and Pacific Islands
Date:	Tue, 9 Feb 2021 16:25:07 -0500

Hi (b)(6)

Can you forward the latest version of the GEC Workbook to this email chain? It might help for me to give some background on this to Poynter before the call.

Thanks!

On Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 4:05 PM Ferdi Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org> wrote:

Dear (b)(6)

Thank you for reaching out regarding M&E for the Balkans and Pacific Islands. Sorry for the late reply. We were just waiting for some internal updates regarding a meeting with our National Board of Advisors. My colleagues and I were tasked in running a few of the meetings that are set through this Thursday and Friday.

We were wondering if we can set a date early next week. We can for sure move things around for Monday need be.

As for activities for the two regions :

We have made some headway with the Pacific Island Grant. We have identified the local partner that will be partnering up with and they are currently underway preparing the localized materials for the training sessions.

As for the Balkans, we are still at the very beginning. We have identified potential partners and have had our introduction meetings and will more to work off of at the end of this month.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for all the support.

Best,
Ferdi

On Fri, Feb 5, 2021 at 2:28 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi! Thank you for reaching out!

Would next Friday work? I'm free anytime after 11am except 3-4pm EST.

Before we meet, can you tell me where your projects are at and what M&E work you've done so far? Also, are you just looking for a walk through of the M&E Workbook/Performance Monitoring Plan? Is there anything else you'd like to accomplish during our call?

Thanks!

(b)(6)

M&E Specialist
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Contractor - Alutiiq Information Management, LLC

(b)(6)@state.gov

x]

From: Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 10:51 AM

To: Vonda Wolcott (h)(6)@iwpr.net>

Cc: Baybars Orsek (h)(6)@poynter.org>; Alanna Dvorak (h)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)

(h)(6)@state.gov>; Maria Adelma Montejo (b)(6)@iwpr.net>

Subject: Re: M&E for Balkans and Pacific Islands

Hi All,

Vonda, thank you for the introductions.

(b)(6) When would be the best time and date for us to set up a call to go over the documents?

The only day that would not work for us is Monday, we will be filming that day for the projects.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best,
Ferd

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 4:47 PM Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net> wrote:

Hi everyone.

Per our discussion, I wanted to put Poynter folks in touch with (b)(6) the M&E expert from GEC. (b)(6) has kindly offered to walk you through the GEC's new M&E workbook.

This Workbook uses the M&E from your GEC-approved proposals, which I've attached for everyone's convenience.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks!

--

Vonda Wolcott
Sr. Program Manager
Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
1156 15th Street, NW
Suite 329
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: (b)(6)

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--

Ferdi Ferhat Özsoy
Program Manager | *International Fact-Checking Network*
[@ferdi_Ozsoy](#) | [@factchecknet](#)



--

Ferdi Ferhat Özsoy
Program Manager | *International Fact-Checking Network*
[@ferdi_Ozsoy](#) | [@factchecknet](#)



--

Vonda Wolcott
Sr. Program Manager
Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
1156 15th Street, NW
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Sender: Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>

Recipient: Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
Maria Adelma Montejo (b)(6)@iwpr.net>

From: "Lin, Liza" <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Linkedin article
Date: Fri, 15 Oct 2021 01:04:56 +0800

we updated this with more context --

night (b)(6)

On Thu, Oct 14, 2021 at 11:53 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Great, thank you so much! Looking forward to the follow-up piece, as well.

(b)(6)

From: Lin, Liza <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 11:49 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Linkedin article

Sure, I'd be happy to! I;m just wrapping up a much longer, more comprehensive take. but here's the first cut we put out. and i'll send you the other later.

On Thu, Oct 14, 2021 at 11:45 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Hi, Liza,

I saw your article today on Linkedin closing in China. Would you be able to send me the full piece? I don't have my subscriptions set up at my new job yet. If not, no worries.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Foreign Affairs Officer, China Team

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)



--

Liza Lin

REPORTER



(b)(6)

E: liza.lin@wsj.com Wechat ID: liza83
A: 13-02 CapitaGreen, Singapore

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Liza Lin

REPORTER

--

(b)(6)

E: liza.lin@wsj.com Wechat ID: liza83
A: 13-02 CapitaGreen, Singapore

✕

Sender: "Lin, Liza" (b)(6)@wsj.com>

Recipient: (h)(6)@state.gov>

From: "Lin, Liza" <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Linkedin article
Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2021 23:48:46 +0800

Sure, I'd be happy to! I;m just wrapping up a much longer, more comprehensive take. but here's the first cut we put out. and i'll send you the other later.

On Thu, Oct 14, 2021 at 11:45 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

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(b)(6)

Foreign Affairs Officer, China Team

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

Office: (b)(6)



--

Liza Lin
REPORTER



(b)(6)
E: liza.l@wsj.com Wechat ID: liza83

A:13-02 CapitaGreen, Singapore

2

Sender: "Lin, Liza" (b)(6)@wsj.com>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: "Nakashima, Ellen" [(b)(6)]@washpost.com>
To: Price, Edward C <[(b)(6)]@state.gov>
CC: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking
Date: Wed, 16 Mar 2022 00:33:05 +0000

Got it, and thanks again!
Ellen

From: Price, Edward C <[(b)(6)]@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:32 PM
To: Nakashima, Ellen <[(b)(6)]@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes

From: Nakashima, Ellen [(b)(6)]@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Price, Edward C <[(b)(6)]@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

Great and thank you, Ned! That's on-background to a State Department official?

From: Price, Edward C <[(b)(6)]@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Nakashima, Ellen [(b)(6)]@washpost.com>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: just double-checking

CAUTION: EXTERNAL SENDER

Yes, I signed off w doing it on background.

From: Nakashima, Ellen (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:13 PM
To: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: just double-checking

Hi, Ned,

Just double-checking on my request to speak with the GEC's Daniel Kimmage, who is on leave at NDU, for a story about Ukraine's information campaign.

Would that be okay with you –and under what ground rules –on record or on background?

Many, many thanks!
Ellen Nakashima
The Washington Post

(b)(6)

Sender:	"Nakashima, Ellen" (b)(6)@washpost.com>
Recipient:	Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Invitation: Discussion on FY21 Strategy for Engagement in Europe
Date: Fri, 30 Oct 2020 01:46:39 -0400

Hi (b)(6)

Happy to participate!

Looking forward to it!

Baybars

On Thu, Oct 29, 2020 at 11:52 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Good afternoon,

With a new fiscal year and a full slate of programs in execution globally, the GEC China team invites you to join a discussion as we look ahead to our efforts in Europe in FY21.

We hope this discussion can be candid, informal, and focused on how we can bring our unique capabilities to bear to support our efforts to counter PRC malign influence in Europe. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on where we've made progress, where gaps remains, and things we should keep in mind as put together our programmatic strategy for FY21.

Please confirm participation in a virtual discussion via Microsoft Teams on November 5 at 8:00 EST / 13:00 CET / 22:00 AET to accommodate your participation from Washington, Europe and Canberra.

Best,

(b)(6)
Director, China
Global Engagement Center
US Department of State

--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
CC: Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ferd Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Subject: Re: IFCN Nobel Prize Nomination
Date: Thu, 21 Jan 2021 23:09:05 -0500

Thank you, (b)(6)

We are truly excited about this news!

Grateful for the support and hope to keep sharing such good news in the future as well!

All the best

Baybars

On Thu, Jan 21, 2021 at 3:36 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Adding in leadership — this is fantastic news! Congratulations to IFCN and their global team!

Best,

(b)(6)

On January 21, 2021 at 15:22:40 EST, Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net> wrote:

Good afternoon GEC folks:

I wanted to pass on the exciting news that IFCN has been nominated for the Peace Prize. Below is a link to their press release.

<https://www.poynter.org/fact-checking/2021/ifcn-is-heartened-by-a-nobel-peace-prize-nomination-for-the-work-of-the-global-fact-checking-community/>

Congratulations again to them!

Thanks!

--

Vonda Wolcott
Sr. Program Manager
Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
1156 15th Street, NW
Suite 329
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: (b)(6)

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--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender:	Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Recipient:	(b)(6)@state.gov>; Vonda Wolcott (h)(6)@iwpr.net>; (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (h)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ferdi Ozsoy (h)(6)@poynter.org>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Subject: Re: Hi (b)(6)
Date: Fri, 12 Mar 2021 13:10:44 +0000

Working propaganda and disinfo issues related to China, it is a great team working on interesting issues, totally enjoying it.

(b)(6)@state.gov) is the spokesperson for SCA these days and (b)(6) is the deputy ((b)(6)@state.gov) I am sure one of them can help out.

Take care,

(b)(6)

From: Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 7:03 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Hi (b)(6)

Adorbs! you adopted 2? twice the cuteness.....

sorry you're not doing Afgh anymore. What are you working on in the GEC? do you like it? and who is doing Afgh press these days?

all the best

Lara Jakes | Diplomatic Correspondent
Washington Bureau | The New York Times
Mobile/Signal/WhatsApp: (b)(6)
(b)(6)@nytimes.com | @jakesNYT

On Mon, Mar 8, 2021 at 1:09 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Alas not working Afghanistan these days. My FSO ways keep me moving about. I am currently working Chinese propaganda and disinformation in the Global Engagement Center.

To brighten your day here are some gratuitously cute puppy photos.



From: Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 12:34 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Hi (b)(6)

Hi, thanks for circling back -- and congrats on the puppy! Exciting. Would love to see pix!

I got what I needed, thanks, although wanted to make sure -- you're still doing Afgh policy right/ If so, we shld probably chat given that things are heating up...

cheers

Lara Jakes | Diplomatic Correspondent
Washington Bureau | The New York Times

Mobile/Signal/WhatsApp: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@nytimes.com | @jakesNYT

On Mon, Mar 8, 2021 at 12:30 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Lara-

Sorry I was offline yesterday (we got a new puppy and that was quite consuming!). Playing catchup today.

Let me know if you still want to connect or if you were able to get what you needed.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 1:08 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Hi (b)(6)

Got a sec to chat today? Thanks --

Lara Jakes | Diplomatic Correspondent
Washington Bureau | The New York Times

(b)(6)

(b)(6)@nytimes.com | @jakesNYT

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@cnn.com (b)(6)@cnn.com Elle Reeve
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov;
GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center phone call request
Date: Thu, 31 Mar 2022 16:03:02 +0000

Hello Ms. Reeve,

Passing along this message from yesterday. Could we schedule a brief off-the-record call to find out more about your request?

We believe that the person best positioned to respond to your request is only available through tomorrow but want to be sure by learning which topics you wish to address.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor

(b)(6)

x]

From: GEC Press
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 3:49 PM
To: (b)(6)@cnn.com (b)(6)@cnn.com Elle Reeve
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Global Engagement Center phone call request

Good afternoon Ms. Reeve,

We have learned of your request to speak to someone at the State Department's Global Engagement Center regarding Russian disinformation.

Would it be possible to schedule a brief off-the-record phone call to find out more? It would help us identify the right person who can speak with you.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor

(b)(6)

x]

Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

(b)(6)@cnn.com (b)(6)@cnn.com>;

Elle Reeve

Recipient: (b)(6) <BinderDR@state.gov>;
GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
To: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation
Date: Fri, 6 May 2022 17:18:55 +0000

Hi Ms. Atwood,

You can call my number - (b)(6) - I will conference you in to (b)(6)

From: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Friday, May 6, 2022 1:12 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

Hi – can I actually call you guys? I won't be on my cell I will be on an office line that is not my own (long story!). What number can I call?
Thanks!

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Date: Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 1:19 PM
To: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

Great - we will call you at 1:30 tomorrow for the on background call with Mr. Stoltz.

Thanks for your flexibility.

From: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 12:47 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

Yes that works tomorrow. How about 1:30 pm tomorrow. Happy to do it over the phone or in person masked. Thanks!

Kylie Atwood
CNN National Security Correspondent
Cell: (b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Date: Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 12:21 PM
To: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>
Cc: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>, Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>, GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>, (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

GEC Deputy Coordinator, (b)(6) is available to speak with you tomorrow from 1:30-3:30. Are you free during that time frame?

If so, I can call you and conference you in to (b)(6)

(b)(6)

From: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 9:54 AM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

Hi Scott - thanks for reaching out. Yes, these are the topics I would like to cover.
Thanks so much, Kylie

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From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 9:30:10 AM
To: Atwood, Kylie (b)(6)@cnn.com>
Cc: Price, Edward C (b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Global Engagement Center conversation

EXTERNAL SENDER: Caution opening links or attachments

Good morning Ms. Atwood,

The Global Engagement Center would like to arrange for someone to speak with you on background. To help us identify the best person at GEC to speak with, we would like to confirm that these are still the topics you are looking to discuss:

What is the GEC is doing when it comes to the disinformation that Russia and China have increasingly put out about the Ukraine war?

How is the GEC tracking it?

What kinds of trends have there been?

Is the GEC leading any efforts to directly combat it?

We look forward to hearing from you and arranging a time for the conversation.

Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

All Native Group Contractor

Office: (b)(6)



Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>;

Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>;

Recipient:

Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>;

GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>;

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CC: GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation
Date: Fri, 6 May 2022 17:31:51 +0000

I will just ring you at that time I literally don't know the number of the phone I am using!! We have a power outage at the CNN offices..... making things complicated.....

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Date: Friday, May 6, 2022 at 1:29 PM
To: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>, Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>, GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>, (b)(6)@state.gov>, Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

Can you call at 1:35 - Mr. Stoltz is delayed in a meeting but is on his way.

From: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Sent: Friday, May 6, 2022 1:12 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Hansler, Jennifer <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

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Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

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(b)(6)

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Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 9:54 AM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Global Engagement Center conversation

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From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
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To: Atwood, Kylie <(b)(6)@cnn.com>
Cc: Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>; Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-

Press@state.gov>;(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Global Engagement Center conversation

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Thank you,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State

All Native Group Contractor

(b)(6)



Sender: "Atwood, Kylie"(b)(6)@cnn.com>

GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;

Price, Edward C <(b)(6)@state.gov>;

Recipient: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>;

GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>;

(b)(6)@cnn.com>



From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Gordon, Michael (h)(6)@wsj.com>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up
Date: Wed, 17 Feb 2021 13:31:18 +0000

Hi Michael,

Glad that time works for you. Would you be able to provide your questions today by noon?

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 4:40 PM
To: Gordon, Michael (b)(6)@wsj.com>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Hey Michael,

Thanks for the text confirmation at 2:00 PM on Thursday works for you.

J.T.

From: Gordon, Michael (b)(6)@wsj.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 3:50 PM
To: Ice, John T (h)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

J.T.

I have a zoom call around that time. Could we do 11 AM or 1 PM or pretty much anytime Thursday.?

The questions all pertain to the material and links you guys sent me. Thanks

Michael
National Security Correspondent
The Wall Street Journal
(b)(6) (cell, WhatsApp, Signal)
(b)(6)@wsj.com (work email)
(b)(6)@protonmail.com (encrypted email)
Book site: michaelrgordon.com

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Sent: Friday, February 12, 2021 11:57 AM
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Hey Michael,

As discussed on the phone, we will look forward to hearing from you on Tuesday.

In the meantime, have a nice weekend.

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John T. Ice

Deputy Spokesperson

United States Department of State

Office: +1.202.647.9986 | Cell: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

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(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



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1. GEC's Special Report (**On the Record**)
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- **New Eastern Outlook:** [https://journal-neo\[.\]org/](https://journal-neo[.]org/)
- **Oriental Review:** [https://orientalreview\[.\]org/](https://orientalreview[.]org/)
- **Rebel Inside:** [https://reblins\[.\]com/](https://reblins[.]com/)

Example 1 [Provided with No Attribution]:

Overview: The following five articles demonstrate how Russian state entities used similar propaganda and disinformation narratives to undermine the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. These websites are all a part of Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem, and the articles here highlight how similar narratives are picked up across Russia's disinformation ecosystem and can be pushed to wider audiences globally.

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New Eastern Outlook: "What's Not Being Said About Pfizer Coronavirus Vaccine"

- **Posted 11/13/2020**
- <https://journal-neo.org/2020/11/13/what-s-not-being-said-about-pfizer-coronavirus-vaccine/>
- The article promotes the idea that the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is unsafe, describing the mRNA gene-editing as a "radical" technology that lacks "precision."
- The author implies that the vaccine is not trustworthy, noting that even Pfizer's CEO "doesn't share the confidence" in his vaccine because he sold 62% of his stock in the company the day Pfizer announced vaccine trials.
- The article accuses Pfizer-BioNTech, the WHO, Bill Gates and the "notorious" Dr. Fauci of rushing through the vaccine approval and therefore "clearly playing fast and loose with human lives." The article quotes Robert F. Kennedy Jr to accuse Dr. Fauci, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that he leads, of ignoring known issues with a dengue fever vaccine that had led to the death of 600 Filipino children.

Rossiya 1: "Weekly News with Dmitriy Kiselyov"

- **Posted on 11/29/20**
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQpoHdN5zQ&t=1032>
- After praising the Russian vaccine Sputnik V, Dmitriy Kiselyov, the host of the flagship weekly news analysis program on the state-owned television channel Rossiya 1, pointed out alleged huge flaws in the Pfizer vaccine, claiming it is too costly to store and that there is no infrastructure in the world to transport it.
- Kiselyov argued that Pfizer's history is full of scandals worthy of a crime drama, including illegal deadly experiments on children, falsification of research, false advertising, and fraud. Pfizer executives, Kiselyov said, sold their shares in the company, implying that they might know something that will bring the share price down when the vaccine is actually used. Considering Pfizer's reputation, one can expect anything, he concluded.

RT Arabic: "Britain bans the Pfizer vaccine for those with allergies"

- **Posted on 12/09/2020**
- <https://euvdisinfo.eu/report/6-people-died-because-of-the-pfizer-vaccine/>
- RT Arabic reported that 6 people who received the Pfizer vaccine died during the clinical trials. According to the EUvsDisinfo, this claim is partly false. "Six people did die during the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine trials, but only two of them were given the vaccine. The other four were given a safe placebo solution of salt and water. Furthermore, no causal relationship was established between the vaccine and the two deaths, which occurred in line with the normal death rate for the general population, as both of them were older than 55," EUvsDisinfo said.

Sputnik Georgia: "Mass vaccinations began in the EU, but will they save Europe from the pandemic?"

- **Posted on 12/29/20**
- <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/video/20201229/250479267/Massovaya-vaktsinatsiya-nachalas-v-ES-Spaset-li-eto-Evropu-ot-pandemii---video.html>
- Reporting on the start of mass vaccinations with the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in Europe, Sputnik Georgia says that is unclear whether it will be effective against the new strains, while claiming that such effectiveness of Sputnik V has been proven. The report asserts that Europe refuses to buy the Russian vaccine for political reasons.

Example 2 [Provided with No Attribution]:**Overview:**

New Eastern Outlook (NEO) describes itself disingenuously, claiming in its "About" section to be a "notable international networking platform offering unbiased expert opinions and open dialogue among all thinking people worldwide regardless of their nationality, race or religion."

Outlined below are the many places that an article from NEO's website appeared across the internet and the globe. The article was originally posted on January 10, 2021 and is titled "Growing Protests Over Threat of US Bio Weapons." The article includes a litany of long-refuted disinformation about alleged U.S. biological weapons. These examples highlight how Russia's disinformation spreads and can be picked up both on purpose, by other Russian proxy sites and channels, and unknowingly by other sites.

Link to original NEO article: <https://journal-neo.org/2021/01/10/growing-protests-over-threat-of-u-s-bio-weapons/>

The article quickly appeared in:

- **New Age, (Bangladesh)**, posted on January 12, 2021
 - <https://www.newagebd.net/article/126917/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons>.
 - Full article published
- **Piazza Della Carina (Italy)** posted January 10, 2021
 - <https://piazadcara.wordpress.com/2021/01/10/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons/>.
 - Lengthy excerpts posted on this site along with a link to full article on NEO.
- **The Free online, (Spain)** posted on January 10, 2021
 - <https://thefreeonline.wordpress.com/2021/01/10/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons-piazza-della-carina/>.
- **Qoshe, (location unknown)** posted on January 10, 2021
 - <https://qoshe.com/new-eastern-outlook/vladimir-platov/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons/96684538>.
 - Excerpts are posted along with a link to the original article.
- **Anarchist Federation (France)**, posted on January 10, 2021
 - <https://www.anarchistfederation.net/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons-piazza-della-carina/>.
 - Automatically posts "news from 377 anarchist collectives,"
 - Links to "The Free online" article.
- **Astute News, (location unknown)**, posted on January 13, 2021
 - <https://astutenews.com/2021/01/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons/>.
 - Full article published.
 - **This site appears to be part of the covert Russian disinformation ecosystem.**
 - Its single "partner blog" is "Oneworld Global Thinktank" (<https://astutenews.com/our-partners/>)
 - OneWorld described itself as a "new analytical and non-profit start-up" that doesn't have "any 'political correctness' or agenda," but merely seeks to "connect people from all across the world who share the same interest in international events."
 - But in July 2020, OneWorld was said by U.S. officials to have "ties to the G.R.U.," Russia's military intelligence agency.

- Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/28/us/politics/russia-disinformation-coronavirus.html>.
- **Message of Wisdom (Iran)**, posted on January 12, 2020
 - <https://messageofwisdom.blogspot.com/2021/01/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio.html>.
 - Full article republished.
- **oc20.com (Cuba)**, (no date identifiable)
 - https://oc20.com/en/cu/topics/World_Politics/kuts3z/growing-protests-threat-us-bio-weapons-the-united-states-1-495-biological-laboratories-25-countries-which-large-scale-outbreaks-infectious-diseases.
 - Full article published.
- **The Russophile (Sweden)**, (no date identifiable)
 - https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:yiDgA_U2PVIJ:https://therussophile.org/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons.html/+&cd=10&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us.
 - Full article published.

Thanks again for your time last week and I look forward to hearing back from you to set up a time to chat further.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Recipient: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>

From: "Gordon, Michael" <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
CC: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up
Date: Thu, 25 Feb 2021 09:28:59 -0500

I told J.T. the other day that I am aiming for the first part of next week. I will be back to you for final fact-checking, etc. Thanks

Michael Gordon
National Security Correspondent
The Wall Street Journal
(b)(6) (cell, WhatsApp, Signal)
(b)(6)@wsj.com (work email)
(b)(6)@protonmail.com (encrypted email)
Book site: michaeltgordon.com

On Thu, Feb 25, 2021 at 9:25 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Michael,

Wanted to confirm if there is anything else I can help with? Also wanted to gauge when you thought this could be published, thank you!

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 8:56 AM
To: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>

Cc: Ice, John T <(b)(7)(F)>@state.gov>

Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Hi Michael,

Thanks for your time last week. The attribution from the call on January 14th is confirmed. The remarks Acting Coordinator Kimmage gave were on Background, attributable to a GEC official, and the Q&A was on Deep Background. To follow up from our call last week please find our responses below.

Question: Why does Russia have a focus on Pfizer vs Moderna? Has it increased in recent months?

Off the Record: We are studying the situation, but have no further information we can provide at this time.

Off the Record: For a more general idea of how Russian disinformation works, these two reports from the NGO Community are useful.

Atlantic Council's DFR Lab: [Weaponized: How rumors about COVID-19's origins led to a narrative arms race](#)

Australian Strategic Policy Initiative: [Chinese and Russian influence campaigns risk undermining Covid-19 vaccination programs](#)

On Background Quotes, Attributable to a State Department Spokesperson

"Russian intelligence services bear direct responsibility for using these four platforms to spread propaganda and lies."

"From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, we have seen Russia's disinformation ecosystem develop and spread false narratives around the crisis."

On Background, Attributable to a State Department Spokesperson

- In the GEC's *Pillars of Russia's Disinformation and Propaganda Ecosystem* report released in 2020, we looked at so-called proxy sites, which play a key role in the dissemination of COVID-19 disinformation. The media multiplier effect described in the report has the potential to create disinformation storms on any given topic, but it also allows Russia to be opportunistic. On COVID-19 disinformation, Russia has used the global pandemic as a hook to push longstanding disinformation and propaganda narratives.
- With development and plans for the global distribution of COVID vaccines rolling out in late 2020, the GEC increased its monitoring of Russia's disinformation campaigns specific to vaccine development. In this area, the GEC looks at two separate but reinforcing approaches by Russia: first, Russia's propaganda promoting its own vaccines, and second, Russia's disinformation regarding U.S.- and Western-origin vaccine development programs.
- In general, Russian disinformation and propaganda related to COVID-19 vaccines seeks to position Russia as a world leader in the fight against the pandemic (especially in the eyes of its domestic audience) and to promote sales of the Russian vaccine Sputnik V. To

achieve these goals, Russia highlights Sputnik V while spreading false and distorted information about Western vaccines: exaggerating adverse effects, spreading conspiracy theories about the alleged malign intentions behind the vaccine production, portraying Western vaccination efforts as failing, underscoring the alleged tensions among the Western partners.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 8:47 AM
To: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
Cc: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Hi Michael,

Sorry for the delay. We will be in touch soon, thank you!

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
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U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 12:44 PM

To: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
Cc: Ice, John T <(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Hi Michael,

Please let me know no later than 2pm today.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: (b)(6)@state.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:46 AM
To: Gordon, Michael <(b)(6)@wsj.com>
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Sounds good, would you be able to provide the questions?

Very best,

(b)(6)

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x]

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Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 8:38 AM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

It's about the material you guys sent me

On Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 8:31 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Michael,

Glad that time works for you. Would you be able to provide your questions today by noon?

Very best,

(b)(6)

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- **Posted 11/13/2020**
- <https://journal-neo.org/2020/11/13/what-s-not-being-said-about-pfizer-coronavirus-vaccine/>
- The article promotes the idea that the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is unsafe, describing the mRNA gene-editing as a "radical" technology that lacks "precision."
- The author implies that the vaccine is not trustworthy, noting that even Pfizer's CEO "doesn't share the confidence" in his vaccine because he sold 62% of his stock in the company the day Pfizer announced vaccine trials.
- The article accuses Pfizer-BioNTech, the WHO, Bill Gates and the "notorious" Dr. Fauci of rushing through the vaccine approval and therefore "clearly playing fast and

loose with human lives.” The article quotes Robert F. Kennedy Jr to accuse Dr. Fauci, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases that he leads, of ignoring known issues with a dengue fever vaccine that had led to the death of 600 Filipino children.

Rossiya 1: “Weekly News with Dmitriy Kiselyov”

- **Posted on 11/29/20**
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQpoHdN5zQ&t=1032>
- After praising the Russian vaccine Sputnik V, Dmitriy Kiselyov, the host of the flagship weekly news analysis program on the state-owned television channel Rossiya 1, pointed out alleged huge flaws in the Pfizer vaccine, claiming it is too costly to store and that there is no infrastructure in the world to transport it.
- Kiselyov argued that Pfizer’s history is full of scandals worthy of a crime drama, including illegal deadly experiments on children, falsification of research, false advertising, and fraud. Pfizer executives, Kiselyov said, sold their shares in the company, implying that they might know something that will bring the share price down when the vaccine is actually used. Considering Pfizer's reputation, one can expect anything, he concluded.

RT Arabic: “Britain bans the Pfizer vaccine for those with allergies”

- **Posted on 12/09/2020**
- <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/6-people-died-because-of-the-pfizer-vaccine/>
- RT Arabic reported that 6 people who received the Pfizer vaccine died during the clinical trials. According to the EUvsDisinfo, this claim is partly false. “Six people did die during the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine trials, but only two of them were given the vaccine. The other four were given a safe placebo solution of salt and water. Furthermore, no causal relationship was established between the vaccine and the two deaths, which occurred in line with the normal death rate for the general population, as both of them were older than 55,” EUvsDisinfo said.

Sputnik Georgia: “Mass vaccinations began in the EU, but will they save Europe from the pandemic?”

- **Posted on 12/29/20**
- <https://sputnik-georgia.ru/video/20201229/250479267/Massovaya-vaktsinatsiya-nachalas-v-ES-Spaset-li-eto-Evropu-ot-pandemii---video.html>
- Reporting on the start of mass vaccinations with the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in Europe, Sputnik Georgia says that is unclear whether it will be effective against the new strains, while claiming that such effectiveness of Sputnik V has been proven. The report asserts that Europe refuses to buy the Russian vaccine for political reasons.

Example 2 [Provided with No Attribution]:**Overview:**

New Eastern Outlook (NEO) describes itself disingenuously, claiming in its "About" section to be a "notable international networking platform offering unbiased expert opinions and open dialogue among all thinking people worldwide regardless of their nationality, race or religion."

Outlined below are the many places that an article from NEO's website appeared across the internet and the globe. The article was originally posted on January 10, 2021 and is titled "Growing Protests Over Threat of US Bio Weapons." The article includes a litany of long-refuted disinformation about alleged U.S. biological weapons. These examples highlight how Russia's disinformation spreads and can be picked up both on purpose, by other Russian proxy sites and channels, and unknowingly by other sites.

Link to original NEO article: <https://journal-neo.org/2021/01/10/growing-protests-over-threat-of-u-s-bio-weapons/>

The article quickly appeared in:

- **New Age, (Bangladesh)**, posted on January 12, 2021
 - <https://www.newagebd.net/article/126917/growing-protests-over-threat-of-us-bio-weapons>.
 - Full article published
- **Piazza Della Carina (Italy)** posted January 10, 2021

--

Michael Gordon
National Security Correspondent
The Wall Street Journal
(b)(6) (cell, WhatsApp, Signal)
(b)(6)@wsj.com (work email)
(b)(6)@protonmail.com (encrypted email)
Book site: michaeltgordon.com

Sender: "Gordon, Michael" (b)(6)@wsj.com>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
Ice, John T (b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	(b)(6)@state.gov>
To:	Julian Barnes <(b)(6)>@nytimes.com>
CC:	GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; Michael Crowley <(b)(6)>@nytimes.com>; Lara Jakes <(b)(6)>@nytimes.com>
Subject:	Re: GEC Follow Up
Date:	Sun, 7 Mar 2021 23:08:37 +0000

Hi Julian,

Please see the following, attributable On Background to a State Department Spokesperson:

- The Global Engagement Center (GEC) does not have a report to release at this time.
- The Department of State can confirm that the GEC has identified four Russian platforms that are directed by Russian intelligence services and spread disinformation. These four platforms are: **News Front**, which is guided and tasked by the Federal Security Service; **New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review**, directed and controlled by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service; and **Rebel Inside**, controlled by the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. These sites all vary in their reach, tone, and audience – but they all are spreading Russian propaganda and disinformation. The State Department’s finding of a link between these sites and Russian Intelligence is a result of a joint interagency conclusion.
- Three of these outlets (News Front, New Eastern Outlook and Oriental Review) spread many types of disinformation, including about both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, as well as international organizations, military conflicts, protests, and any divisive issue that they can exploit. Rebel Inside has been largely dormant for the past year.
- The Department will continue to expose Russia’s nefarious activities online.
- We will also continue to work closely with our allies and partners to provide a global response to countering disinformation.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor

(b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 10:40 AM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>; Michael Crowley (h)(6)@nytimes.com>; Lara Jakes (h)(6)@nytimes.com>

Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

(b)(6)

I see the Journal story on the state report has (at last) been published
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/russian-disinformation-campaign-aims-to-undermine-confidence-in-pfizer-other-covid-19-vaccines-u-s-officials-say-11615129200>

Can you provide us a copy of the report?

Julian

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 6:13 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Thanks! Do you still plan to run the story tomorrow?

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



From: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 6:09 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Got this and forwarding to lead writer.

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 6:05 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

My apologies again for this delay! Busy times at the State Department today. Please let me know if there is still time to make it in the story.

The following comments are provided on background, attributable to a State Department Spokesperson.

- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic we've seen Russia's disinformation ecosystem develop false narratives around the virus and pandemic response, including vaccines.
- On vaccines specifically, Russia has pushed two common disinformation and propaganda narratives to the global community, primarily focused on promoting their own vaccines, and seeking to sow distrust in U.S.- and Western-origin vaccine development programs-
- Towards the end of 2020 as vaccines received regulatory approval, the State Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) analyzed COVID-19 vaccine-focused messaging from over 1,000 suspected Russian-aligned Twitter accounts.
- Consistent with past observations of Russian-aligned disinformation efforts on Twitter, Spanish-language accounts showed the greatest engagement during this period.
- These false narratives focus on disproportionately magnifying the risk of potential side effects associated with western vaccines. Additionally, some accounts promoted intentionally misleading narratives falsely alleging that mRNA vaccines are untested and thus risky.
- Scientists and manufacturers all over the world are innovating and doing remarkable things to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States continues to focus on the facts and follow the lead of scientists that are working on robust and transparent clinical trials, regulatory processes, and high-quality manufacturing. Russia's efforts to promote disinformation through social media, undermines the collective global effort to end the global pandemic.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



--
+(b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>;

Recipient: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>;

Michael Crowley (b)(6)@nytimes.com>;

Lara Jakes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up
Date: Thu, 4 Feb 2021 18:23:31 -0500

Pubbing tomorrow morning. Unclear what Time

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 6:13 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Thanks! Do you still plan to run the story tomorrow?

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 6:09 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC Follow Up

Got this and forwarding to lead writer.

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 6:05 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

My apologies again for this delay! Busy times at the State Department today. Please let me know if there is still time to make it in the story.

The following comments are provided on background, attributable to a State Department Spokesperson.

- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic we've seen Russia's disinformation ecosystem develop false narratives around the virus and pandemic response, including vaccines.
- On vaccines specifically, Russia has pushed two common disinformation and propaganda narratives to the global community, primarily focused on promoting their own vaccines, and seeking to sow distrust in U.S.- and Western-origin vaccine development programs.
- Towards the end of 2020 as vaccines received regulatory approval, the State Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) analyzed COVID-19 vaccine-focused messaging from over 1,000 suspected Russian-aligned Twitter accounts.
- Consistent with past observations of Russian-aligned disinformation efforts on Twitter, Spanish-language accounts showed the greatest engagement during this period.
- These false narratives focus on disproportionately magnifying the risk of potential side effects associated with western vaccines. Additionally, some accounts promoted intentionally misleading narratives falsely alleging that mRNA vaccines are untested and thus risky.
- Scientists and manufacturers all over the world are innovating and doing remarkable things to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States continues to focus on the facts and follow the lead of scientists that are working on robust and transparent clinical trials, regulatory processes, and high-quality manufacturing. Russia's efforts to promote disinformation through social media, undermines the collective global effort to end the global pandemic.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)



--
(b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp
--

(b)(6) mobile/signal/WhatsApp

Sender: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
To:	Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Subject:	Re: GEC - Who to contact?
Date:	Thu, 23 Jun 2022 20:31:21 +0000

Thanks, Amanda. Let me chat internally with colleagues and get back to you on the format plus some options for next week to speak with our Russia Director. I hope to get back to you by EOD tomorrow.

All the best,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 3:16 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Great. I think it would be wonderful if we could have an off the record conversation, to be candid, and perhaps have a portion of the conversation on the record or on background. Let me know what you think.

On Jun 23, 2022, at 1:56 PM, GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:

[EXTERNAL]

That is doable! I will coordinate with my colleagues and share some options with you to decide.

Would this conversation be on deep background, OTR, do you need quotes, etc? Want to also square away logistics internally as well.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 1:32 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6) -

So great to hear from you. I'd love to set up a time next week, if possible?

Thank you,

Amanda

Amanda Seitz
Newsperson
The Associated Press

(b)(6)@ap.org
(b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 1:00 PM
To: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Thanks (b)(6) Moving you to bcc.

Hi Amanda -- happy to assist you with this. Let me connect with my team and see if we can schedule a chat in the coming days. Kindly let me know what your timeline is in the meantime.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 12:46 PM
To: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi Amanda,

Adding GEC Press to help you with this inquiry

From: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 12:17 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6) –

I am working on a story looking at how Russian propaganda and disinformation around the Ukraine war is thriving in eastern European countries like Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovakia, etc. I was hoping to touch base with someone at the GEC to talk a little bit about the efforts there to combat this, and which countries GEC might be most concerned about. Would love to chat with someone on this, and I also haven't really had the chance to introduce myself to the folks now leading the GEC since the administration change. Do you know who I could connect with on this?

Thanks,

Amanda Seitz

Newsperson

The Associated Press

(b)(6)@ap.org

(b)(6)

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The information contained in this communication is intended for the use of the designated recipients named above. If the reader of this communication is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error, and that any review, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify The Associated Press immediately by telephone at +1-212-621-1500 and delete this email. Thank you.

Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Recipient: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
CC: (h)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?
Date: Wed, 3 Aug 2022 15:12:42 +0000

Hi Amanda,

Apologies for not getting back to you sooner. We have amended the quote slightly:

"Russian propaganda and disinformation sources will try to connect Ukrainian refugees to negative indicators about quality of life in Europe."

Also, we would like the quote attributed to "an official at the State Department's Global Engagement Center."

Thank you,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(h)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:38 AM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6)

Sorry for the delay. Thank you very much for checking on the quote and attribution.

I think we are hoping to publish the third week in August, to coincide with an additional embargo report we will be writing about that is intended for publication on Aug. 22.

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 1, 2022 9:29 AM
To: Seitz, Amanda <(h)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (h)(6)@state.gov>; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Hi Amanda,

We are confirming the quote and attribution for your article. Can you confirm if the article will run in August?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor



From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Sent: Friday, July 29, 2022 11:39 AM

To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi Amanda,

Many thanks for your email and follow-up. The topic you've landed on sounds very interesting!

Happy to run your questions by a few folks internally. I will likely have answers by Monday if that is OK? Would you be able to share a deadline/timeline for when the story might run?

Thanks and either myself or (b)(6) will revert back with guidance.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Sent: Friday, July 29, 2022 10:50 AM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6)

I hope you are doing well. I wanted to give you an update on our story. We are now hoping to run something around Russian propaganda in regards to the Ukraine war in August, and I was hoping to include some of John's comments around the possibilities he raised that Russia is likely to exploit divisiveness over refugees in Europe. I plan on summarizing his comments that Russian propaganda is likely to play up narratives that refugees cause crime, take away jobs, etc. As for an actual quote, am hoping to use this:

"They'll try to connect them to negative indicators about quality of life in Europe," he said.

As far as a title, how should I handle this as I believe John has already moved into a new position since we spoke?

Also, please let me know if we should touch base before this story runs if there are any relevant updates to be had on this topic.

Thank you very much,

Amanda

Amanda Seitz

Newsperson

The Associated Press

1100 13th Street NW

Washington, DC

(b)(6)@ap.org

(b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2022 11:09 AM

To: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov; GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Hi Amanda,

We have attached the original Russian Health Ministry disinformation pamphlet that John mentioned during the interview.

This is GEC's short report on Russian disinformation on food security, which includes a section listing examples of the Russian disinformation ecosystem amplifying false narratives: <https://www.state.gov/disarming-disinformation/russias-disinformation-cannot-hide-its-responsibility-for-the-global-food-crisis/>



Russia's Disinformation
Cannot Hide its
Responsibility for the Global
Food Crisis - United States
Department of State

This bulletin is also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Urdu. "As with its decision to start this unjustified war, responsibility for the disruption of these supplies and the suffering that it's causing around the world lies squarely and solely with the Russian Government." Secretary of State Antony Blinken May 18, 2022 Lying to ...

www.state.gov

Also, here is a State Department product from the Bureau of Global Public Affairs that rebuts Russian false narratives: <https://stories.state.gov/this-is-a-warning/>

Thank you,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 3:41 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Thank you very much, (b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 3:05 PM
To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Hi Amanda,

This is the GEC's PAO (b)(6) responding, thanks for reaching out to us. I heard that the discussion with John went well and I'm happy that we were able to help.

We will look for the information you are requesting and be back in touch.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 2:42 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6)

I wanted to thank you again very much for scheduling the interview yesterday with (b)(6). I would love if we could schedule a check-in once the new director comes in as well.

I wanted to touch base on the pamphlet John mentioned was circling around during the World Health Assembly that highlighted humanitarian assistance from Russia. Would you be able to send that over, by chance?

Also, I know that (b)(6) mentioned some of the propaganda around food shortages, and I wondered if the GEC might be willing to share an example of what they have seen?

I will send a few quotes for approval later this week.

Thank you very much,

Amanda Seitz
Newsperson
The Associated Press

(b)(6)@ap.org

(b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 4:34 PM

To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Great - thanks Amanda! We look forward to tomorrow.

If you have any issues dialing in, please feel free to call me on my cell 202 368 2083 to troubleshoot anything.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 4:09 PM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6)

Thank you again, yes, I can share some of the broader points I'd like to touch base on:

_Countries and narratives that the GEC is seeing Russian propaganda thrive?

_Which countries are a priority for the GEC to counter that narrative?

_What are the most effective ways the GEC has countered that narrative?

_Has GEC engaged at all with US-owned tech companies to talk about some of the mis-and dis-information around the war?

_Which countries' leaders has the GEC engaged in conversations with around the prevalence of Russian propaganda?

_ Which Russian propaganda narratives are the most effective?

_Can you speak to how different the perception of outlets like RT and Sputnik is in some of these other countries?

I hope this is helpful for you to have a general sense, and I look forward to chatting tomorrow.

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 11:20 AM
To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Of course -- below my text you will find the dial-in details (you can disregard the Teams link; I'll join via there to open up the line).

Last question for you - in terms of any quotes you might want to use, would you be able to (broadly) share the types of questions you'd like to cover? John would like to ensure he can address specific questions and make sure you leave the conversation with the information you are seeking.

Many thanks,

(b)(6)

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

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Or call in (audio only)

(b)(6) United States, Spokane

Phone Conference ID: (b)(6)

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

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From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 9:35 AM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Oh yes, if you could provide dial-in details that would be great. Thank you!

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, June 26, 2022 9:01 AM
To: Seitz, Amanda <[\(b\)\(6\)@ap.org](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Thanks, Amanda. Just circling back on my question below - would you be able to share dial-in details that you'd like us to use? Or would you like us to provide them?

From: Seitz, Amanda <[\(b\)\(6\)@ap.org](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)>
Sent: Friday, June 24, 2022 4:22 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

That sounds great, thank you [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 9:22 PM
To: Seitz, Amanda <[\(b\)\(6\)@ap.org](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

12:30 should work! I'll likely join John Spykerman, our GEC Russia Director, on this call. We can aim for 30-45 minutes if that works on your end?

I think a phone call would likely be best as John and I are in different locations at the moment. Would you be able to provide dial-in details or would you like us to?

Many thanks and looking forward to next Tuesday,
[\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)

From: Seitz, Amanda <[\(b\)\(6\)@ap.org](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)>
Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 9:03 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, [\(b\)\(6\)](mailto:(b)(6)@ap.org)

That sounds great. Would 12:30 work? I am happy to chat by phone or in person, just let me know.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 23, 2022, at 8:00 PM, GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:

[EXTERNAL]

Hi Amanda -

Following up with the following:

Could we aim to have you speak with our GEC Russia Director any time on Tuesday June 28th between 12-3PM?

Additionally, we would like to have the conversation on background and we can work with you on reviewing/approving a couple of OTR quotes.

Please let me know what you think,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 3:16 PM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Great. I think it would be wonderful if we could have an off the record conversation, to be candid, and perhaps have a portion of the conversation on the record or on background. Let me know what you think.

On Jun 23, 2022, at 1:56 PM, GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov> wrote:

[EXTERNAL]

That is doable! I will coordinate with my colleagues and share some options with you to decide.

Would this conversation be on deep background, OTR, do you need quotes, etc? Want to also square away logistics internally as well.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 1:32 PM

To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: RE: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, (b)(6)

So great to hear from you. I'd love to set up a time next week, if possible?

Thank you,

Amanda

Amanda Seitz

Newsperson

The Associated Press

(b)(6)@ap.org

(b)(6)

From: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 1:00 PM

To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

[EXTERNAL]

Thanks (b)(6) Moving you to bcc.

Hi Amanda -- happy to assist you with this. Let me connect with my team and see if we can schedule a chat in the coming days. Kindly let me know what your timeline is in the meantime.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)@state.gov

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 12:46 PM

To: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Subject: Re: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi Amanda,

Adding GEC Press to help you with this inquiry

From: Seitz, Amanda <(b)(6)@ap.org>

Sent: Thursday, June 23, 2022 12:17 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov

Subject: GEC - Who to contact?

Hi, Megan –

I am working on a story looking at how Russian propaganda and disinformation around the Ukraine war is thriving in eastern European countries like Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, Slovakia, etc. I was hoping to touch base with someone at the GEC to talk a little bit about the efforts there to combat this, and which countries GEC might be most concerned about. Would love to chat with someone on this, and I also

haven't really had the chance to introduce myself to the folks now leading the GEC since the administration change. Do you know who I could connect with on this?

Thanks,

Amanda Seitz

Newsperson

The Associated Press

(b)(6)@ap.org

(b)(6)

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Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Recipient: Seitz, Amanda (b)(6) @ap.org;
(b)(6) @state.gov;
GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

From: "Boitel, Emily" <(b)(6)@novetta.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Fw: Beijing Social Media Snapshot, 11/10-11/2020
Date: Thu, 12 Nov 2020 09:50:03 -0500

It's possible I received an invitation on my State email--as yet, not on this distro. But receiving them has been very useful.

On Thu, Nov 12, 2020 at 9:47 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Are you on this distro?

(b)(6)

Director, Technology Engagements
Global Engagement Center

(b)(6) (b)(6)@state.gov VISIT US @ [TET Home Page](#)
(Mobile)

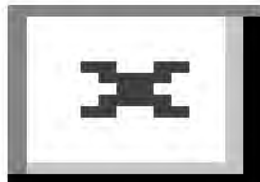


From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 12:29 AM
To: Beijing Press Office <BeijingPressOffice@state.gov>
Subject: Beijing Social Media Snapshot, 11/10-11/2020

Top Performing Post on the Embassy's Flagship Weibo Page Last 24 hours:

Steps to becoming an ambassador [infographic] (Share America) (Sina: 290,000 views; 104 reposts; 409 comments; 3,427 thumbs up - most on negative or sarcastic *comments*).

Most comments are negative or sarcastic.



- 化小硕: 首先会搞间谍, 然后会抹黑它国, 再然后就补充 (868 thumbs up)
To become an ambassador, first he can do spy work, then he can be cheeky to other countries, and then he can be cheeky. . . welcome to add more.
- 阿尔法斯基07: 只要给竞选人提供政治献金就好了, 然后就可以实现你的梦想了 (up)
All you need to do is to provide political contributions to the candidates. . . you will realize your dream.

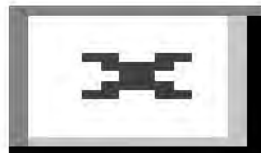
- 孝川我的儿：平均33位美国人就有一名新冠肺炎患者
夫

On average, there is one COVID-19 case in every 33 American
sick man of North America.

- 海闻3720：裁撤一名美国驻外大使的一个步骤：特朗普
One step in removing a U.S. ambassador to a foreign country
Twitter!



Honoring U.S. military veterans each November (Share America) (Sina: 282,000 views; 86
reposts; 709 comments; 3,121 thumbs up - most on negative or neutral *comments*).



**Most comments are negative or neutral, a few comments are
D.C. in mid-1932; some comments criticized the U.S. response**

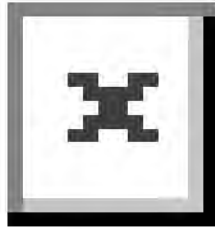
- 甘李梁同志：华盛顿惨案 (418 thumbs up)
Washington tragedy. (Referring to the Bonus Army Conflict)
- 努力当个教员万分之一的教员：替我向朝鲜战争幸存
士呢 (322 thumbs up)
Say hello to the American veterans who survived the Korean
them on the battleground.
- 从理学无止境：这些美国退伍军人没死于战争，却
These American veterans did not die in wars, but died of the
- 忘了忘不了2060：二战美国阵亡军人二十万左右，
发狂。神奇的国度
There are about 200,000 American soldiers who died in World
Americans commemorate the dead soldiers, but nobody cares
country.



What else is going on?

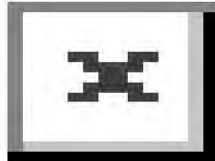
Top trending Weibo content of the day:

Fourth anniversary of the sacrifice of Yu Xu, the first female fighter pilot in China (Sina: 2,722 reposts, 2,402 comments, 44,857 thumbs up)



Top Trending WeChat post in China related to the United States in the last 24 hours:

Texas becomes the first state with 1 million COVID-19 cases (Posted by today-america 美南网, source: www.newrank.cn)



The Beijing Social Media Snapshot provides a quick look at netizen reaction to content on Chinese social media platforms Weibo and WeChat, including the Embassy's [Sina](#) micro-blog postings for the 24-hour period. The post rankings are based on engagement percentages from the previous six months' posts. To request addition or removal of a recipient please email beijingpressoffice@state.gov. You must have a .gov email address to receive this product. Suggestions welcome.

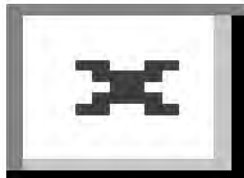
Follow the U.S. Embassy Beijing:



Embassy Beijing posted eight posts on Nov. 10 - 11, 2020. You may view the entire day's posts and engagement statistics here [\[link to SharePoint\]](#).

[#3 top content for the day] – How the process of the Electoral College works (USG) (Sina: 325,000 views; 146 reposts; 425 comments; 2,988 thumbs up - most on negative *comments*).

Most comments are negative. Some netizens discussed the procedure of the presidential election.



- 阿尔法斯基07: 一个民主国家为什么容不下川宝宝, 只是要求连任而已 (472 thumbs up)
Why can't a democratic country tolerate Trump? He just asks re-election.

- 懒算输赢：为何不是一人一票真普选呢？ (211 thumbs up)
Why is it not truly universal suffrage?
- 阿尔法斯基07：懂王说你们作弊 (163 thumbs up)
Trump said you cheated.
- 东邪奔西走：美国选举人团制度，是伪民主、假普选
The U.S. electoral college system is a pseudo-democracy and fake universal suffrage.

[RESPONSES/CONVERSATIONS]

U.S. Embassy Beijing posted six responses on Sina Weibo/Wechat, including two “public” responses.

The following response continued significant conversations from the PREVIOUS DAY’s posts:

Response to #U.S. Embassy Interaction Time# Recounting the ballots (Sina:2,580,000 views; 627 reposts; 1,423 comments; 12,300 thumbs up).

Comment: 誉哥微录：问一下，根据美国的体制，总统选举投票过程有可能作弊吗？

I would like to ask, according to the U.S. system, is it possible to cheat in the presidential election voting process?

Response to #U.S. Embassy Interaction Time# Freedom of the Press (Sina:346,000 views; 197 reposts; 845 comments; 4,574 thumbs up).

Comment: xsun345：那谁监督媒体？

Who will supervise the media?

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Section

American Embassy - Beijing

E-Mail: (b)(6)@state.gov

Visit Our Web Site: <https://china.usembassy-china.org.cn/>

Follow us:



--

Emily Boitel

Operations Planner



Email: (b)(6)@novetta.com

Mobile: (b)(6)

Sender: "Boitel, Emily" (b)(6)@novetta.com>

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
To:	Steven Lee Myers <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
CC:	GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>
Subject:	Re: Foreign misinformation about elections
Date:	Fri, 7 Oct 2022 19:55:25 +0000

Good afternoon Steven,

Thanks for reaching out to us.

Could you please share some more detail on the topic(s) you would like to discuss? Also, what kind of a deadline are you looking at?

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
All Native Group Contractor



From: Steven Lee Myers <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Friday, October 7, 2022 2:43 PM
To: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject: Foreign misinformation about elections

Hello,

Following up on our last conversation, I was hoping to speak about foreign influence operations following the recent takedown by Facebook and this AP story.

<https://hosted.ap.org/thetimes-tribune/article/ea913f2b3b818651a9db1327adaa330a/us-warns-about-foreign-efforts-sway-american-voters>.

Would it be possible to set something up?

Many thanks

Steven Lee Myers

The New York Times

Twitter: @stevenleemyers

Facebook: StevenLeeMyersNYT

What'sApp and Signal, +(b)(6)

Sender: GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

Recipient: Steven Lee Myers (b)(6) @nytimes.com>;
GEC-Press <GEC-Press@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: Steven Lee Myers (b)(6)nytimes.com>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Foreign disinformation operations
Date: Fri, 16 Dec 2022 22:16:09 +0000

Excellent, will do. Let's stay in touch, and we'll arrange that chat with Jamie after the holidays. Feel free to reach out any time.

(b)(6)

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From: Steven Lee Myers (b)(6)@nytimes.com>

Sent: Friday, December 16, 2022 4:51:24 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Foreign disinformation operations

(b)(6)

I saw the announcement, thank you. And please give my regards to Jamie. I was covering the State Department when he was Madeleine Albright's spokesman, which dates us both!

Sorry to not have had a chance to meet when I was in DC but I look forward to being in touch on global disinformation trends and threats. Please let me know when he might be free to meet, in person or virtually.

Best

Steve

The New York Times

Twitter: @stevenleemyers

Facebook: StevenLeeMyersNYT

What'sApp and Signal, (b)(6)

On Fri, Dec 16, 2022 at 12:17 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Steven

I'm really sorry I was unable to connect when you were in town. Please keep your eye out for Secretary Blinken's announcement today – our new Special Envoy and Coordinator is Jamie Rubin. You can flag for your editors. He said he'd like to grab lunch with you when you are in town next.

Best,

(b)(6)

Senior Advisor

Global Engagement Center

Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Steven Lee Myers (b)(6)@nytimes.com>;

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	Viktoras Daukšas Debunk EU (b)(6)@debunkeu.org>
To:	(h)(6)@state.gov>
Subject:	Re: Debunk EU: Disinformation tsunami against the Baltic states during Belarus protests
Date:	Thu, 1 Oct 2020 18:01:41 +0300

Great, thanks!

On Thu, Oct 1, 2020 at 5:42 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Dear Viktoras:

Excellent report. Many thanks for sending. I have forwarded to colleagues in GEC.

Hope all is well.

Best,

(b)(6)

From: Viktoras Daukšas | Debunk EU (b)(6)@debunkeu.org>

Sent: Thursday, October 1, 2020 3:36 AM

Subject: Debunk EU: Disinformation tsunami against the Baltic states during Belarus protests

Hi,

Here is the new report from Debunk EU: Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia disinformation analysis for August 2020.

During the month of August, we have managed to analyse 6500 content pieces throughout all three countries.

The events in Belarus, where people are protesting after the implicit falsification of the results of presidential election, were topical in the media agenda-setting in August. Therefore, it is not surprising that the pro-Kremlin propaganda actively used this topic too. In its own narratives about Belarus, it reserved special places for the Baltic states (especially for Lithuania). The Baltic states, together with other regional countries, were presented as the provokers of the protests.

Read full article:

<https://medium.com/@DebunkEU/debunk-eu-election-fraud-in-belarus-brought-a-surge-of-pro-kremlin-propaganda-e41a350ed7f9>

The report is attached as PDF.

About Debunk EU

Debunk EU, Vsl, is an independent technology think tank and non-governmental organisation that researches disinformation and runs educational media literacy

campaigns. Debunk EU conducts disinformation analysis in the Baltic states, as well as in the United States and Northern Macedonia together with the partners. Debunk EU was noticed by such media giants as "The Financial Times" and "Deutsche Welle". The organisation has presented its activities in 17 countries, including the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Serbia, etc.

Published reports:

<https://medium.com/@DebunkEU>

Social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/DebunkEU>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/debunk-eu/>

<https://twitter.com/DebunkEu>

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Viktoras Daukšas

Head of Debunk EU

Mob. tel. +[(b)(6)]

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/viktorasdauksas>

Sender: Viktoras Daukšas | Debunk EU [(b)(6)]@debunkeu.org>

Recipient: [(b)(6)]@state.gov>

From: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Connecting - Poynter/IFCN and U.S. Embassy Tunis
Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2022 16:54:04 -0400

Excellent! Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best,
alanna

On Tue, Apr 19, 2022 at 4:50 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Apologies for the delay Alanna. I'm trying to coordinate a call on Friday morning. If you are available, I will circle back with the proposed time. Thanks.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 9:41:23 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Connecting - Poynter/IFCN and U.S. Embassy Tunis

Hi all,

Just following up on this to see if we can get a call scheduled.

Best,
Alanna

On Sat, Apr 9, 2022 at 3:48 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Alanna
Thanks for getting back to us so quickly. (b)(6) who leads our press efforts will work with you on a time next week for a call.

Best regards,

(b)(6)

Counselor for Public Affairs
US Embassy Tunis

(b)(6)@state.gov

From: Alanna Dvorak <(b)(6)@poynter.org>

Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 7:33 PM

To: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Cc: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>;

(b)(6)@state.gov>

Subject: Re: Connecting - Poynter/IFCN and U.S. Embassy Tunis

Thanks for the connection, (b)(6)

Yes, we do think supplemental mentorship could help both those organizations. What has been helpful is both Fatabyyano's desire to help them cross the finish line and the fact that both organizations are highly motivated and really want to be both effective fact-check units and signatories.

I'd love to hop on a call next week to discuss potential next steps, if that's something you all are amenable to?

Best,
Alanna

On Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 7:36 AM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:

Baybars and Alanna,

I oversaw the *Empowering Fact-Checking in the Global South* sub-award from the State Department's Global Engagement Center, working through IWPR. I re-read your final report and the Tunisia portions had some fantastic findings.

I'm connecting you directly with (b)(6) the Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, to explore what additional mentorship through Poynter/IFCN might look like in Tunisia. Also cc'd is (b)(6) from the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy. The report had recommended that the two organizations in Tunisia – Les Grandes Ecoles de la Communication and Business News/BN Check – would benefit from additional mentorship to absorb the fact-checking skills.

(b)(6) – Baybars Örsek is the director of international programming at the Poynter Institute and director of the International Fact-Checking Network. Alanna Dvorak is Poynter's International Training Manager.

Please feel free to keep me cc'd but I'm glad to be connecting you all.

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Foreign Affairs Officer

Global Engagement Center

U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)@state.gov

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Alanna Dvorak
International Training Manager/IFCN
The Poynter Institute
ph: (b)(6)
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Alanna Dvorak

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(b)(6)@poynter.org

www.poynter.org

Sender: Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>

From: Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re: Automatic Response Chat Applications
Date: Thu, 3 Jun 2021 09:59:20 -0400

Hi (b)(6)

Thanks a lot for reaching gout.

I'm more than happy to help and in fact, you can feel free to use this [link](#) here to set up a call that would work for you and your colleagues.

All the best-

Baybars

On Wed, Jun 2, 2021 at 2:09 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Dear Baybars, Cristina,

Hoping this finds you well. My name is (b)(6) and I work with the Global Engagement Center at the Department of State. Baybars, I believe we have been on a few calls with my colleague (b)(6) who has since headed over to the NSC. Cristina, I believe we have not yet met, but it is a pleasure to e-meet you -- I believe you may have worked with some of our posts in Brazil back in March/April.

If I may, earlier today I was on a call with some colleagues from our Western Hemisphere Affairs bureau (WHA) and they indicated they were interested in connecting with folks that have expertise in creating automatic-response chat functionalities. They are considering creating a similar automatic-response functionality and are looking for advice/expertise.

As I recall, Poynter IFCN worked to help Whatsapp create a similar functionality -- please feel free to correct me if I have this wrong. If I do have this right though, would either of you be interested in being connected with them, or may I connect their team with someone on your staff who may be able to assist and share insights on this?

Please let me know if I can clarify anything on the above -- much thanks.

V/r,

(b)(6)

Program Analyst

GEC | DOS | Alutiiq Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)

(b)(6)@state.gov

--

Baybars Örsek

Director | International Fact-Checking Network
@baybarsorsek / @factchecknet

Sender: Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

From:	(b)(6)@state.gov>
To:	Bajak, Frank (b)(6)k@ap.org>
CC:	(b)(6)@state.gov>; GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>
Subject:	Re: AP calling - Russian vaccine disinfo campaign/
Date:	Fri, 28 May 2021 15:50:46 +0000

Hi Frank,

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you.

Unfortunately, we don't have any analysis to share specific to the recent French allegations of Russian disinformation about the Pfizer vaccine.

However, I did pull together an on-background response (below) regarding Russian disinformation about western vaccines, more generally, as well as U.S. efforts to combat COVID.

Further below, and off-the-record, I've also included a list of examples of Russian disinformation that we thought might be helpful.

Thanks. (b)(6)

Response on background, attributable to "a State Department spokesperson":

- Since the early days of this pandemic, we have observed Russian disinformation about COVID, including falsehoods and misleading information about Western vaccines' safety and efficacy. Russia's tactics include distorting and excluding context about the side effects of Western-origin vaccines, spreading conspiracy theories about alleged malign intentions behind vaccine production, and portraying Western vaccination efforts as failing.
- These tactics undermine the integrity of the scientific process, threaten public confidence in vaccines which have been transparently reviewed for safety and efficacy, and do not serve the public interest. Despite efforts to undermine confidence in vaccines produced in the United States, there is clear, consistent demand for them globally.
- On May 17, the President announced that we are giving away 80 million doses of vaccine by the end of June. The vaccine doses the United States is providing to the world don't come with strings attached. We're leading the world in global vaccination efforts because it's the right thing to do: the right thing morally, the right thing from a global public health perspective, and the right thing for our collective security and well-

being. We will work with COVAX and other partners to ensure these safe and effective vaccines are delivered in a way that is equitable and follows the science and public health data. The United States will not use its vaccines to secure favors from other countries.

Examples of Russian disinformation and overpromising (provided off-the-record)

Disinformation Narratives from Russian Outlets:

- Russia has not only highlighted adverse vaccine side effects and falsely claimed that mRNA vaccines are dangerous, but also disparaged the COVAX initiative:
 - Sputnik: "As Pfizer Side Effects Emerge, Why Is the West Still Overlooking Russian Anti-Covid Vaccines?"
 - RT: "WHO vaccination scheme at 'very high' risk of failure, leaving poor nations without Covid-19 shots until 2024 – report,"
 - Pfizer used fake or improperly conducted trials:
 - VGTRK (Rossiya 24) >><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQpoHdN5zQ><<
 - Pfizer and other Western pharmaceutical companies and their executives are driven solely by money and power
 - RT: Pfizer CEO sells \$5.6mn of stock on record surge the day he praised Covid-19 vaccine's 90% effectiveness, denies insider trading
 - Domestic and international Russian media targeted the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine as a failure:
 - RT: 'Average' effectiveness & unexplained side effects: 7 QUESTIONS that AstraZeneca needs to answer about its Covid-19 vaccine
 - Claimed the vaccine could be not be successful without Russia's Sputnik V vaccine:
 - Rossiya 24: >>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2C6El9vMr_E&t=74s<<

Disinformation Narratives from Russian intelligence-linked proxy sites:

- Western vaccines are pushed for the benefit of "Big Pharma," social media companies, and Bill Gates:
 - NEO: "The Vaccine Race: Yet Another US Weapon for World Domination"
 - Oriental Review: "Hoarding The Jobs: The Inequalities Of Vaccine Distribution"

Useful Background:

- The Times: Russians spread fake news over Oxford coronavirus vaccine

- Politico: In race for coronavirus vaccine, Russia turns to disinformation
- Alliance For Securing Democracy: Securing Democracy Dispatch
- DFRLab: How pro-Kremlin outlets and blogs undermine trust in foreign-made COVID vaccines
- EU vs Disinformation: Telling Half Truths Is Also Lying
- New York Times: Russian Campaign Promotes Homegrown Vaccine and Undercuts Rivals
- German Marshall Fund: Influence-enza: How Russia, China, and Iran Have Shaped and Manipulated Coronavirus Vaccine Narratives

From: Bajak, Frank <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 5:06 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: AP calling - Russian vaccine disinfo campaign/

(b)(6)

Using passive DNS, we've determined that Fazze.com and Adnow.com share some internet infrastructure.

And both have listed the same London address as their headquarters. Most of Adnow's employees are in Russia, according to LinkedIn. But who owns the company?

Best,
-fb

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 10:12 AM
To: Bajak, Frank <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Subject: Re: AP calling - Russian vaccine disinfo campaign/

[EXTERNAL]
Hi Frank,

Thanks for your note.

I've reached out to our Russia Team. I'll see what I can dig up for you.

(b)(6)

From: Bajak, Frank <(b)(6)@ap.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 5:51 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: AP calling - Russian vaccine disinfo campaign/

Hi (b)(6)

I wonder if the GEC can discuss with us the apparent Russian connections here:

<https://apnews.com/article/europe-social-media-coronavirus-pandemic-business-coronavirus-vaccine-c4ce42244be08d7d73a412dd42e36360>

We did not include them in our reporting yet _ we're still working on it. But we're seeing apparent Russian hosting of fazze.com (which is now offline) and interesting LinkedIn connections between adnow.com and fazze employees. Is this an SVR front, one wonders?

Seems like there may be considerably more to Russia's effort to try to discredit Pfizer and other Western vaccines than what this WSJ piece referenced <https://www.wsj.com/articles/russian-disinformation-campaign-aims-to-undermine-confidence-in-pfizer-other-covid-19-vaccines-u-s-officials-say-11615129200>

Many thanks,
-fb

Frank Bajak, Cybersecurity/Investigations

Twitter: @fbajak – secure email: (b)(6)@protonmail.ch – Boston, U.S.A.

Cel: (b)(6) (Signal) Landline: (b)(6)

PGP/encrypted chat: <http://keybase.io/fbajak> Fingerprint: (b)(6)

Wickr, WhatsApp – XMPP: sfbjr@jabber.ccc.de



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Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Bajak, Frank <(b)(6)@ap.org>;

Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
GEC Press <GECPress@state.gov>

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Re:
Date: Thu, 4 Feb 2021 17:08:09 -0500

call me

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 5:03 PM (b)(6)@state.gov> wrote:
Hi Julian,

We are still planning to send a response today. Let me know if there is any more time.

Very best,

(b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
Accenture Federal Services Contractor
Cell: (b)(6)

x]

From: Julian Barnes <(b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 4, 2021 4:29 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject:

(b)(6)

give me a quick call to update me on where you stand. (need to speak to you before 5)
Julian

Julian E. Barnes
Intelligence, National Security reporter
The New York Times
(b)(6) Mobile/WhatsApp/Signal

Sender: Julian Barnes (b)(6)@nytimes.com>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

Empowering Collective Action Against Disinformation

Proposal Narrative, 29 August 2022

Funding Opportunity Title: Disinformation Response Network

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0009141

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

b)(4)

Withheld pursuant to exemption

b)(4)

From: Vonda Wolcott <(b)(6)@iwpr.net>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
To: Alanna Dvorak <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
Baybars Orsek <(b)(6)@poynter.org>;
Ferdie Ozsoy <(b)(6)@poynter.org>
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Poynter IFCN and GEC Pacific Islands connector re follow on work
Date: Fri, 7 Jan 2022 14:34:23 -0500

Good morning/afternoon all:

Per (b)(6) request, I wanted to link up the GEC and Poynter folks interested in talking about follow-on work in the Pacific Islands.

As everyone may recall, (b)(6) is now GEC's officer in the Pacific Islands region based in Hawaii. Baybars is the Director of Poynter's IFCN program and Alanna and Ferdi are the other key IFCN personnel working on the GEC project.

As I mentioned on our recent GEC call, Poynter had said RMIT (its regional partner in the Pacific Islands) is also interested in continuing the work in there.

And a timely note: Some of the people quoted in that Guardian piece I sent today were beneficiaries in Poynter's program, including Scott Waide, Dan McGarry and Leilani Reklai.

I leave it to you all from here. I wish you all productive discussions.

Thanks!

--

Vonda Wolcott
Sr. Program Manager
Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
1156 15th Street, NW
Suite 329
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: (b)(6)

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Sender:	Vonda Wolcott (b)(6)@iwpr.net>
Recipient:	(b)(6)@state.gov>; Alanna Dvorak (b)(6)@poynter.org>; Baybars Orsek (b)(6)@poynter.org>; Ferdi Ozsoy (b)(6)@poynter.org>; (b)(6)@state.gov>

From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: OAN
Date: Wed, 25 Nov 2020 00:52:23 +0000

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/technology/youtube-under-pressure-over-election-falsehoods-suspends-oan-for-covid-19-misinformation.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage>



YouTube, under pressure over election falsehoods, suspends OAN for Covid-19 misinformation. - The New York Times

YouTube suspended One America News Network, one of the right-wing channels aggressively pushing false claims about widespread election fraud, for violating its policies on misinformation.

www.nytimes.com

(b)(6)

Counter Disinformation Officer- Russia Team
Global Engagement Center
United States Department of State
Muscofee International | Contractor
Teleworking cell: (b)(6)
(b)(6)@state.gov



Sender: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Recipient: (b)(6)@state.gov>

FLASH REPORT

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Leak Site Containing Allegedly Stolen Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Documents Claims to Prove Election Fraud

From Insikt Group
November 16, 2020

TLP AMBER: For employees and affected organizations directly engaged in threat research, security operations or senior company management. Not to be distributed further without prior approval from the originator.

Summary

On November 16, 2020, Insikt Group identified multiple suspicious Twitter accounts promoting a site allegedly containing stolen U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) documents. The site currently contains 19 sample documents allegedly obtained by actors purporting to be "Israeli Hackers" and a 72 hour countdown where the actors state they will release additional material from the "monumental bulk of data" accessed. Insikt Group confirmed that all documents previously appeared in the June 2020 BlueLeaks data leak and are likely being recycled to support the actor's false claims of "hacking" DHS.

The actors also claim that they have proof of widespread election fraud and will continue to leak documents if the outcome of the election is not changed. Insikt Group believes this will likely also entail recycling of existing leaked material. At this time, the site has received limited engagement on social media platforms despite attempts from multiple accounts to amplify it. This included a Twitter account that switched from posting pro-Biden/Harris content to alleging that Biden will "start a war against Iran" and linking to the leak site "proving" election fraud just over one week later.

Leak Site Analysis

The leak site ([electionfraudevidence\[.\]com](http://electionfraudevidence[.]com)) begins with a blurb claiming that the U.S. 2020 Presidential Election was a "fraudulent process and a shameful exhibition of how the failed Democratic Party and even people from inside the government, can rig a democratic procedure". The actors then claim to be an "Israeli White Hat Hackers team" that have stolen a substantial amount of data from DHS servers. They allege that this

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stolen data demonstrates that a significant number of DHS employees and personnel tried to work against the Trump campaign to "ensure Biden's victory against the will of the American people". The actors state that DHS and Joe Biden's campaign have 72 hours "to correct their wrongdoings and put an end to their Election Fraud." The site features a timer counting down to 8AM UTC on Thursday November 19, 2020 in reference to this 72 hour window.

The leak site currently contains 19 PDF documents covering a range of topics, including counterterrorism, theft, and fraud, primarily dated from May and June 2020. The documents, all of which appeared in the June 2020 BlueLeaks data leak, appear to originally come from the following organizations:

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- U.S. National Counterterrorism Center
- Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)
- Delaware Information and Analysis Center (DIAC)
- Amtrak Intelligence Team
- New Jersey Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (NJ ROIC)
- Pleasant Hill Police Department
- San Mateo County (SMC) Sheriff's Office
- Stockton Police Department

Each document is followed by a caption which typically disparages the Democratic party and often exaggerates the classification of the documents. For instance, several are said to be "top secret" within the caption, but are actually marked "UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY."

Suspicious Twitter Accounts Promoting Site

To date, Insikt Group has identified three Twitter accounts promoting the site: @electionfraude1, @ChoratShoshana, and @johnand48726254. The @electionfraude1 account is linked directly on electionfraudevidence[.]com and was the first to begin posting links to the site. The account has tweeted several times linking to the leak beginning on November 15 at 12:57PM UTC. However, the account has received limited engagement to date, likely because it is currently restricted and has a join date of November 15, 2020.

The ChoratShoshana account was the next to begin posting links to the site, tweeting a large number of times that "Israeli hackers broke into U.S. Department of Home and [sic] Security and released some evidence upon Election." These tweets tagged or responded to unrelated tweets from multiple journalists, news agencies, and politicians, including President Trump's account. This flurry of tweets began on November 15 at 1:20PM UTC and lasted for approximately 40 minutes. Unlike electionfraude1, this account was active prior to this activity, and was registered in October 2020. The user's Twitter biography, which stated they were an independent reporter based in Greece, contained a link to their Facebook profile. Both the Facebook and Twitter profiles have now been banned. Historical archives of the Twitter account show multiple tweets in favor of Joe Biden

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and Kamala Harris, as well as a tweet stating "becoming the president, Biden will start a war against Iran." These tweets appear contradictory coupled with the account's attempted amplification of the leak site that allegedly "proves" election fraud.

The final Twitter account, johnand48726254, was registered on November 16 and began posting links to the site in replies to popular Twitter accounts from 11:02AM UTC onwards, however the account is restricted and receiving minimal engagement. Insikt Group will continue to monitor this leak site for subsequent leaked documents and further attempts to amplify and draw attention to it on social media and other sources.

Sourcing:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201115132813/https://twitter.com/ChoratSoshana/status/1327965434361110528>

<https://app.recordedfuture.com/live/sc/4GG1jh8YtzWW>

<https://app.recordedfuture.com/live/sc/59WpfvI0Vxvy>

https://web.archive.org/web/*/https://twitter.com/ChoratSoshana*

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201108044750/https://twitter.com/ChoratSoshana/status/1325298916829650944>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201108045909/https://twitter.com/ChoratSoshana/status/1325301761444368386>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201115132813/https://twitter.com/ChoratSoshana/status/1327965434361110528>

About Recorded Future

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Recorded Future delivers the world's most technically advanced security intelligence to disrupt adversaries, empower defenders, and protect organizations. Recorded Future's proactive and predictive platform provides elite, context-rich, actionable intelligence in real time that's intuitive and ready for integration across the security ecosystem.





From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Fw: Global Digital Rights Digest | 01.15.21
Date: Sat, 16 Jan 2021 00:05:37 +0000

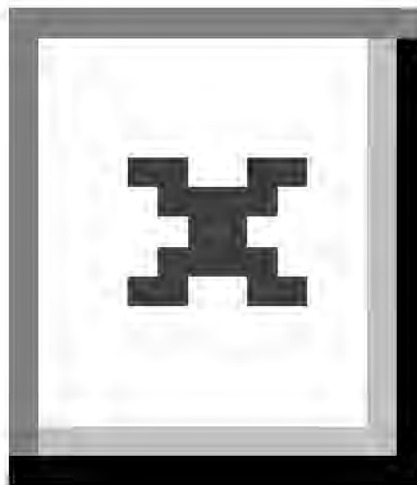
maybe some info for baseball cards in here...

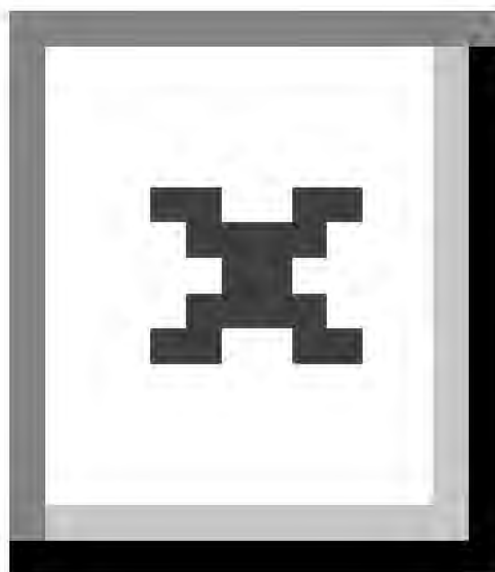
(b)(6)
Senior Advisor, Technology Engagement Team
Global Engagement Center | U.S. Department of State
(b)(6)@state.gov

From: (b)(6)@stanford.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2021 4:01 PM
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: Fw: Global Digital Rights Digest | 01.15.21

(b)(6)@stanford.edu
(b)(6)
- @samsends
From: Global Digital Policy Incubator <stanford_gdpi@stanford.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2021 9:56 AM
To: (b)(6)@stanford.edu>
Subject: Global Digital Rights Digest | 01.15.21

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Special Section- January 6 Capitol Hill Riots:

1. Social media platforms' responses to the violence on January 6 included dramatic new actions, including suspension of U.S. president Donald J. Trump
2. Parler, a platform that does not restrict violent extremist content, was removed from both Google and Apple App stores following the Capitol riots, and eventually removed from Amazon's web-hosting services, effectively taking it offline
3. Online activity promoting violence and extremism increased significantly in the lead up to the January 6 Capital riot in Washington D.C.
4. Companies that facilitate financial transactions or provide infrastructure for applications and web services, respond with actions to neutralize those promoting violence following the Capitol riots
5. Independent open source investigators and law enforcement use facial recognition to identify Capitol rioters, raising concerns among rights groups

Government Regulation of Online Platforms:

1. The EU aims to tackle Big Tech with new Digital Markets Act and Digital Services Act draft proposals
2. Uganda blocks all social media in advance of presidential elections, apparently in response to removal of pro-government accounts for inauthentic activity
3. YouTube, TikTok, DailyMotion, and VK each appoint legal representatives in Turkey, following implementation of new social media law

AI and Human Rights:

1. New Jersey man sues local authorities for arrest and imprisonment based on facial recognition "racial profiling" mismatch

Digital Security and Surveillance:

1. Singapore acknowledges that COVID contact-tracing data can be accessed by police for criminal investigations

Special Section- January 6 Capitol Hill Riots:

1. Social media platforms' responses to the violence on January 6 included dramatic new actions, including suspension of U.S. president Donald J. Trump

- **In the wake of the riots on Capitol Hill, technology companies took numerous steps to mitigate the risks of further violence by moderating content on their platforms.**
- **A number of platforms took their most severe actions to date against President Trump himself, as he continued to refuse to forcefully denounce the violence at the Capitol and to promote false claims of election fraud.**
 - **On January 6th, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter all removed President Trump's video reasserting electoral fraud and telling violent rioters that they were "very special" and that he loved them.** These platforms also removed content that violated their civil integrity policies.
 - **Following the escalating situation at the Capitol, as well as President Trump's obstinate refusal to forcefully condemn the riots, both Facebook and Twitter temporarily suspended the President's accounts for repeated violations of the companies' policies, suspensions which were later made permanent or indefinite.**
 - Facebook extended the suspension "indefinitely and for at least the next two weeks" until a peaceful transition of power can take place.
 - After warning that the temporary ban would become permanent if President Trump continued to violate the platform's policies, the President's Twitter account was briefly reinstated before being permanently suspended following tweets that violated the platform's glorification of violence policy.
 - Several attempts were made to circumvent the President's suspension on Twitter. A staffer renamed his account "Donald Trump" and gave the President access. Attempts were also made to use the official POTUS account. The staffer's account was ultimately suspended and the POTUS account was locked until a transition occurs.
 - YouTube has suspended President Trump's channel for at least one week. Before this decisive action, it had implemented a new policy for videos containing false claims, including those posted by the President.
 - **While Twitter and Facebook led the platforms' charge to take action against the President, a number of other platforms have followed suit.** Most notably, Snapchat and Twitch have both disabled the President's account without identifying an end date.
- **In addition to actions taken against the Presidents' accounts, platforms are removing content and accounts that incite violence and perpetuate real-world harms.**

- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have taken increased action against accounts using the hashtag #stopthesteal or promoting the unfounded conspiracy theory that there was widespread electoral fraud. This has included automatically removing posts with the hashtag or phrase. Twitter has also suspended several accounts associated with the conspiracy theory.
- Other less high-profile platforms, like Mailchimp and DLive, have removed accounts that attempted to incite violence through their platforms and those that were directly linked to the Capitol riots. Even companies we don't typically think of as content platforms, like Peloton, have begun banning certain hashtags linked to the riots.
- **These drastic and swift actions against President Trump's accounts mark a shift from platforms' previous reticence to moderate the speech of public officials, especially those who post divisive content.** Questions remain, however, about how this will impact platform policies moving forward, both domestically and internationally.

2. Parler, a platform that does not restrict violent extremist content, was removed from both Google and Apple App stores following the Capitol riots, and eventually removed from Amazon's web-hosting services, effectively taking it offline

- **On January 11, social media platform Parler went offline when Amazon withdrew web-hosting services to the company.** The platform had generated a widespread conservative and pro-Trump user base following Twitter and Facebook's increasing moderation of false claims by President Trump and his supporters. Once Twitter and Facebook made the decision to de-platform President Trump, Parler jumped to the most downloaded free app in the App Store.
- **Amazon cited Parler's violation of its terms of service by failing to adequately moderate "inappropriate" content on its platform, specifically the glorification of violence experienced at the Capitol riots.** Parler has been accused of being one of the primary online locations for organizing the riots, including posts urging users to bring guns to the Capitol, even inciting violence against Vice President Mike Pence.
 - Amazon cited 98 specific examples in its initial warning before cancelling the platform's web-hosting services.
- **Amazon's move was the latest in a series of blows dealt to the platform since the riot at the Capitol.** Apple and Google cut off Parler by removing its app from their app stores, citing the platform's inability or unwillingness to remove illegal content inciting violence or threats to public safety.
- **Hours after going dark, Parler filed a federal lawsuit arguing that Amazon had violated antitrust law by conspiring with Twitter to shut down its platform.** Parler also complained that they were

not given a 30 days' notice and were prematurely terminated. An Amazon spokesperson stated that these claims had "no merit," reaffirming that Parler's content moderation behaviors in recent weeks demonstrated they were either "unable or unwilling to promptly identify and remove" violating content.

3. Online activity promoting violence and extremism increased significantly in the lead up to the January 6 Capital riot in Washington D.C

- **Multiple media outlets and organizations documented a significant increase in online content by extremist groups expressing violent rhetoric and previewing planned riot activity in the weeks before the riot.** The Anti-Defamation League, which has been tracking extremist social media content over the past year, flagged the recent increase in violent online rhetoric to law enforcement in advance of the attack.
- Online content has been driven by weeks of unfounded claims of election fraud from President Trump and his supporters; however, **the more recent uptick was closely linked to Trump's specific promotion of a January 6 protest in Washington, DC to "stop the steal" of the election result.**
- **The increase in violent rhetoric online was seen on both mainstream social media platforms and websites popular with far-right and extremist groups.** For instance, NBC News has highlighted multiple QAnon-affiliated accounts on Twitter calling for protest attendees to arm themselves. Videos on TikTok with thousands of views similarly promoted violent activity at the protest. Advance Democracy, an investigative organization, also found that half of the top posts made on the website TheDonald.win on January 4 discussing the electoral certification process included calls for violence on January 6th. The niche website was established after Reddit removed and banned the subreddit of the same name.
- Platforms generally responded by taking down content that violates policies on the promotion of violence that can lead to real-world harm, but the online activity does not seem to have prompted greater action on the ground. This raises questions about how online threats should translate to offline security.

4. Companies that facilitate financial transactions or provide infrastructure for applications and web services, respond with actions to neutralize those promoting violence following the Capitol riots

- Following the violence at the Capitol, companies typically outside the conversation around protecting digital rights and limiting harmful speech online have taken significant steps to limit their connection

to those who stormed the Capitol, or who would otherwise promote violence. Companies that forced Parler offline are most notable in their responses. As outlined in more detail above, Apple and Google removed the app from their store. Amazon Web Services withdrew its services from Parler. In practice, the app was temporarily forced to completely stop operations.

- Other companies, however, have also taken important steps.
 - Paypal and Venmo closed the account of the organizer of the "Stop the Steal" rally where Trump incited participants, Ali Alexander. Patreon has also suspended Alexander's account.
 - Paypal also closed an account used to raise travel funds for participants, and Gofundme removed campaigns used to fund travel for the January 6th event.
 - Gofundme removed campaigns used to fund travel and other expenses, and banned fundraising for events likely to "incite violence."
 - Shopify stopped hosting two stores selling Trump merchandise, and Stripe announced that it will no longer process payments for Trump's campaign website.
- These actions demonstrate the power of digital companies beyond social media platforms, particularly those that provide the infrastructure for activity online, to impact the viral spread of demonstrably harmful content when they choose to take action. While it is not the first time that financial services companies or web hosting platforms have taken action, it is the most high-profile.

5. Independent open source investigators and law enforcement use facial recognition to identify Capitol rioters, raising concerns among rights groups

- Following the riots at the Capitol, both independent open source investigators and law enforcement have begun to identify those who were present. Because the rioters largely did not wear masks and posted numerous pictures and videos, facial recognition has been employed by both independent researchers and reportedly by law enforcement to identify them.
- Rights organizations have raised serious concerns that the need to identify those who invaded the Capitol building will serve to further normalize the use of facial recognition, with serious potential risks to individual privacy and for innocent people who might be mistakenly targeted. These groups argue that even at such a critical moment, the use of facial recognition has serious risks. These algorithms have known limitations, and some of the databases used by companies that offer these services use photos which were obtained without users' consent. Lauding facial recognition in this moment has the potential to further entrench its more regular and widespread use. On the other hand, law enforcement experts have applauded the surge in tips and leads as critical in arresting perpetrators of the violence and in disabling the extremist movement.

- The current situation points to the pressing need for clearer regulation of facial recognition. It also demonstrates the complex balance between the usefulness of the technology and its potential risks to privacy and false identification.

Government Regulation of Online Platforms:

1. The EU aims to tackle Big Tech with new Digital Markets Act and Digital Services Act draft proposals

- **On December 15, the European Commission published two highly-anticipated draft proposals: the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA).** These sweeping new rules reflect major changes in Europe's approach towards its digital strategy. The EU aims to preserve individual users' digital rights and create a more equitable playing field for tech competitors and consumers alike. As other nations such as the US engage in Big Tech antitrust and regulation deliberations, this European digital policy experiment is a critical alternative approach to watch.
- **The Digital Services Act (DSA) creates new binding obligations for digital service providers, effectively expanding the "liability regime" for intermediary services and online platforms and strengthening the enforcement of such duties.** For example, the law designates due diligence obligations for flagging illegal online content and activities, such as maintaining "traceability of business users in online marketplaces." It also includes provisions for the protection of online users' freedom of speech, such as avenues for redress regarding disputed content.
 - **Notably, when deciding the scope of obligations, the law considers an online service's "role, size and impact in the online ecosystem."** For example, "very large platforms" encompass platforms that "reach more than 10% of the EU's population," thus meriting heightened standards of transparency and accountability under the DSA, such as sharing critical data with authorities and researchers.
 - In terms of oversight, the law states that **EU countries will be the primary enforcers, bolstered by a new European Board for Digital Services**, "an independent advisory group of national authorities designated by the Member States for the consistent application of the DSA." However, **very large platforms will receive "enhanced supervision and enforcement by the Commission."**

- **On the other hand, the Digital Markets Act (DMA) aims to regulate platforms that act as “gatekeepers” in the digital realm, with the goal of building a more free and fair competitive landscape.** As such, the DMA establishes various obligations for gatekeepers, colloquially described as “do’s” and “don’ts”, such as permitting third-parties to interoperate with their services and allowing users to uninstall any pre-installed software or apps.
 - In order to fall under the scope of the DMA, a **platform must meet three cumulative criteria**, each of which has its own quantitative definitions outlined in the law: (1) A size that impacts the internal market; (2) the control of an important gateway for business users towards final consumers; and (3) an (expected) entrenched and durable position. The Commission also reserves the right to conduct market investigations on whether to deem a particular company as a gatekeeper.
 - **Enforcement will be at the discretion of the Commission, due to the “cross-border nature of gatekeepers.”** Failure to comply with the DMA can result in sanctions and fines of up to **10% of the company's total worldwide annual turnover or periodic penalty payments of up to 5% of the company's total worldwide annual turnover.**
- **Ultimately, these twin acts largely were written to rein in Big Tech companies that have cultivated powerful monopolies.** So far, Big Tech has not expressed substantial resistance to the draft proposals, **though greater pushback is expected.**
 - Shortly after the proposals were released, the Computer and Communications Industry Association (CCIA), a group that represents tech giants including Amazon, Facebook, Twitter and Google, published a neutral but cautious statement welcoming cooperation to create effective policies that would **“make the EU a leader in digital innovation, not just in digital regulation.”**
 - However, the proposals did receive backlash from the **US Chamber of Commerce**, which raised concerns that the laws targeted almost exclusively American companies with its “onerous” regulations and hefty financial penalties.
- **Though the DSA/DMA package presents promising wins for consumers and small digital actors, civil society organizations such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) have identified a few points of concern in the draft proposals.** For example, EFF highlighted that under the content moderation obligations outlined in the laws, “platforms, rather than courts, are increasingly becoming the arbiters” of acceptable online speech. Other pain points include the ban on competing national laws made by EU member states and the absence of rules on interoperability.

2. Uganda blocks all social media in advance of presidential elections, apparently in response to removal of pro-government accounts for inauthentic activity

- **On January 12th, the Ugandan Communications Commission ordered ISPs throughout the country to “immediately suspend any access and use, direct or otherwise, of all social media platforms and online messaging applications.”** The order was issued only two days before a presidential and parliamentary election whose campaigns have so far been characterized by violence and intimidation of opposition candidates.
- **The move also comes after Facebook shut down a network of accounts linked to the Ugandan Ministry of Information for inauthentic activity** such as using fake accounts in order to spread pro-government messages. The latest order is rumored to be in part a retaliation for this removal, although social media was also blocked during the 2016 elections in the country.
- **This is only the latest in the Ugandan government’s increasing attempts to repress dissent in part by limiting speech online**, although there have also been widespread reports of violence against journalists. In December, the government also pressured Youtube to remove channels opposing the government from the platform. As repression of dissent escalates offline, social media has been an important space for opposition politics in Uganda.
- **Human rights organizations have called for Uganda to halt the shutdown of social media and allow a free flow of information in advance of the elections.**

3. YouTube, TikTok, DailyMotion, and VK each appoint legal representatives in Turkey, following implementation of new social media law

- On December 16, YouTube was among the first social media companies to appoint a local representative to Turkey in compliance with the country’s new social media law. TikTok, Dailymotion, and VK have also acquiesced to the stipulation.
- Turkey’s social media law came into effect on October 1, 2020. It requires companies with more than 1 million daily users to appoint a representative on the ground in Turkey within 30 days of the law going into effect. The law stipulates that if social media companies do not cooperate with Turkish authorities, they will face fines and bandwidth reductions of up to 90%, rendering them virtually inoperable. The Turkish government fined Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and YouTube each TL 30 million (~\$3.83 million) in early December.
- Compliance with the law has the potential to threaten free expression, and tightens the government’s control over social media. The new legal pressure on social media companies creates opportunities for arbitrary censorship. Furthermore, in-country representatives will be under substantial pressure to comply with government orders, and risk personal consequences and arbitrary detention for failure to comply.

AI and Human Rights:

1. New Jersey man sues local authorities for arrest and imprisonment based on facial recognition "racial profiling" mismatch

- **A New Jersey man, Nijeer Park, filed a civil lawsuit against local law enforcement, prosecutors and city government for violating his right to equal protection through their use of facial recognition.** Other cited violations include false imprisonment, cruel and unusual punishment, and excessive force under the Fourth Amendment.
- The Black plaintiff alleges that police misidentified him as a suspect in a 2019 criminal investigation. Unspecified facial recognition software that authorities used had returned a "high profile match" between a fake driver's license and his photo in the government database. The New York and New Jersey police departments involved in the case and two other investigators denied or did not confirm participation.
- The plaintiff further alleges that authorities' sole reliance on the algorithmic mismatch as evidence, without consideration of his alibi or other biometrics, constituted "racial profiling" as well as false arrest and imprisonment. Prosecutors dismissed his case after the presiding New Jersey Superior Court judge required authorities to produce evidence beyond the facial recognition match in the court hearings.
- Park's case is the third known instance of a Black man arrested based on facial recognition mismatch in America, and the second lawsuit claiming wrongful AI-driven arrest and prosecution. The case affirms ongoing concerns voiced by human rights experts about the discriminatory outcomes and community mistrust of the use of algorithms in law enforcement, such as for surveillance and predictive policing.

Digital Security and Surveillance:

1. Singapore acknowledges that COVID contact-tracing data can be accessed by police for criminal investigations

- On January 4, Singaporean government ministers revealed that data from its COVID-19 contact-tracing program can be used by the police for criminal investigations, marking a sharp reversal of its previous privacy assurances. Nearly 80% of residents use the popular TraceTogether app or wearable Bluetooth token, which record location check-ins and whom individuals are in contact with, making it one of the most successful national contact-tracing programs in the world.
- In the initial phase of the program, Singaporean authorities attempted to rally mass participation by promising that “the data w[ould] never be accessed, unless the user tests positive for Covid-19 and is contacted by the contact tracing team.” Now, government leaders including Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan have walked back their statements, citing the Criminal Procedure Code as the legal obligation for surrendering users' data to the police if necessary.
 - Despite reassurances from officials that TraceTogether had been designed with careful consideration towards privacy, the centralized storage of users' data inherently prompted concerns regarding individuals' **rights to privacy, freedom of movement, and freedom of association**.
- This revelation has evinced major backlash from Singaporean citizens and eroded public trust in government, particularly as it pertains to privacy. In turn, without public support, the Singaporean government may face critical challenges to the success of future initiatives and health responses that require individual compliance with data collection.

The Global Digital Rights Digest was inaugurated with the generous support of the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). The contents are the responsibility of GDPi and do not necessarily reflect the views of ICNL or Stanford University.

[x](#)

The Global Digital Policy Incubator *is a part of Stanford's Cyber Policy Center at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies.*

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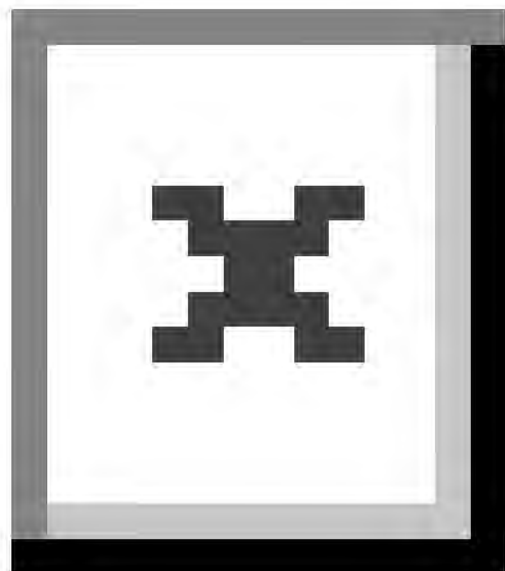
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This latest report may interest TET colleagues, particularly the details on tech industry response to election mis/disinfo.

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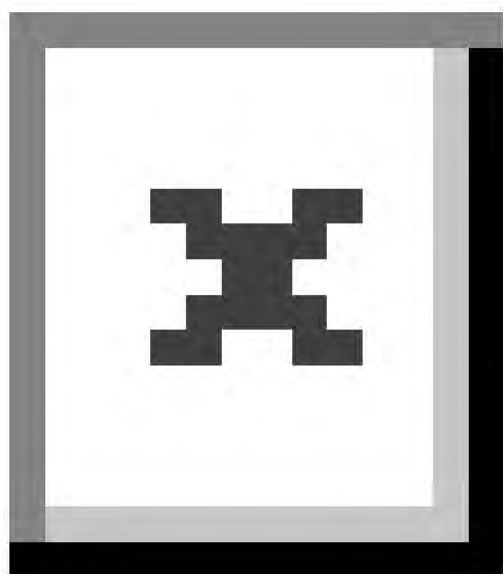
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Digital Risk Foresight

navigating digital risk



November 2020

...no bark?

The US presidential elections delivered a delayed victory for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris over incumbent President Trump and Vice President Pence. It also revealed the extent of deep polarization that divides the country. Many specialists

feared that the US election would be hit by a tsunami of disinformation campaigns, data breaches, ballot tampering and disruption of the voting infrastructure. Indeed, President Trump and his supporters have issued a rash of unsubstantiated allegations that the integrity of elections were compromised. Yet contrary to expectations, election day came and went unmarred by evidence of serious digital malfeasance, including election hacking. To the contrary - it was described as the most secure in American history. Just as the pollsters wrongly predicted a "blue wave" for the Democrats, is it possible that cyber punters overstated the risks of a major disruption?

While there was no evidence of digital pyrotechnics on election day, it turns out that the US election campaign experienced multiple digital threats throughout 2020. For example, Microsoft observed a sharp increase in attacks in the months leading-up to the vote. Among the most prominent were led by Strontium, a Russian advanced threat group active in the 2016 campaign, which launched salvos of phishing exploits against some 200 organizations including political campaigns, advocacy groups and political consultants. Zirconium, a Chinese APT, launched at least 150 attacks on dozens of universities and think tanks. And Phosphorus, an Iranian APT, went after personal accounts of people associated with Donald Trump between May and June. Most of these attempts were short-circuited before they could do much damage.

The incidence of ransomware also increased dramatically in US states and cities. It is difficult to determine whether these are geopolitical in nature or more a result of opportunistic criminals. In October, for example, a major software vendor for state and local governments - Tyler Tech - reported that it was a victim of ransomware a month earlier, losing some \$1.5 million. Governments in both Louisiana and Washington state also reported being hit by ransomware (similar to

incidents in 2016). It is hard to know the motives of the attackers: the trojan used to commit the attack (known as "KimJongRat") was linked to a group affiliated with the North Korean government. The attack was stopped in its early stages and the national guard was called in to investigate.

A major fear was that electoral infrastructure would be targeted in order to undermine the voting process. Indeed, alleged Russians attacks in October 2020 targeted a wide swathe of government networks, including those related to safeguarding the election in states such from California to Indiana. Some of these strikes were launched by Energetic Bear (also known as Firefly) and reports emerged that voter data may have been breached. Iranian-backed groups were also sanctioned by the US Treasury for attempted interference. A worry was that attacks could also hone in on websites displaying voting results (and not the machines related to casting and counting ballots). In the end, the FBI and CISA claimed there was no evidence that elections data was compromised.

One of the most dangerous threats of digital malfeasance are not so much strikes on critical infrastructure and election hacking as misinformation campaigns and influence operations. There was considerable evidence of attempts to manipulate US voters throughout the 2020 election campaign and its aftermath, much of it focusing on spreading false allegations of ballot fraud, fake evidence of software glitches and spurious rumors of election hacking. Several of these efforts began long before the election campaign got underway, and included a slew of fake websites and hashtags (#stopthesteal) and the spread of false social media by Trump supporters such as Roger Stone to discredit the electoral process. A special target was the postal vote, including undermining US postal sorting capacity and efforts to discredit mail-in voting entirely.

As in previous elections, automated accounts or 'bots' were widespread and responsible for spreading fake news. Researchers from the University of Southern California studied 240 million election-related tweets from June to September 2020 and found they accounted for over 20 percent of all tweets containing falsehoods. Bots advocating right-wing views accounted for 80% of reported misinformation and were "more than 12 times more likely to spread false conspiracy theories". Some threats incorporated low-tech cell-phone texting campaigns and robocalls to spread misinformation. Notwithstanding preventive measures (including tip lines created by WhatsApp) adopted by some private messaging apps, challenges persist with end-to-end encrypted WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal. Activities on these channels are hard to monitor and contributed to the so-called 'misinformation pandemic'. Meanwhile, disgruntled conservatives are migrating to alternative social media including Parler, Rumble and Newsmax (though some extreme groups describe these outlets as "honey pots").

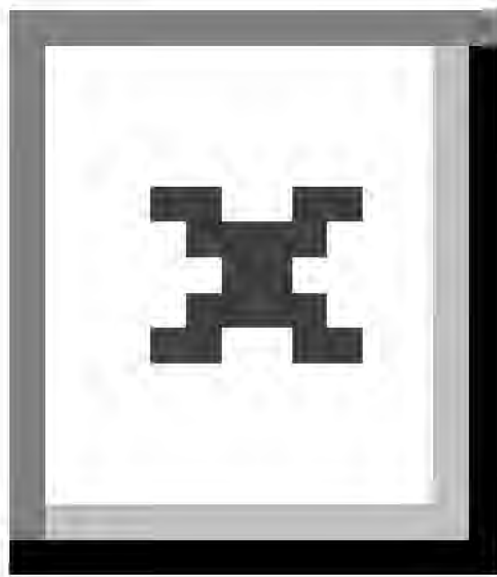
Misinformation was pervasive during the 2020 election voting process. Yet as the process wore on, a great deal of malign content was also discredited by news media, fact checking organizations, government agencies and social media platforms. For example, false rumors circulated about election workers handing out "sharpies" to disenfranchise voters were labeled false. Speculation about the domestic use of technologies designed by the CIA to spy on and manipulate foreign elections (i.e. "Hammer" and "Scorecard") were discredited. The US Director of National Intelligence and FBI Director also disclosed in October 2020 that they took down a network of Iranian hackers posing as far-right groups responsible for sending threatening emails to demand voters support President Trump "or else". That said, it later emerged that Iranian hackers successfully hacked the voter registration database of at least one state.

One reason why the elections averted massive cyber attacks is because the US intelligence and security architecture was better prepared for digital shenanigans than in the past. Owing in part to its participation in the NCCIC project, the Department of Homeland Security was able to provide support to the two political parties including malware samples, criminal group activity profiles, hacking campaign signatures and training and support to fight hacking efforts. The DHS also worked in partnership with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Center for Internet security, and the Election Assistance Commission to set-out standards for election security.

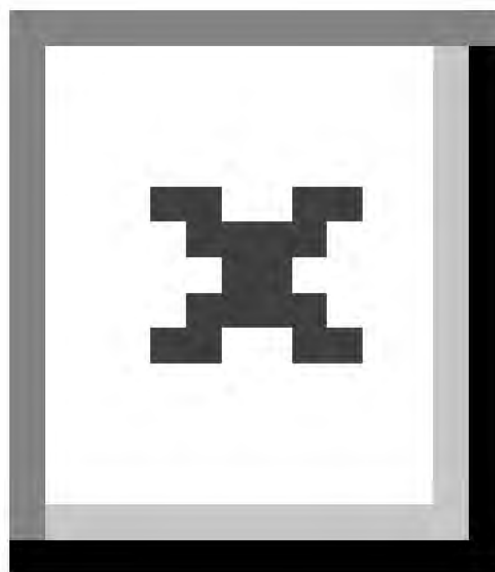
US intelligence and policing agencies also worked closely with technology companies to take proactive action before the election got underway. After issuing repeated warnings and launching a rumor control page, the FBI and DHS Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) invested in ransomware detection and disruption well in advance. For example, preemptive action resulted in the takedown of a trickbot. In October, in partnership with Microsoft, the government seized the servers of the notorious botnet. The same ransomware had reportedly infected over a million devices since it was created in 2016. Companies such as Microsoft likewise deployed new software called ElectionGuard that confirmed to voters that their selections were being accurately recorded. Meanwhile Facebook agreed to fight disinformation by blocking new political advertisements on its platform in the weeks leading up to the election. Facebook also redirected users to accurate election results to limit the costs of premature declarations of victory.

Days before the election, Instagram announced that it would temporarily remove the 'Recent' tab from all hashtag pages as part of its effort to contain the spread of election related misinformation. Twitter suspended accounts of individuals

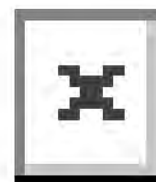
reportedly spreading misinformation and added new misinformation warnings to help users to guard against possible misinformation. Twitter also directed users to validated information sources (on, for example, 'mail-in voting') and reminded their users that election results might be delayed due to increased use of mail-in voting. TikTok, in addition to stepping-up fact-checking, also reached out to a younger audience about the election process and added a live stream from the Associated Press. Both TikTok and Twitter had already banned any political advertisements on their platforms since October 2019. Meanwhile, Pinterest, Facebook Messenger, Google, YouTube, Snapchat, Apple News and Google News adopted measures to curb election related misinformation. Some critics grumbled that these moves backfired or amounted to too little too late.



The US election and its aftermath. no cyber doomsday but no resolution to endemic cyber insecurity either...

**wait for it....**

The US is entering a volatile two months before president-elect Biden and vice president-elect Harris assume power. President Trump has yet to concede the election and has resorted to baseliness legal channels to challenge the



election results. He has also started purging the upper ranks of the military establishment and threatens to intensify his misinformation campaign against the election process. He continues to insist the elections were rigged despite the fact they were largely incident-free and without any cyberattack incidents or visible signs of any intervention from foreign governments. President Trump, together with conservative media figures, insists that an election technology company called Dominion Voting System suffered from glitches that "stole" millions of votes. While it is unlikely that he will hold on to power, there are fears his efforts will hasten the erosion of public trust in electoral institutions and democracy.

There are several factors that make the current "transition" more dangerous than even. Concerns include deepening red-blue divides across the country (and the fact that 70% of Republicans currently believe the elections were not free and fair). Added to this are worries about a political 'power vacuum' at the national level and soaring COVID infections and deaths which have entered an unprecedented 'third wave'. The cyber threats that existed prior to the elections are intensifying, according to Christopher Krebs, the director of

the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. The risk of China, Russia, Iran and others taking advantage of the US in a moment of weakness are increasing even as Trump sows doubt about the legitimacy of election results. Cyber threats facing the US over the next 60 days include (mis/dis) information threats and attacks on data, access and availability.

Threat actors may ramp-up attacks on election mechanisms to disrupt recounts and conduct 'perception hacks' whereby the belief that voting was flawed far exceeds the realistic possibility of it occurring. Anxieties about voting-fraud are fueled almost exclusively by Trump and some members of the GOP. They are also getting a bump from mainstream social media. Another concern is that 'narrative laundering' - weaving of disinformation with genuine media - could also spike. GRU - a Russian military intelligence agency - is particularly expert in this space. Fears are also growing of a possible email blitzkrieg spreading misinformation. This type of approach was supposedly deployed by Iranian threat actors that posed as the Proud Boys in order to threaten voters in key battleground states. The 'Stop the Steal' movement and other voting related posts are fast spreading across social media despite

ban imposed by mainstream social media.

Finally, while the much hyped 'deep-fakes' did not play a major role in the 2020 election xylem, there were reportedly 'cheap fakes' that were helpful in swaying public opinion.



Ransomed!

The ransomware epidemic continues to spread around the world. One prominent example is RansomExx cyberthreat actors that were supposedly behind a massive attack on Brazil's Superior Court of Justice in the first week of November 2020. The threat actor exploited a domain admin account to access the court's servers and reportedly encrypted all case files and backups. Defray777 (as RansomExx was once called) has the capability to attack Linux facilities and has been active since 2018. Other victims include the Montreal public transport system (Société de transport de Montréal, STM), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Konica Minolta, Tyler Technologies and IPG Photonics. These attacks are a harbinger of what is to come and some specialists fear a ransomware epidemic owing to the diversification of services, the rise of cybercrime-as-a-service

which allows technologies to rapidly spread across organizations.

Ransomware threat actors are employing ingenious methods to undertake attacks that blend automation tools with human ingenuity. According to Mark Loman, Director of Engineering at Sophos, the largest generation of ransomware can add or change traits and change approaches to evade most anti-ransomware protection systems. Some evasion methods include booting the OS to a diagnostic mode, encrypting on a very small portion of the target's file or elevating user account privileges to increase the document size and prioritize the target drives. In order to defend against the onslaught of ransomware attacks, experts recommend a well rounded 365-degree approach to cybersecurity that provides end-to-end monitoring of the networks and systems to protect exposed services, unpatched systems and compromised credentials.

Another worrying trend, according to Coveware's Q3 2020 ransomware report, is that ransomware gangs are reneging on deals and resorting to extortion and data exfiltration whether or not victims pay-up. Recent examples include,

Sodinobkibi, Maze (Egregor), Netwalker, Mespinoza, Conti. Traditionally ransomware gangs kept their threats private or posted them on to the Dark Web. Of late, some ransomware gangs have started using Facebook to pressure their victims to pay ransoms. Recently, the Ragnar Locker team ran advertisements on Facebook using hacked accounts to publicly put pressure on Campari Group, an Italian beverage vendor to accede to their ransom demand of \$15 million for 2TB of data. These attacks can generate real world fatalities. Consider the ransomware attack by Ryuk on the Universal Health Services (UHS) hospital network. This attack reportedly contributed to as many as four fatalities.

Emerging Threats

Data breaches and phishing attacks

- **Pakistan International Airlines** network access was put up for sale on Dark Web forums. The stolen credentials includes passenger names, their phone numbers and passport details according to cybersecurity experts from Israel, KELA. Apparently, the threat actors are selling



domain admin access to the airline for \$4,000. It was put up for sale on two Russian language websites and one English language on the Dark Web.

- **Shiney Hunters dumped a slew of new databases.** On the heels of the Mashable data leak incident, a new set of databases are up for sale on the Dark Web by a hacking group, ShinyHunters. Among them is one owned by Animal Jam, a popular children's online playground. This breach has reportedly impacted 46 million accounts. The other databases that are up for sale include Eskimi, Geniusu, Eatigo, JoinPiggy, Peatix, Redmart, Nitrogo, Pluto.tv, Storybird, Homechef, among others.

Scams and Vulnerabilities

- **Microsoft and Google released security patches. November's Patch Tuesday, Microsoft released fixes for 112 vulnerabilities**, including 24 remote code execution (RCE) bugs. These fixes range for a wide range of Microsoft products including Microsoft Edge and Windows WalletService, among others. More

importantly, a Windows zero-day vulnerability patch, tracked as CVE-2020-17087, was released. This zero-day vulnerability was supposedly exploited along with Chrome zero-day to target the users of Windows 7 and Windows 10. Google released Chrome version 86.04240.198 to help patch two Chrome zero-days, CVE-2020-16013 (relating to improper implementation in Chrome version 8) and CVE-2020-16017 (a memory corruption bug). These vulnerabilities were supposedly exploited in the wild.

- **Intel and Adobe released advisories.**

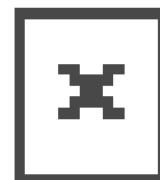
Intel released 40 security advisories to patch different vulnerabilities impacting their Active Management Technology (AMT), Wireless Bluetooth and Next Unit of Computing (NUC) products. More specifically, the severe vulnerabilities included, CVE-2020-8752 (with a CVSS score of 9.4 out of 10) and CVE-2020-12321 (with a CVSS score of 9.6 out of 10). Adobe also rolled out fixes for several bugs found in Adobe Reader Mobile and Adobe Connect. The vulnerabilities are

classified 'Important' but not critical on the CVSS scale. They include: [CVE-2020-24442](#) and [CVE-2020-24443](#), both related to reflected cross-site scripting (XSS) issues.

- **Scamming Chocolate Lovers.** A [Cadbury scam](#) recently surfaced on Facebook. A fake FB account, in the name of Cadbury, was created by scammers to lure social media users into sharing their personal and financial details. The fake page appeared official and convincing. The scammers promised participants cash prizes and Cadbury chocolate hampers to lure them into providing information. A similar scam occurred in [2018](#).

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RUSSIA THREAT TEAM WEEKLY OPERATIONS UPDATE**8/01/2022****(U) Current Observations and Analysis on Convergence Themes in the Information Environment**

Russia Accused Ukraine of Bombing its Own POWs in Olenivka. In an attempt to deflect blame and discredit U.S. military assistance to Ukraine, the Russian government, via its UN Twitter account, accused Ukraine of using U.S.-made high-mobility artillery rocket systems (HIMARS) in the July 29 bombing of Olenivka prison, Donetsk Oblast, which led to the killing of over 50 Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs). Russian representative to the UN, Dmitry Polyanskiy, described the bombing as a “proxy war against Russia.” While Russia continues to block the Red Cross from accessing the Olenivka prison, the Russian disinformation ecosystem went on the offensive through outlets such RT Arabic, RT Última Hora, and Russian embassy accounts, to show Russia’s readiness to cooperate with the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) investigators. The ecosystem also touted Russia’s humanitarian treatment of Ukrainian POWs, including those from the “neo-Nazi” Azov Battalion.



(U) Key Leader Engagement

(SBU) Ongoing GEC and Partner Activities

(U) Russia Threat Team Actions

(SBU) GEC Russia Division staff meets with Selected CSDIF Recipients. GEC Russia Team staff met with representatives from Embassy Sofia, Embassy Kampala, and Embassy Cairo to discuss projects and next steps for funding for those proposals approved by the GEC FO through the Countering State Disinformation Innovation Fund (CSDIF). Calls included representatives from GEC Resources, GEC M&E, and GEC China Threat Team. Funds will be allocated before the end of the fiscal year.

(U) GEC Reports/Products

(U) New GEC Snapshots on Russia's Disinformation on Ukraine: On July 28 and August 2, GEC released two Snapshots on Russia's disinformation trends on Ukraine. The first overviews Foreign Minister Lavrov's Ukraine disinformation during his visit to Congo, Uganda, and Ethiopia, pro-Kremlin media claims that Russia's FSB foiled a plot by Ukraine's military intelligence to hijack Russian jets, and how the Russian propaganda and disinformation ecosystem weaponizes maps to question the legitimacy of Ukraine's statehood. The second Snapshot analyzed Kremlin narratives alleging prisoner of war deaths in Russian-occupied Olenivka were caused by a Ukrainian "provocation," how Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem is promoting the false narrative that the United States is behind renewed unrest between Serbia and Kosovo to distract from unrealized goals in Ukraine, and Kremlin plans to carry out a "referendum" in occupied Kherson exposed by the Security Service of Ukraine that included establishing "election commissions" and organizing pro-Russian demonstrations. To be added to GEC's distribution list for future Snapshots, please contact (b)(6) at (b)(6)@State.gov