



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

July 31, 2024

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 June 28, 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 23 additional responsive record subject to the FOIA. Upon review, we have determined that all 23 records may be released in part.

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. 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 black ink, appearing to read "Diamonece Hickson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Diamonece Hickson
Chief, Litigation and Appeals Branch
Office of Information Programs and Services

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

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Firm Fixed Price Payment Schedule

<u>Deliverable</u>		
Evaluation Work Plan including Overall Evaluation Design Proposal		
Phase 2 Fieldwork Design Proposal		
Progress Reports		
Bi-Weekly Phone Calls		
Phase 1, 2, and 3 Draft and Final Reports		
Media Literacy Design Manual		
Evaluation Summary		
Action Planning Final Workshop		
Methodology Presentation to DOS Evaluation Community of Practice		
Total Firm Fixed Price		

Statement of Work

EUR/ACE Evaluation of Media Literacy Projects in Europe and Eurasia

Nature and Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation is being commissioned by the Bureau of Europe and Eurasia/Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (EUR/ACE). It will be a performance evaluation of media literacy assistance projects carried out by USG donors and one USG-funded implementing partner in Europe and Eurasia: The Global Engagement Center (GEC); the Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL); the National Endowment for Democracy (NED); and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The objective of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of these partners' past and on-going projects, and to inform future funding decisions of the Bureau of Europe and Eurasia/Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (EUR/ACE) and to identify and apply lessons learned from the evaluation to future programming in the region. The intended audience is the implementing partners plus ACE, EUR, SCA, U.S. embassies and USAID Missions in Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia.

Countries to be included in this evaluation include Georgia, Ukraine, Armenia, Moldova, one Central European country, and one Baltic country. The latter two countries will be selected by ACE during evaluation implementation based on analysis of background documents by the evaluation contractor and recommendation to ACE from the contractor on which of them will yield the most useful information from fieldwork by local consultants or firm.

Background and Current Status of the Effort

This evaluation will focus on media literacy projects or the media literacy components of projects implemented in 2017-2020 with funding from ACE and GEC with any fiscal year funds that partners were expending during this timeframe. Media literacy encompasses the practices that allow people to access, analyze, critically evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication. The media literacy projects to be evaluated contribute to the following joint regional strategy objective and EUR/ACE assistance program for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia:

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- Objective: Counter Malign Influence
 - EUR/ACE assistance program: Strengthen cybersecurity and counter disinformation

Projects to be Evaluated

1. USAID/Armenia's Media for Informed Civic Engagement Project, implemented by the Media Initiatives Center (MIC), 9/2014-9/2021. The project's activities educate the Armenian public, especially youth, to better identify media manipulation and false information. With USAID's support, MIC developed an interactive media literacy curriculum that was approved for use as an extracurricular material for schools by the Ministry of Education in 2013 and subsequently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry to support the further institutionalization of media literacy education. To date, the Ministry has not adopted the curriculum as part of a mandatory program, and MIC supports this effort through training of teachers and seed funds for teachers to organize media literacy clubs in schools. MIC also uses gamification tools to boost media literacy. These include Media Battle, an educational computer game that has been translated and adapted for use in Ukrainian, Belarussian, and Romanian, and online fact checking techniques. In addition, the project organizes media literacy seminars for a network of information hubs in ten regions of Armenia focusing on the role of independent media and free speech, and practical skills for fact-checking and source verification. These efforts are expected to result in more savvy news consumers. As a testament to MIC's integrated approach to promote media literacy in Armenia, the organization was the top recipient of UNESCO's 2017 Global Media and Information Literacy Awards from among 170 nominations submitted. The award recognizes individuals and organizations that integrate media and information literacy in an innovative way in their work and are "supporters of critical, constructive spaces for knowledge sharing, research and debate."

2. NED grants to Transitions Online, a Czech NGO, to counter vulnerability to disinformation online among seniors (adults age 55 and over) in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary. The project began two years ago in the Czech Republic with U.S. Embassy support and was extended with grants from NED to the other three countries. This is one of the few interventions that is targeting this older group, which is among the most active in terms of voting, but the most vulnerable to propaganda and fake news. The project includes needs assessments for target groups, design of educational materials, training of trainers, workshops, pairing young media professional with senior citizens to bridge the generational divide in dealing with disinformation, and creation of core groups of seniors transferring media literacy skills. The project includes measurement of the increase in media literacy skills of seniors who participated in it in comparison with those of a control group. Continued post-project use of their media literacy skills by senior participants will be a measure of project performance. Project partners are the Hungary-based Center for Independent Journalism, the Slovakia-based MEMO 98 and the Association of Christian Seniors (4,500 seniors in 70 clubs countrywide), and the Poland-based Association of Creative Initiatives and a nationwide network of clubs that includes 4,000 seniors.

3. DRL's Strengthening Independent Media and Media Literacy in Moldova III Project, 9/18/2018-9/30/2020, implemented by IREX Europe. This multi-year project focuses on increasing media literacy and strengthening resistance to fake news, propaganda, and manipulation through the media by building media and information literacy skills in Moldova's communities.

4. USAID's MEDIA-M Activity in Moldova, 3/2017-3/2022, implemented by Internews. This Activity aims to promote the development of independent, professional media that give citizens access to a variety of perspectives, and to create a media sector that is more resilient to political and financial pressures. The evaluation will look at the Activity's public surveys to measure audience media preferences, perceptions, and habits; public media literacy education initiatives to improve citizens' ability to seek, analyze,

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evaluate, and produce news content, including for high schools and youth generally, rural initiatives, public campaigns, working with librarians, media monitors, press councils, and election coverage including debates.

5. DRL's Media Literacy in the Baltics Project, 10/1/2019-9/30/2021, implemented by IREX. This project enables the public in the three Baltic states to be able to better engage critically with multiple forms of media. The evaluation will look at two of its three components. The relevant components are: (1) building capacity for spreading skills and behaviors for critical information engagement in the wider population, and (2) supporting students' campaigns to raise public awareness of disinformation and how to combat it.

6. USAID/Ukraine's Media Program in Ukraine (MPU), implemented by Internews, 10/2018-10/2023. Working in close collaboration with local media organizations, this five-year program strengthens the accountability and capacity of the Ukrainian media sector to provide citizens with relevant and engaging information, expands media literacy, helps key institutions implement reforms, and builds media industry standards and sustainability. The program strengthens Ukraine's democratic development, bolsters its ability to counter Russian state disinformation, and foster European integration. Through USAID funding, MPU has supported several media literacy initiatives of its local partners, such as: media literacy videos by Ukrainian online media Toronto TV; Internews Ukraine (IUA)'s TrollessUA Project to fight against disinformation on Facebook and an innovative product countering Russia's propaganda and cultivating critical thinking - "Propagandarium" installation (exhibition); the efforts of the Academy of Ukrainian Press to expand the integration of media literacy into mandatory disciplines at secondary schools and increase the quality of curricula and textbooks on media literacy; an electronic mechanism for complaints about media content (Media Check) by the Ukrainian media watchdogs Institute of Mass Information and Detector Media; national contest Catch a Fake! by the Institute of Mass Information; trainings on media literacy and media monitoring in the regions by the Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy (POID); and an add-on for internet browsers Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox developed by the Data Journalism Agency (Texty.org.ua).

7. Global Engagement Center (GEC) Learn to Discern in Georgia (L2D Georgia) Project implemented by IREX is preparing 16 master trainers and 600 youth trainers/champions (age 10-25, representative of the target audience) supported by a Facebook group community of practice who will help to build the skills of at least 18,000 youth and others to critically consume information. Through additional knowledge and skill transfer, L2D Georgia could reach over 36,000 indirect beneficiaries over the 16-month life of project in 2019-2020. Each youth trainer will train at least 30 of their peers, co-workers, neighbors, relatives, and friends. Youth trainers will facilitate digital game events with small cash prizes at popular youth hangouts to attract hard-to-reach youth and empower them to identify and reject manipulative information. It is hoped that the utilization of gaming could have a significant positive impact and allow past participants and new audience members to interact. Follow-up surveys will track attitude change and skill acquisition. Programming partners include the IREX-run Multimedia Education Center, Georgian Library Association, Media Development Foundation, and three voluntary media monitoring partners (Coda Story, Sova.news, Georgia Charter of Journalistic Ethics). IREX is modifying the L2D information campaign which reached 22 million people and produced a 14 percent increase in demand for information literacy skills in Ukraine for the Georgian context to ensure that it is culturally relevant and effectively reaches Georgian youth audiences. The campaign will run from Dec. 2019-June 2020. IREX will modify the existing curriculum and game "Factory of Lies" for the Georgian content, and integrate local examples and audience research, while maintaining neutrality and balance so beneficiaries with strong geopolitical leanings will not be alienated.

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8. GEC-funded Inoculation against Disinformation in the Baltics Project implemented by Debunk EU, Vsl in Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, over eight months in 2020. The approach uses a gamified media literacy program to increase the ability of target groups to distinguish between real and manipulated information on the internet. Debunk EU is adapting the internet-based game "Bad News" whose positive effects of increased resilience are backed by a study conducted at Cambridge University. The game puts players in the position of the people who create disinformation and, as such, give players insights into the various tactics and methods used by fake news mongers to spread their messages. It covers six common disinformation tactics: impersonation, emotion, polarization, conspiracy, discrediting, and trolling. The game will be adapted to local cases and humor, and translated into the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Russian languages. The project is expected to reach 100,000 game players and one million people spread over the three Baltic states, targeting high school students and their parents via advertising campaigns on national grade book platforms and older generations (age 56 and above) via advertising on local portals of DELFI, the most robust online media company in the Baltics. Effectiveness will be measured by Google Analytics before and after surveys with assistance from DROG, a multidisciplinary team of academics, journalists and media experts from all over Europe, headquartered in The Hague.

9. GEC-funded cooperative agreement for the TechSoup Project, 9/2018-9/2020, that is implemented by TechSoup Global. The purpose is to work with regional partners to build a cadre of trainers who will deliver training in their countries to grow the number of people able to identify and effectively respond to disinformation. The project will also cultivate and organize a network of people who will regularly research and publish online their findings about cases of misinformation and manipulation.

Evaluation Questions

The contractor will develop a typology of media literacy improvement techniques and answer the following evaluation questions for each specific target group (defined by age, language, and other relevant socio-cultural factors) that is represented in the set of cases to be evaluated:

1. To what extent are the various approaches in the typology of techniques more or less (if at all) effective in the short- and long-term¹ in making specific target groups into discerning consumers of media, able to recognize and disregard disinformation and misinformation?
2. To what extent do different target groups (disaggregated by age, gender, other relevant socio-cultural factors, and type of media) use the various media literacy techniques post-intervention?
3. To what extent have participants in the projects altered their use of media (communication modes, specific channels and websites, etc.) due to influence from the media literacy training they received from the projects?
4. Have the target groups improved their understanding of digital literacy—that is, an understanding of the role algorithms and micro-targeting play in the type of information they see? Has target groups' understanding of such practices had an impact on their use of social media platforms or apps, or in how they protect/share their own data?

¹ Long term is defined for this purpose as the maximum time after completion of training that can be captured within the constraints of the timeframe of this evaluation. Some training for some target groups that began in 2017 may have been completed up to three years ago, while in the most recent cases or the longest duration on-going ones, training may still be on-going, though even in that instance, post-training results can be captured for the earliest trainee groups.

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5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the various approaches used by implementing organizations, and which, if any, are the most cost-effective in terms of the number of media consumers who have changed their behavior?
6. To what extent have changes in media literacy behavior been sustained by participants post-project?
7. To what extent have the different approaches used by implementers demonstrated a multiplier effect in terms of affecting media literacy behavior in a broader group, rather than just the direct project participants?
8. To what extent does the post-intervention evidence indicate that there is a specific volume (quantity or critical mass), depth (intensity), or duration of an intervention that is required to produce enduring improvements in media literacy in specific target groups and sociocultural contexts?

Evaluation Design and Data Collection Methods

The evaluation is a meta-analysis of the set of media literacy improvement approaches outlined above, and its purpose is to produce findings, conclusions, and recommendations on best practices that can guide the design of future media literacy projects. The contractor will complete the work in three phases. In Phase 1, the contractor will undertake a review of the literature on evidence that supports specific approaches to media literacy training. The contractor will also contact points of contact designated by ACE in GEC, DRL, NED, USAID/E&E (which will put the contractor in touch with the USAID Missions in Ukraine, Armenia, and Moldova), to collect background documents and data on the projects to be evaluated and obtain in-briefings from the funders and the implementers. The contractor will complete a full document review on the projects to be evaluated including a review of the results of the implementers' own before-and-after testing and implementers' own evaluations on rates of skill development, retention, and media literacy behavior change, and will analyze them comparatively across the set of approaches to be evaluated. The contractor will identify gaps in information needed to answer the evaluation questions and will propose statistically significant methods to fill these gaps through online and phone surveys of a random sample of participants. In Phase 1 the contractor will also propose an evaluation design for the use of field work and new remote primary data collection during Phase 2 in which the contractor will lead focus groups and key informant interviews to deepen the findings and analysis needed to answer the evaluation questions. The contractor will develop the necessary survey forms, focus group guides and key informant in-person and phone interview guides and will submit them to ACE for approval before they are translated or used in the field. The contractor will produce and submit a report on its findings, conclusions and recommendations from the Phase 1 meta-analysis, along with its proposal for remaining gaps to be filled and methodologies to be used in Phase 2 first to ACE for quality assurance, and next to DRL, NED, GEC and USAID for additional feedback before the contractor finalizes this as a report on the Phase 1 work.

In Phase 2, the contractor will undertake fieldwork as approved by ACE in Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine. ACE will decide if that work can be done in-person or whether it will need to be done remotely with the assistance of the local consultant or local firm that the contractor will hire in each of those four focus countries. As stated above, the contractor's Phase 1 report will recommend which one of the Central European and which one of the Baltic countries that will be recommended to ACE for the focus of additional local data collection. The international team members will not travel to that Central European or to that Baltic state, but the team will hire a local consultant or a local firm in each of those two countries to undertake the Phase 2 data collection, interviews, and/or focus groups in those two countries. The two latter countries will be proposed to ACE for approval based on where Phase 1 analysis indicates that the fieldwork will be most useful. The evaluation contractor will propose a

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detailed methodology for the fieldwork and the roles of the international and local team members in that work to ACE for approval. This must specify the languages, translators, and interpreters that will be used in the field. At the end of this phase of the work, the contractor will submit an analysis to ACE of the primary data collected in the field and through remote methods, along with summary findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the answers to the evaluation questions. The contractor will submit this report first to ACE for quality assurance, and next to DRL, NED, GEC and USAID for additional feedback before the contractor finalizes this as a report on the Phase 2 new primary data collection work.

In the first half of Phase 3, as a desk effort after the completion of the fieldwork, the evaluation team will draft a full report on implications of the Phase 1 and 2 reports with overall evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations, and will submit this to ACE for review and comments no later than one month after the completion of the Phase 2 report. The Evaluation Team will provide a debrief to ACE, GEC, USAID/E&E (Washington), USAID/Armenia, USAID/Ukraine, USAID/Moldova, NED, and DRL which can be via remote conferencing platform or telcon, depending on the logistics involved. ACE and its implementing partners will review the draft Phase 3 report and provide consolidated comments within three weeks after receipt of the draft final Phase 3 report. The contractor will then respond to any feedback and will finalize the evaluation report within two weeks after receipt of the feedback on the draft version. This Phase 3 report must be Section 508 compliant.

Once the report has been finalized and approved by ACE, during the second half of Phase 3, the evaluation team will produce a draft manual on Media Literacy Project Design that will include the best practices identified in the evaluation on all aspects of the findings including target group baseline research, training materials development, before-and-after testing for skills developed and their retention, and long term behavior change in media consumption and critical thinking related to media exposure. The contractor will submit the draft manual first to ACE for quality control and next to its implementing partners for review and feedback, and will finalize the manual within two weeks after receipt of that feedback. The manual should be user-friendly and provide useful tools, templates, and explanatory graphics, as needed, for clarity and to attract users. This manual must be Section 508 compliant.

The contractor will facilitate a final event in this task order as a planning workshop at the State Department for ACE and its implementing partners that will produce an action plan on what recommendations will be accepted and how actions required to implement those recommendations will be operationalized. ACE will decide at the time whether this event will be done remotely or in-person. The main outcome of the workshop will be initial agreement on the part of State and its implementing partners on follow-up actions that the U.S. government will take in regards to media literacy programming in the region in response to the final evaluation report and the manual. The evaluators must devise a workshop design that involves active learning, is engaging for participants, and can be completed within a three- to four-hour (maximum) time frame. The evaluators will document the discussion and outcomes of the workshop, and provide these notes to ACE in a Word file(s).

On the same day as the final workshop above, the contractor will provide a separate one-hour session including a PowerPoint presentation (of up to 30 minutes) followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer component to the State Department's Evaluation Community of Practice on the methodology planned for the evaluation, any ways that it needed to be adapted along the way during implementation, and any lessons learned about how this kind of multi-country, multi-phase methodology could be useful for other future evaluations. The purpose of this session is to contribute to learning in the State Department on

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multi-country evaluation methodologies. The contractor will not present the specific technical content of this media literacy evaluation. The Community of Practice will decide at that time whether this event will be delivered remotely or in-person; under either scenario, it will include a phone-in option for participants.

Evaluation Team

Size and composition: The evaluation contractor will provide an experienced Evaluation Team Leader who is an expert on performance evaluation methods and project design as well as the use of statistical data from surveys and training test results. The contractor will also provide a senior technical expert who is knowledgeable about and experienced in media literacy and a wide range of online and in-person training methods, as well as the use of before and after training testing, with experience working on media literacy to counter disinformation in Europe and Eurasia. The evaluation contractor will also engage a local in-country research expert in each of the six countries of focus (or a local evaluator or vendor firm in each of the countries of focus) who will identify any available data that pertains to measuring the changes and desired outcomes identified in the evaluation questions above, and who will collect initial data as needed prior to field visits by the expatriate team in the four countries of potential international team members' fieldwork focus (Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine). The evaluation team should include appropriate gender representation. As stated above, the international team members will not travel to the Central European or the Baltic country. Prior to the start of Phase 2, ACE will decide whether the international team members' Phase 2 data collection will need to be done remotely in Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine, or whether their travel to the field in those countries will be permitted and feasible at that time.

Collectively, the team must provide skills and experience in media and information literacy, including experience as designers and deliverers of training in the Europe and Eurasia region, in a wide range of media (online, broadcast, and print), and a wide range of training methods for both youth and older target groups (online and in-person training methods, use of gaming, etc.), as well as the collection and analysis of statistical data from surveys and before-and-after training testing; with experience working on media literacy to counter disinformation in Europe and Eurasia. The team will also demonstrate experience in secure remote data collection.

Qualifications: The required qualifications and experience of the evaluation team leader and the team as a whole are outlined below. Each international and local team member must sign a certification that states that they do not have any conflict of interest in relation to the organizations to be evaluated.

- Team Leader must demonstrate experience in evaluation leadership, team management, evaluation methods, and effective communications with contract CORs and government technical representatives, data analysis, and writing ability in English equivalent to that of a native-speaker.
- The team as a whole includes a senior subject matter expert with technical competence in data analysis, media literacy project design and training, and countering vulnerability to disinformation, plus a local team member or vendor firm in each country covered by this evaluation (Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, one Central Europe and one Baltic country). This team must collectively cover the following skill and experience requirements:
 - Data collection, survey design, test development, key informant interviewing, focus group facilitation, and skills in analyzing all of these data sources.
 - Work and sociocultural analysis experience in as many as possible of the following target countries: Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, Central Europe and the Baltics.
 - Russian language skills preferable, and translators and interpreters for local languages as needed.

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- Gender and age group analysis skills.
- English language report writing skills.
- **Security Clearance:** Security clearances are not required for members of the evaluation team. If this requirement should change, bidders should be prepared to obtain appropriate clearances post award, though ACE does not anticipate documents above the level of sensitive but unclassified (SBU) will require review. Contractor should meet DOS requirements for the handling and storage of any SBU documents received.
- **Proposed Personnel:** ACE fully expects that the individual team members identified in the proposal will be available to conduct the evaluation. At least 30 days prior to diverting any of the specified individuals to other programs or contracts (or as soon as possible, if an individual must be replaced, for example, as a result of leaving the employment of the contractor), the contractor shall notify the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) and the Contracting Officer (CO), and submit comprehensive justification for the diversion or replacement request (including proposed substitution(s)) to permit evaluation by the COR and CO of the impact on performance under this task order. The contractor shall not divert or otherwise replace any personnel without the written consent of the CO.

Timetable and Staff Time Allocations

The contractor shall complete the evaluation, with final reports on all three phases and the project design manual delivered, no later than one year after an award has been made. In their technical proposals, bidders should include a timetable for initial planning, data collection and analysis, report writing and submission of all required deliverables including reports, the best practices project design manual, the half-day workshop and the presentation to the State Evaluation Community of Practice. The timetable should be realistic given the vagaries of data collection, and possible travel restrictions, and should allow for sufficient time for State and its implementing partners to review draft deliverables, provide input, and review revisions if needed. In addition, a table of staffing days by task and team member should be included in the technical proposal.

Deliverables

The contractor will produce the following deliverables under an award to carry out this evaluation:

- **Evaluation Work Plan including Overall Evaluation Design Proposal:** Once the contractor has signed the contract, the evaluation team will submit a detailed work plan for conducting the evaluation, including a timetable for submitting deliverables according to the three phases of the work. The contractor shall include a detailed evaluation design stating how it will answer the evaluation questions, and the division of labor for various members of the team, including local consultants (or local vendor firms).
- **Phase 2 Fieldwork Design Proposal:** The evaluation contractor will propose a detailed methodology for the fieldwork and the roles of the international and local team members in that work to ACE for approval. This must specify the languages, translators, and interpreters that will be used in the field and provide English versions of the surveys and interview and focus group guides to be used.
- **Progress Reports:** The contractor shall submit bi-weekly written reports to ACE on its progress in completing the evaluation work plan. These may be in the form of emails to the COR and the government technical representatives (the ACE Democracy Officer and the ACE Senior Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist).

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- *Bi-weekly phone calls:* The contractor will schedule and coordinate logistics of a bi-weekly call during the implementation of the evaluation with the COR and government technical representatives.
- *Phase 1, 2 and 3 Draft and Final Reports:* The Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 (Final) Evaluation Reports shall be clear, concise, empirically grounded, and persuasive. ACE prefers succinct reports of no more than 40 pages each (single spaced). Details about research methodology, sampling, or research instruments shall be included as annexes (annexes are not included in the page limitations). Given that the subjects of this evaluation are a wide range of media literacy approaches, the contractor should propose what it regards as the most effective organization of the three reports (one on each Phase) in terms of readability, clarity, and usefulness for end users, which will be subject to ACE's approval. The Phase 3 Final Evaluation Report must be formatted to be Section 508 compliant. Generally, the Phase 1, 2 and 3 Evaluation Reports shall contain the following items:
 - (a) Executive summary of the Phase being reported on
 - (b) Description of the projects evaluated as relevant to the phase being reported on
 - (c) Purpose and scope of the relevant evaluation phase
 - (d) Evaluation design and data collection methods for the phase being reported on
 - (e) Data and findings
 - (f) Conclusions
 - (g) Recommendations
 - (h) Annexes:
 - a. The SOW for the phase being reported on
 - b. Research instruments of the phase being reported on
 - c. Details about data collection (sites visited, persons interviewed, nature of surveys, focus group conducted and/or documents reviewed.)
- *Media Literacy Project Design Manual:* The contractor shall produce a draft manual on Media Literacy Project Design that will include the best practices identified in the evaluation on all aspects of the findings including target group baseline research, training materials development, before-and-after testing for skills developed and their retention, and long term behavior change in media consumption and critical thinking related to media exposure. The manual must be user-friendly and provide useful tools, templates, and explanatory graphics, as needed, for clarity and to attract users. The manual will be a public document. Its intended audience includes donors, implementing partners and other designers of media literacy projects. This manual must be formatted for compliance with Section 508.
- *Evaluation Summary:* The contractor shall provide a publishable summary of the final evaluation report that is Section 508 compliant, in addition to the full final evaluation report itself. The contractor will write the summary for a public audience, and it will not be included in the final evaluation report. The summary will be brief, not more than two pages and should not include confidential issues. It will include the title of the evaluation, date of the submission of the report, evaluation questions, data collection methods, key findings, recommendations, and use, if applicable.
- *Action Planning Final Workshop:* The contractor will also organize a workshop with key stakeholders in Washington, D.C. to discuss findings and recommendations, and to facilitate consensus on implications of the evaluation for future programming, and specific actions that ACE and/or its implementing partners will take in response to the evaluation. The time for this workshop will be up to a half day.
- *Methodology Presentation to DOS Evaluation Community of Practice:* The contractor will present a one-hour session including a PowerPoint presentation (of up to 30 minutes)

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followed by a 30-minute question-and-answer component to the State Department's Evaluation Community of Practice on the methodology planned for the evaluation, any ways that it needed to be adapted along the way during implementation, and any lessons learned about how this kind of multi-country, multi-phase methodology could be useful for other future evaluations.

Logistics Support

GEC, DRL, NED, USAID/Armenia, USAID/Ukraine, and USAID/Moldova will provide the evaluation team with access to data and documents related to the projects of focus in this evaluation. Contractors will obtain their own visas and security clearances (if necessary). In-country logistics will be the primary responsibility of the evaluation team, including transportation, scheduling of appointments, and food and lodging. GEC, DRL, NED, USAID/Armenia, USAID/Ukraine, and USAID/Moldova, however, will provide contacts and contact information relevant to the evaluation to the evaluation team if needed, including with government ministries, civil society groups, program participants. In most cases, security in the focus countries is sufficient that State does not anticipate that security transportation facilities will be required.

Also, in some countries, logistics can be complicated by weather at certain times of year if access to interviewees outside of the capital is needed, and this should be taken into account if relevant in developing the field work schedule.

Contract Security Requirements

Contractor personnel performing on this task order do not require personnel security clearances for contract performance. RSO vetting requirements (as determined by the RSO) may be required for Local nationals performing on this task order.

Standard Information Protection

The contractor and its employees shall exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all matters relating to their duties and functions. They shall not communicate to any person any information known to them by reason of their performance of services under this task order which has not been made public, except in the necessary performance of their duties or upon written authorization of the contracting officer. All documents and records (including photographs) generated during the performance of work under this task order shall be for the sole use of and become the exclusive property of the U.S. Government. Furthermore, no article, book, pamphlet, recording, broadcast, speech, television appearance, film or photograph concerning any aspect of work performed under this task order shall be published or disseminated through any media without the prior written authorization of the contracting officer. These obligations do not cease upon the expiration or termination of this task order. The contractor shall include the substance of this provision in all contracts of employment and in all subcontracts hereunder. Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU) Information: See 12 FAM 540 for guidance regarding the Handling, Access, Dissemination, and Release of SBU.

Laptop and Data Protection Requirements

- The Contractor is restricted from transporting unencrypted SBU data electronically across the Internet using email, FTP sites, or commercial web sites.
- THE ELECTRONIC PROCESSING MEDIA MUST BE ENCRYPTED USING any NIST approved product. (NIST approved products can be found at <http://csrc.nist.gov/groups/STM/cmvp/validation.html>). An overwrite utility software must be used to

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remove all previous data in the following manner: A first overwrite pass using the number '1'; A second overwrite pass using the number '0'; and a third overwrite pass using ANY character.

- Thumb drives, jump drives and other portable storage devices: Downloading project information onto thumb drives, jump drives or other portable storage devices onto which project information can be downloaded, is prohibited unless specifically authorized in writing by the COR . Requests to utilize these portable storage devices must include certification that a NIST approved product (including the product name and version) will encrypt the portable storage device. A listing of NIST approved products for these storage devices can be found at <http://csrc.nist.gov/groups/STM/cmvp/validation.html>. Authorized users must be briefed by their Facility Security Officer (FSO) or security point of contact and sign a briefing acknowledgement regarding their responsibility to safeguard such media. Any loss or compromise of storage device containing project information must be reported to the COR and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, DS/IS/IND immediately.
- Contractor site office and all subcontractor site office individual computer hard-drives (including laptops) and server hard-drives must be encrypted using any NIST approved product (found at <http://csrc.nist.gov/groups/STM/cmvp/validation.html>). Contractor site office copiers, scanners and all other electronic media shall be password protected to prevent unauthorized use, access and downloading of SBU and project sensitive information by unauthorized users. Site offices containing computers, scanners, printers, hardcopy, and electronic storage media shall be locked against unauthorized access when not in use.
- While on travel, laptops must remain with the contractor employee and cannot be included in any checked baggage.

Badging Requirements

The DOS Personal Identification Card Issuance Procedures may be accessed at <https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/DS-in/C/ST/SSI/NSM/IDM/OneBadge/SitePages/OneBadge.aspx>

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GENERAL TASK ORDER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The total period of performance for this effort shall be up to one year.

2 PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The work to be performed under this task order will be performed at the Contractor's site.

3 TASK ORDER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In addition to the terms and conditions specified in this task order, all terms and conditions of the Contractor's IDIQ Contract shall apply.

4 DOI-AAAP-0028 - Electronic Invoicing and Payment Requirements – Internet Payment Platform (IPP) (Apr 2013)

Payment requests must be submitted electronically through the U. S. Department of the Treasury's Invoice Processing Platform System (IPP).

"Payment request" means any request for contract financing payment or invoice payment by the Contractor. To constitute a proper invoice, the payment request must comply with the requirements identified in the applicable Prompt Payment clause included in the contract, or the clause 52.212-4 Contract Terms and Conditions - Commercial Items included in commercial item contracts. The IPP website address is: <https://www.ipp.gov>.

Under this task order, the following documents are required to be submitted as an attachment to the IPP invoice:

Supporting travel documentation.

Invoices for travel must include the name of the traveler, travel itinerary, purpose of travel, receipts for airfare or other means of transportation, hotel, rental car, and any other expense over \$75, and any other documentation requested by the Contracting Officer. **No travel is authorized unless prior government approval from the COR is obtained.**

Ø The contractor is responsible for ensuring invoices submitted are accurate and complete, and all labor, travel and other direct costs are in accordance with federal guidelines, the FAR Part 31 and other Government mandates and directives.

Ø Additional supporting documentation MAY BE REQUESTED at the discretion of the COR or CO.

FINAL INVOICE:

Within sixty calendar days of product acceptance and/or completion of services:

- The contractor shall submit a final invoice, designated as such by a clear statement of "FINAL INVOICE" on the face of the invoice document.
- The contractor shall provide a certificate of completion which certifies all goods and service have been provided as required by this task order.

The sixty calendar day submission timeframe shall not be extended without written authorization from the contracting officer. In the event items a, b, or c above are not submitted within the

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authorized timeframe, the contracting officer will make final cost determinations in order to make final payment and closeout the task order unilaterally.

The Contractor must use the IPP website to register access and use IPP for submitting requests for payment. The Contractor Government Business Point of Contact (as listed in SAM) will receive enrollment instructions via email from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB) within 3 - 5 business days of the task order award date. Contractor assistance with enrollment can be obtained by contacting the IPP Production Helpdesk via email ippgroup@bos.frb.org -or phone (866) 973-3131.

If the Contractor is unable to comply with the requirement to use IPP for submitting invoices for payment, the Contractor must submit a waiver request in writing to the Contracting Officer with its proposal or quotation.

(End of Local Clause)

5 SECTION 508 COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

The offeror shall ensure the personnel providing the labor hours possess the knowledge, skills, and ability necessary to address the applicable Revised 508 Standards defined in this task order, and shall provide supporting documentation upon request.

For Microsoft Office and PDF documents, WCAG Level A and AA Conformance test results must be based on the Harmonized Testing Guidance from the Accessible Electronic Document Community of Practice (AED ACOP).

6 Key Personnel Designation

For the purpose of the overall performance of this effort, the Team Lead and Subject Matter Expert shall be designated as a key person. The individuals performing in key categories are considered by ECA to be essential to performance.

7 Quality Assurance

The COR will review, for completeness, preliminary or draft documentation that the Contractor submits, and may return it to the Contractor for correction. Absence of any comments by the COR will not relieve the Contractor of the responsibility for complying with the requirements of this work statement. Final approval and acceptance of documentation required herein shall be by letter of approval and acceptance by COR. The Contractor shall not construe any letter of acknowledgment of receipt material as a waiver of review, or as an acknowledgment that the material is in conformance with this work statement. Any approval given during preparation of the documentation, or approval for shipment shall not guarantee the final acceptance of the completed documentation.

8. Paperwork Reduction Act

(a) This contract involves a requirement to collect or record information calling either for answers to identical questions from 10 or more persons other than Federal employees, or information from Federal employees which is outside the scope of their employment, for use by the Federal government or disclosure to third parties; therefore, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) shall apply to this contract. No plan, questionnaire, interview guide or other similar device for collecting information (whether repetitive or single time) may be used without the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) first providing clearance. Contractors and the Contracting Officer's Representative shall

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be guided by the provisions of 5 CFR part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, and seek the advice of the DoS to determine the procedures for acquiring OMB clearance.

(b) The Contractor shall not expend any funds or begin any data collection until the Contracting Officer provides the Contractor with written notification authorizing the expenditure of funds and the collection of data. The Contractor shall allow at least 120 days for OMB clearance. The Contracting Officer will consider excessive delays caused by the Government which arise out of causes beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the Contractor.

FAR Clause: 52.204-25 Prohibition on Contracting for Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment.

PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTING FOR CERTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT (AUG 2019)

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this clause—

“Covered foreign country” means The People’s Republic of China.

“Covered telecommunications equipment or services” means—

(1) Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);

(2) For the purpose of public safety, security of Government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);

(3) Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment; or

(4) Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the government of a covered foreign country.

“Critical technology” means—

(1) Defense articles or defense services included on the United States Munitions List set forth in the International Traffic in Arms Regulations under subchapter M of chapter I of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations;

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(2) Items included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, and controlled-

(i) Pursuant to multilateral regimes, including for reasons relating to national security, chemical and biological weapons proliferation, nuclear nonproliferation, or missile technology; or

(ii) For reasons relating to regional stability or surreptitious listening;

(3) Specially designed and prepared nuclear equipment, parts and components, materials, software, and technology covered by part 810 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to assistance to foreign atomic energy activities);

(4) Nuclear facilities, equipment, and material covered by part 110 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to export and import of nuclear equipment and material);

(5) Select agents and toxins covered by part 331 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, part 121 of title 9 of such Code, or part 73 of title 42 of such Code; or

(6) Emerging and foundational technologies controlled pursuant to section 1758 of the Export Control Reform Act of 2018 (50 U.S.C. 4817).

"Substantial or essential component" means any component necessary for the proper function or performance of a piece of equipment, system, or service.

(b) *Prohibition.* Section 889(a)(1)(A) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) prohibits the head of an executive agency on or after August 13, 2019, from procuring or obtaining, or extending or renewing a contract to procure or obtain, any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. The Contractor is prohibited from providing to the Government any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system, unless an exception at paragraph (c) of this clause applies or the covered telecommunication equipment or services are covered by a waiver described in Federal Acquisition Regulation 4.2104.

(c) *Exceptions.* This clause does not prohibit contractors from providing—

(1) A service that connects to the facilities of a third-party, such as backhaul, roaming, or interconnection arrangements; or

(2) Telecommunications equipment that cannot route or redirect user data traffic or permit visibility into any user data or packets that such equipment transmits or otherwise handles.

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(d) Reporting requirement.

(1) In the event the Contractor identifies covered telecommunications equipment or services used as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system, during contract performance, or the Contractor is notified of such by a subcontractor at any tier or by any other source, the Contractor shall report the information in paragraph (d)(2) of this clause to the Contracting Officer, unless elsewhere in this contract are established procedures for reporting the information; in the case of the Department of Defense, the Contractor shall report to the website at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>. For indefinite delivery contracts, the Contractor shall report to the Contracting Officer for the indefinite delivery contract and the Contracting Officer(s) for any affected order or, in the case of the Department of Defense, identify both the indefinite delivery contract and any affected orders in the report provided at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>.

(2) The Contractor shall report the following information pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) of this clause

(i) Within one business day from the date of such identification or notification: the contract number; the order number(s), if applicable; supplier name; supplier unique entity identifier (if known); supplier Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code (if known); brand; model number (original equipment manufacturer number, manufacturer part number, or wholesaler number); item description; and any readily available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended.

(ii) Within 10 business days of submitting the information in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this clause: any further available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended. In addition, the Contractor shall describe the efforts it undertook to prevent use or submission of covered telecommunications equipment or services, and any additional efforts that will be incorporated to prevent future use or submission of covered telecommunications equipment or services.

(e) *Subcontracts*. The Contractor shall insert the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (e), in all subcontracts and other contractual instruments, including subcontracts for the acquisition of commercial items.

(End of clause)

52.204-23 Prohibition on Contracting for Hardware, Software, and Services Developed or Provided by Kaspersky Lab and Other Covered Entities.

PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTING FOR HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, AND SERVICES DEVELOPED OR PROVIDED BY KASPERSKY LAB AND OTHER COVERED ENTITIES (JUL 2018)

(a) *Definitions*. As used in this clause—

Covered article means any hardware, software, or service that—

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(1) Is developed or provided by a covered entity;

(2) Includes any hardware, software, or service developed or provided in whole or in part by a covered entity; or

(3) Contains components using any hardware or software developed in whole or in part by a covered entity.

Covered entity means—

(1) Kaspersky Lab;

(2) Any successor entity to Kaspersky Lab;

(3) Any entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with Kaspersky Lab; or

(4) Any entity of which Kaspersky Lab has a majority ownership.

(b) *Prohibition.* Section 1634 of Division A of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Pub. L. 115-91) prohibits Government use of any covered article. The Contractor is prohibited from—

(1) Providing any covered article that the Government will use on or after October 1, 2018; and

(2) Using any covered article on or after October 1, 2018, in the development of data or deliverables first produced in the performance of the contract.

(c) *Reporting requirement.*

(1) In the event the Contractor identifies a covered article provided to the Government during contract performance, or the Contractor is notified of such by a subcontractor at any tier or any other source, the Contractor shall report, in writing, to the Contracting Officer or, in the case of the Department of Defense, to the website at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>. For indefinite delivery contracts, the Contractor shall report to the Contracting Officer for the indefinite delivery contract and the Contracting Officer(s) for any affected order or, in the case of the Department of Defense, identify both the indefinite delivery contract and any affected orders in the report provided at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>.

(2) The Contractor shall report the following information pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) of this clause:

(i) Within 1 business day from the date of such identification or notification: the contract number; the order number(s), if applicable; supplier name; brand; model number (Original Equipment

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Manufacturer (OEM) number, manufacturer part number, or wholesaler number); item description; and any readily available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended.

(ii) Within 10 business days of submitting the report pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) of this clause: any further available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended. In addition, the Contractor shall describe the efforts it undertook to prevent use or submission of a covered article, any reasons that led to the use or submission of the covered article, and any additional efforts that will be incorporated to prevent future use or submission of covered articles.

(d) Subcontracts. The Contractor shall insert the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (d), in all subcontracts, including subcontracts for the acquisition of commercial items.

(End of clause)

From:

(b)(6)

To:

(b)(6)

state.gov>

Subject: RE: Russia Team Meeting: chat conversation from Microsoft Teams**Date:** Mon, 23 Jan 2023 17:11:01 +0000**From:**

(b)(6)

@state.gov>

Sent: Monday, January 23, 2023 12:08 PM**To:**

(b)(6)

@state.gov>

Subject: Russia Team Meeting: chat conversation from Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams

x

x

(b)(6)

ago

(b)(5)

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~**Sender:**

(b)(6)

Recipient:

(b)(6)

@state.gov>

Kremlin Disinformation Bulletin March 9, 2022

Debunking Russia's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Disinformation

The Kremlin's false allegations of U.S. labs and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats in Ukraine are the latest examples of disinformation we have repeatedly debunked over the years in Ukraine and around the world. Russia, and earlier, the Soviet Union, has long accused the West of the very CBRN actions it undertakes. Today, using a network of official spokespeople, state media, proxy sites, and social media, Russia seeks to exploit fears and sensationalize threats to spread their disinformation.

The Kremlin has stepped up its CBRN disinformation campaign, with amplification by the People's Republic of China (PRC), alleging that foreign owned and operated laboratories working with the U.S. Department of Defense's Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program are biological weapon facilities. These laboratories are used for peaceful purposes, playing a vital role in the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria and Libya, the reduction of the threat of state and non-state actors acquiring or developing chemical and biological weapons, and the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Independent researchers have authoritatively debunked these false claims.

Ukrainian public and animal health research and diagnostic laboratories help prevent, detect, and mitigate the spread of infectious disease threats in Ukraine. The Ukrainian government owns and operates all these facilities, and their work is part of the normal efforts of any country to ensure the health and safety of its citizens from infectious disease.

Increasing Kremlin Disinformation on Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Threats in Ukraine

The Kremlin is using its disinformation amplification network to attempt to spread these allegations. On March 3, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, under U.S. sanctions for having "advanced the false narrative that Ukraine is the aggressor in Putin's war of choice, claimed Ukraine's public and animal health facilities were "biological military laboratories," insinuating they represented a threat to justify Russia's invasion of Ukraine. On March 6, Russian Ministry of Defense spokesperson Major General Igor Konashenkov claimed Russia had proof Ukrainian laboratories were developing biological weapons, without publicly releasing any supporting evidence.

Russian state and proxy media outlets have widely reported these deceptive claims, and on March 8, People's Republic of China (PRC) Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhao Lijian and PRC state media repeated them. Russian state media then amplified Zhao's remarks, demonstrating how these dangerous narratives can be echoed, laundered, and amplified.

Another disinformation narrative pushed by Russian state media is that the United States transferred plutonium to help Kyiv develop a "dirty" nuclear weapon. This false narrative has spread widely across Russian state media and outlets linked to U.S.-sanctioned Yevgeniy

Prigozhin (e.g. TASS, RIA Novosti, Zvezda, PolitRossiya). The Russian MFA also alleged March 8 that Ukrainian intelligence and Azov Battalion militants had “rigged” a reactor near Kharkiv to stage a provocation then accuse Russian forces of attacking the nuclear facility.

Russia’s disinformation and propaganda ecosystem has attempted to justify their unprovoked and brutal war with accusations Ukraine, the United States, or NATO were preparing a chemical disaster in Donbas, using ultrasonic weapons, and even conducting biological experiments on Ukrainian and Georgian soldiers. These claims wrongly try to blame Ukraine for the Putin’s war of choice and divert attention from Russia’s own violations of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Soviet and Russian Biowarfare Activities

According to the 2012 study *The Soviet Biological Weapons Program: A History*, while the United States was giving up its offensive biological weapons in the late 1960s, the Soviet government “decided to establish a large biological warfare program that would be driven by newly discovered and powerful biotechnologies.” A 2016 study concluded that “there are no signs that Russia intends to scale back the biological institutes that once directed the Soviet bioweapons program.”

While Russia works hard to push the false narrative the United States is developing biological weapons, it remains secretive about its own activities. In addition to Russia’s own use of chemical weapons, the Kremlin also continues to support the Assad regime in Syria, which has repeatedly used chemical weapons. Russia that has long maintained a biological weapons program in violation of international law.

Despite Russia’s lies, the facts are clear -- the United States is in compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention and does not develop or possess such weapons anywhere. In contrast, as White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki has noted, Russia “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.”

Drafted: R/GEC: (b)(6)

Approved: R/SBO: Jennifer Hall-Godfrey [JHG]

Clearances:

R/FO: (b)(6)

R/FO: (b)(6)

EUR/FO: Chris Robinson (ok)

GEC/FO: (b)(6)

GEC/RU: (b)(6)

EUR/RUS: (b)(6)

EUR/PPD/StratComm: (b)(6)

EUR/Press:

L/EUR: (b)(6)

L/PD: (b)(6)

EUR/PRA: (b)(6)

EUR/EE: (b)(6)

EAP/CM: (b)(6)

R: (b)(6)

ISN/CTR: (b)(6)

AVC/CBW: (b)(6)

D: (b)(6)

D-MR: (b)(6)

P: (b)(6)

S/P: (b)(6)

C: No response

GPA:

SPOX:

From: (b)(6)
To: (b)(6)@state.gov;
(b)(6)@state.gov;
(b)(6)@state.gov
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov
Subject: GEC Russia Involvement with WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism
Date: Wed, 28 Sep 2022 15:00:55 +0000

(b)(6) - Flagging the below cable outlining GECs participation in WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism. (b)(6) suggested we set up time to discuss how we might fit into this plan.

- LOE 3.2: Work internally with the Global Engagement Center, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, the Russia Influence Group, and others to develop strategies to counter Russian disinformation tactics that weaponize claims of antisemitism and Holocaust denial to discredit U.S. allies and partners. Identify Russia's attempts to sow societal discord in Western Hemisphere countries, including their support for parties and groups of various political identities and ideologies that espouse antisemitism and other forms of xenophobia. Work locally with civil and religious organizations on engagement in communities targeted by Russian disinformation.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: (b)(7)(E)

Passcode: (b)(7)(E)

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

Or call in (audio only)

(b)(7)(E) United States, Spokane

Phone Conference ID: (b)(7)(E) #

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

DeControlled

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~**From:** SMART Core <svcsmartbtsewshprec1@state.gov>All
@state.gov**Sent:** Tuesday, September 27, 2022 12:40 PM

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

All @state.gov

Subject: (U) WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism**UNCLASSIFIED**

-SBU-

**Info Office:**PPR_PD_PAO, Research, DEP_COOR, Violent_Extremist_Groups,
GSEC_SCA, DIV_CHIEF, PLCY_OFF, SA_TAGS, R_FO,
WHA_POSTS, POL_INFO, RPO, SEN_ADV_1**MRN:**22 STATE 106432**Date/DTG:**

Sep 27, 2022 / 271639Z SEP 22

From:

SECSTATE WASHDC

Action:ASUNCION, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BELMOPAN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
BOGOTA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BRASILIA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
BRIDGETOWN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BUENOS AIRES,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; GEORGETOWN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
GRENADA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; GUATEMALA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
HAVANA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; KINGSTON, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; LA
PAZ, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; LIMA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; MANAGUA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; MEXICO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; MONTEVIDEO,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; NASSAU, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; OTTAWA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; PANAMA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; PORT AU
PRINCE, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; PORT OF SPAIN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
QUITO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SAN JOSE, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SAN
SALVADOR, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SANTIAGO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
SANTO DOMINGO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; TEGUCIGALPA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; VENEZUELA AFFAIRS UNIT BOGOTA,
USOFFICE ROUTINE**E.O.:**

13526

TAGS:

PHUM, KIRF, KRGA, PREL, SCUL, SOCI, PGOV, KPAO

Captions:~~SENSITIVE~~**Reference:**A) 20 STATE 74628
B) 19 USOSCE 130
C) 22 Quebec 54
D) 20 STATE 22778
E) 21 Quebec 8
F) 21 Ottawa 138
G) 21 Montreal 122
H) 21 Toronto 160**Subject:**

(U) WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism

1. **(U) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST:** WHA requests that offices and posts review the WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism (paragraphs 3-9) and use it to inform Integrated Country Strategy implementation and review, aid strategic and program planning, assist in prioritizing engagement, and identify specific efforts to implement in country. By November 1, posts should report by cable up to three specific lines of effort (LOEs). Posts should then send a follow-up front channel report by November 1, 2023, that documents any results. Please see paragraph 10 for additional details of the action request. You should include in the initial cable any requests for assistance associated with those efforts. Additionally, posts may voluntarily report on significant activities and best practices related to combatting antisemitism, linking them to the LOEs below. WHA/PPC will review post responses and coordinate with the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (SEHI), the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (SEAS), the Office of International Religious Freedom (J/IRF), and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) to provide technical support, expert consultations, guides, and workshops. **END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST**

2. **(U) BACKGROUND:** WHA recognizes that Jewish communities throughout the Western Hemisphere face ongoing risks. This action plan, developed in coordination with SEHI, SEAS, J/IRF, and DRL, aligns with WHA's efforts to promote U.S. leadership and values by upholding democratic principles, supporting human rights, and strengthening respect for the rule of law. The plan sets forth five policy priorities: 1) promote security of Jewish communities; 2) strengthen cooperation with civil society to combat antisemitism and promote respect for religious freedom; 3) counter antisemitism in the media, including social media; 4) encourage governments to address Holocaust issues accurately; and 5) combat antisemitism regionally and internationally. While some of these themes may not apply directly to every post, we request that all posts incorporate elements of the WHA action plan into their work, to the extent possible. **END BACKGROUND.**

WHA ACTION PLAN FOR COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM

3. **(U) CONTEXT:** Antisemitism takes many forms: violent attacks against Jewish communities, antisemitic rhetoric, vitriolic comments on social media, and attempts to deny or distort the history of the Holocaust. Since antisemitism cuts across ideology, political party, group, and nation, we must combat it with wide-ranging efforts and include bilateral and multilateral engagement with governments as well as cooperation with civil society, religious groups, the private sector, and academia. This action plan seeks to assist WHA posts and offices to focus strategic planning, identify lines of effort, and offer expert assistance to those seeking to tailor activities to the local context. WHA encourages posts to use the bureau-level LOEs (paragraphs 5-9) as the basis for their own action plans.

4. **(U)** To combat antisemitism in the Western Hemisphere, WHA works in close coordination with the Department's Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (SEHI), the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (SEAS), the Office of International Religious Freedom (J/IRF), and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL). The action

plan centers on five main themes: security of Jewish communities; cooperation with civil society; combatting antisemitism in the media, including social media; Holocaust education, remembrance, and commemoration, and combatting Holocaust distortion and denial; and international and regional collaboration. Combating antisemitism aligns with WHA's strategic objectives of promoting social inclusion and respect for the human dignity and rights of all persons, building safe communities, and building support for U.S. values.

POLICY PRIORITIES AND LINES OF EFFORT

5. (U) I. Promote security of Jewish communities

Objective/Desired End State: Western Hemisphere governments protect Jewish communities from antisemitic acts (including physical assaults, attacks against property, and threats) so Jewish communities can live free from fear. Governments investigate antisemitic acts and hold perpetrators accountable. Governments (including security forces and law enforcement) work with Jewish communities to identify and respond to their security needs. Governments document incidents of antisemitism and share applicable disaggregated data with law enforcement, civil society, and international organizations.

- LOE 1.1: Encourage governments at national, state, regional, and local levels to take steps to improve protection for Jewish communities, places of worship, and other culturally meaningful sites, incorporating Jewish community experience and expertise.
- LOE 1.2: Support training for those in the justice system, including police officers, prosecutors, judges, and public defenders, to understand antisemitism and antisemitic crime so they can effectively promote the security of Jewish communities.
- LOE 1.3: Encourage countries to preserve historic Jewish sites in the Western Hemisphere and consistently monitor, condemn, and respond when such sites become targets of attacks. Projects in the Dominican Republic and Suriname through the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation can serve as a model.
- LOE 1.4: Encourage governments to meet existing commitments on recognizing, recording, and reporting antisemitic hate crimes. Meet with government entities responsible for law enforcement, as well as civil society and religious leaders, to understand the challenges involved in reporting, investigating, and prosecuting antisemitic crimes and incidents, with the goal of increasing the proportion of countries that annually report data on antisemitic hate crimes.
- LOE 1.5: Publicly encourage national, state, regional, and local governments to condemn antisemitic incidents and rhetoric when they occur and to continue to seek accountability for previous antisemitic crimes and incidents. Urge political parties, including political groups, to hold members accountable for antisemitic statements.
- LOE 1.6: Assist law enforcement in Western Hemisphere countries with internal vetting and training to address the risk from violent antisemitic extremists in their ranks.

6. (U) II. Strengthen government cooperation with civil society to combat antisemitism and uphold religious freedom

Objective/Desired End State: Governments and civil society work together to combat antisemitism and safeguard religious practice for Jewish communities. They collaborate to actively combat antisemitism among government, school, law enforcement, and military personnel employed in all state institutions, while protecting freedom of expression. Civil society (including both Jewish and non-Jewish groups) actively counter antisemitism and promote respect for religious freedom and tolerance of members of religious and ethnic minority groups.

- LOE 2.1: Support efforts of Jewish communities to advocate for themselves on issues (including pending or enacted legislation) that threaten to restrict their religious practice. Through diplomatic engagement, as appropriate, oppose laws and practices that would negatively infringe on religious practices (e.g., bans on kosher slaughter, male circumcision).
- LOE 2.2: Offer support, knowledge, and best practices to Western Hemisphere governments considering appointing national coordinators to combat antisemitism.
- LOE 2.3: Encourage countries to incorporate civil society input into not only action plans but also national strategies and policies on antisemitism and/or other forms of intolerance. France, Germany, the European Commission, and the OSCE have action plans that could serve as models for Western Hemisphere countries (Ref B).
- LOE 2.4: Support and sustain encounters with and within minority communities that promote tolerance and respect for religious freedom, to include community projects and interfaith coalitions. Consulate General Quebec City's extensive diversity and inclusion outreach initiatives outlined in Ref C, including interfaith dialogues and events, provide a model for promoting inclusion in a concrete way.
- LOE 2.5: Promote the exchange and dissemination within and among countries of best practices and lessons learned by those countering antisemitism, working with Public Affairs Sections to utilize the range of tools available. This could include the International Visitor Leadership Program, the U.S. Speaker Program, and others. Encourage the translation into English of best practices, studies, and lessons learned for maximum international use and retranslation. Actively reach out to communities where antisemitic narratives and sentiment have become widespread to discuss antisemitism and share the U.S. experience in combating hatred directed against Jews and members of other minority groups.
- LOE 2.6: Promote education programs focused on combating antisemitism, not limited to Holocaust education topics (which we address further below), so that students and others learn the history and contemporary manifestations of antisemitism and effective ways to counter it.
- LOE 2.7: Promote and encourage the use of positive images and narratives highlighting the contributions of Jewish people in their communities.

7. (SBU) III. Counter antisemitism and false narratives in the media, including social media

Objective/Desired End State: Civil society voices become or remain active and empowered to counter antisemitic and other hateful and false narratives in all media. Independent media identify and effectively push back against antisemitic narratives (e.g., conspiracy theories, scapegoating, hateful and negative stereotypes, etc.). Governments do not use antisemitic tropes

and spread antisemitic narratives through the media; they actively and effectively counter antisemitism without infringing on freedom of expression.

- LOE 3.1: Reinforce and elevate local voices to speak out against antisemitism.
- LOE 3.2: Work internally with the Global Engagement Center, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, the Russia Influence Group, and others to develop strategies to counter Russian disinformation tactics that weaponize claims of antisemitism and Holocaust denial to discredit U.S. allies and partners. Identify Russia's attempts to sow societal discord in Western Hemisphere countries, including their support for parties and groups of various political identities and ideologies that espouse antisemitism and other forms of xenophobia. Work locally with civil and religious organizations on engagement in communities targeted by Russian disinformation.
- LOE 3.3: Build relationships with local representatives of independent media, including social media platforms, and local organizations working to counter hate speech online. Encourage voluntary collaboration to address the spread of antisemitic content, while fully respecting freedom of expression.
- LOE 3.4: When Western Hemisphere government officials, political leaders, and other prominent public figures voice, enable, or willfully allow antisemitic narratives, or when antisemites receive government recognition or advancement, WHA takes steps to challenge such narratives, directly or in partnership with other U.S. or international officials in both public statements and private engagements.

8. (U) IV. Encourage governments to address Holocaust issues responsibly and accurately

Objective/Desired End State: Governments address Holocaust issues responsibly, develop comprehensive Holocaust education programs, and actively counter efforts to deny or distort the Holocaust.

- LOE 4.1: Encourage countries to honor their commitments under the 2009 Terezin Declaration on Holocaust-Era Assets and Related Issues by utilizing the JUST Act Report (Ref D). Western Hemisphere signatories of the Terezin Declaration include Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Uruguay. The Netherlands is also a signatory.
- LOE 4.2: Promote Holocaust education efforts, including through public awareness campaigns and engagement with youth and non-Jewish religious minority communities, as well as teacher training sessions. Draw from OSCE guidelines, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust, and materials from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), as appropriate. Partner with the USHMM to share best practices with government and civil society officials responsible for Holocaust memory and restitution efforts, expand on educational efforts, and support the museum's traveling exhibitions.
- LOE 4.3: Through diplomatic engagement with likeminded partners, counter government and other actors' attempts to use laws, museums, or other initiatives to distort the historical record of the Holocaust.

9. (U) V. Combat antisemitism regionally and internationally

Objective/Desired End State: Western Hemisphere countries actively and effectively combat antisemitism domestically and regionally, including in multilateral fora.

- LOE 5.1: Encourage countries to embrace and apply in practice the nonbinding IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, inclusive of the examples. (Endorsing country list: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/member-countries>)
- LOE 5.2: Encourage Western Hemisphere countries to join IHRA as members or observers. WHA member countries include Argentina and Canada. WHA observer countries include Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay.
- LOE 5.3: Encourage countries to respond effectively to attempts by other countries to deny, exploit, distort, or politicize the Holocaust or Holocaust remembrance in multilateral fora.
- LOE 5.4: Work with multilateral and regional institutions to combat antisemitism. Work on joint statements with member countries in these fora. Work with these organizations' specialists and envoys to support and amplify their work.
- LOE 5.5: Work with likeminded governments to combat antisemitism beyond the Western Hemisphere, including removing antisemitic content in textbooks in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as encourage steps toward IHRA observer status or membership for Middle Eastern and North African governments.

ACTION REQUEST

10. (U) By November 1, 2022, we request posts to report by cable up to three specific LOEs from the suggestions above with the goal of delivering results by November 1, 2023. Posts should also report on the estimated size of the Jewish community and the prevalence of antisemitic activities in the host country. Additionally, posts may voluntarily report on significant activities and best practices related to combatting antisemitism, linking them to the LOEs listed above. We encourage posts to highlight specific efforts Public Affairs offices implement in their Section Activity reporting in PD Tools. Posts may wish to consider collaboration with other posts in their region or with other international or NGO communities at their own post and may find inspiration by reviewing the work undertaken in Mission Canada (Refs E-H) and Mission Trinidad and Tobago (reported in post's Section Activities in PD tools), as well as ideas in the EUR Action Plan (attached). Post's cable should include any requests for technical or financial assistance or visits from technical experts to share best practices associated with those efforts. WHA/PPC will review posts' responses and coordinate assistance within the Department for posts based on their needs, including expert consultations, seminars, training, technical assistance, and other support with the intent of making these services easier to access.

POINT OF CONTACT

11. (SBU) Please direct questions to (b)(6)@state.gov.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~**Signature:**

Blinken

Drafted By:

WHA_PPC:(b)(6)

Cleared By:

WHA/BSC:(h)(6)

WHA/BSC:(h)(6)

WHA/BSC:(h)(6)

D-MR:(h)(6)

WHA/CAR:(b)(6)

WHA/CEN:(h)(6)

WHA/HA:(b)(6)

INL/WHP:(h)(6)

WHA/EPSC:(h)(6)

WHA/PD:(b)(6)

J/SEAS:(b)(6)

J/IRF:(h)(6)

DRL/WHA:(b)(6) (DRL)

EUR/SEH:(b)(6)

D:(b)(6)

P:

S/P:(b)(6)

R:(b)(6)

J:(b)(6)

E:

R/PPR:(h)(6)

GPA/RA/RE:(h)(6)

R/GEC:(b)(6)

ECA/P/P:(h)(6)

INL/KM:(b)(6)

INL/FO:(b)(6)

WHA:(b)(6)

WHA:

WHA:

WHA:

WHA/CCA:(h)(6)

WHA/CAR:(b)(6)

WHA:(h)(6)

WHA/PPC:(b)(6)

WHA/PPC:

Approved By:

WHA:Nichols, Brian A

Released By:

WHA_PPC (b)(6)

Info:

(b)(6)

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Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

DIS_PPR_PD_PAO, DIS_RESEARCH, DIS_DEP_COOR,
DIS_VIOLENT_EXTREMIST_GROUP, DIS_GSEC_SCA,
DIS_DIV_CHIEF, DIS_PLCY_OFF, DIS_SA_TAGS, DIS_R_FO,
WHA_POSTS, POL_INFO, DIS_RPO, DIS_SEN_ADV_1

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

Sender: (b)(6)

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

Recipient:

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

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

(b)(6) @state.gov>

From: (b)(6)
To:
Cc:
Subject: GEC Russia Involvement with WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism
Attachments: image001.gif

(b)(6) - Flagging the below cable outlining GECs participation in WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism. (b)(6) suggested we set up time to discuss how we might fit into this plan.

- LOE 3.2: Work internally with the Global Engagement Center, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, the Russia Influence Group, and others to develop strategies to counter Russian disinformation tactics that weaponize claims of antisemitism and Holocaust denial to discredit U.S. allies and partners. Identify Russia's attempts to sow societal discord in Western Hemisphere countries, including their support for parties and groups of various political identities and ideologies that espouse antisemitism and other forms of xenophobia. Work locally with civil and religious organizations on engagement in communities targeted by Russian disinformation.

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SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

From: SMART Core <svcsmartbtsewshprec1@state.gov>

All @state.gov

Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 12:40 PM

(b)(6)

Obtained by America First Legal Foundation

(b)(6)

Subject: (U) WHA Action Plan to Combat Antisemitism

All @state.gov

UNCLASSIFIED~~SECRET~~☐**Info Office:**PPR_PD_PAO, Research, DEP_COOR, Violent_Extremist_Groups,
GSEC_SCA, DIV_CHIEF, PLCY_OFF, SA_TAGS, R_FO,
WHA_POSTS, POL_INFO, RPO, SEN_ADV_1**MRN:****Date/DTG:**

Sep 27, 2022 / 271639Z SEP 22

From:

SECSTATE WASHDC

Action:ASUNCION, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BELMOPAN, AMEMBASSY
ROUTINE; BOGOTA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BRASILIA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; BRIDGETOWN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
BUENOS AIRES, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; GEORGETOWN,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; GRENADA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
GUATEMALA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; HAVANA, AMEMBASSY
ROUTINE; KINGSTON, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; LA PAZ,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; LIMA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; MANAGUA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; MEXICO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
MONTEVIDEO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; NASSAU, AMEMBASSY
ROUTINE; OTTAWA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; PANAMA,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; PORT AU PRINCE, AMEMBASSY
ROUTINE; PORT OF SPAIN, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; QUITO,
AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SAN JOSE, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SAN
SALVADOR, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; SANTIAGO, AMEMBASSY
ROUTINE; SANTO DOMINGO, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE;
TEGUCIGALPA, AMEMBASSY ROUTINE; VENEZUELA AFFAIRS
UNIT BOGOTA, USOFFICE ROUTINE**E.O.:**

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Subject:

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2. (U) BACKGROUND: WHA recognizes that Jewish communities throughout the Western Hemisphere face ongoing risks. This action plan, developed in coordination with SEHI, SEAS, J/IRF, and DRL, aligns with WHA's efforts to promote U.S. leadership and values by upholding democratic principles, supporting human rights, and strengthening respect for the rule of law. The plan sets forth five policy priorities: 1) promote security of Jewish communities; 2) strengthen cooperation with civil society to combat antisemitism and promote respect for religious freedom; 3) counter antisemitism in the media, including social media; 4) encourage governments to address Holocaust issues accurately; and 5) combat antisemitism regionally and internationally. While some of these themes may not apply directly to every post, we request that all posts incorporate elements of the WHA action plan into their work, to the extent possible. **END BACKGROUND.**

WHA ACTION PLAN FOR COMBATTING ANTISEMITISM

3. (U) CONTEXT: Antisemitism takes many forms: violent attacks against Jewish communities, antisemitic rhetoric, vitriolic comments on social media, and attempts to deny or distort the history of the Holocaust. Since antisemitism cuts across ideology, political party, group, and nation, we must combat it with wide-ranging efforts and include bilateral and multilateral engagement with governments as well as cooperation with civil society, religious groups, the private sector, and academia. This action plan seeks to assist WHA posts and offices to focus strategic planning, identify lines of effort, and offer expert assistance to those

seeking to tailor activities to the local context. WHA encourages posts to use the bureau-level LOEs (paragraphs 5-9) as the basis for their own action plans.

4. (U) To combat antisemitism in the Western Hemisphere, WHA works in close coordination with the Department's Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (SEHI), the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (SEAS), the Office of International Religious Freedom (J/IRF), and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL). The action plan centers on five main themes: security of Jewish communities; cooperation with civil society; combatting antisemitism in the media, including social media; Holocaust education, remembrance, and commemoration, and combatting Holocaust distortion and denial; and international and regional collaboration. Combating antisemitism aligns with WHA's strategic objectives of promoting social inclusion and respect for the human dignity and rights of all persons, building safe communities, and building support for U.S. values.

POLICY PRIORITIES AND LINES OF EFFORT

5. (U) I. Promote security of Jewish communities

Objective/Desired End State: Western Hemisphere governments protect Jewish communities from antisemitic acts (including physical assaults, attacks against property, and threats) so Jewish communities can live free from fear. Governments investigate antisemitic acts and hold perpetrators accountable. Governments (including security forces and law enforcement) work with Jewish communities to identify and respond to their security needs. Governments document incidents of antisemitism and share applicable disaggregated data with law enforcement, civil society, and international organizations.

- LOE 1.1: Encourage governments at national, state, regional, and local levels to take steps to improve protection for Jewish communities, places of worship, and other culturally meaningful sites, incorporating Jewish community experience and expertise.
- LOE 1.2: Support training for those in the justice system, including police officers, prosecutors, judges, and public defenders, to understand antisemitism and antisemitic crime so they can effectively promote the security of Jewish communities.
- LOE 1.3: Encourage countries to preserve historic Jewish sites in the Western Hemisphere and consistently monitor, condemn, and respond when such sites become targets of attacks. Projects in the Dominican Republic and Suriname through the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation can serve as a model.
- LOE 1.4: Encourage governments to meet existing commitments on recognizing, recording, and reporting antisemitic hate crimes. Meet with government entities responsible for law enforcement, as well as civil society and religious leaders, to understand the challenges involved in reporting, investigating, and prosecuting antisemitic crimes and incidents, with the goal of increasing the proportion of countries that annually report data on antisemitic hate crimes.
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- LOE 1.6: Assist law enforcement in Western Hemisphere countries with internal vetting and training to address the risk from violent antisemitic extremists in their ranks.

6. (U) II. Strengthen government cooperation with civil society to combat antisemitism and uphold religious freedom

Objective/Desired End State: Governments and civil society work together to combat antisemitism and safeguard religious practice for Jewish communities. They collaborate to actively combat antisemitism among government, school, law enforcement, and military personnel employed in all state institutions, while protecting freedom of expression. Civil society (including both Jewish and non-Jewish groups) actively counter antisemitism and promote respect for religious freedom and tolerance of members of religious and ethnic minority groups.

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- LOE 2.3: Encourage countries to incorporate civil society input into not only action plans but also national strategies and policies on antisemitism and/or other forms of intolerance. France, Germany, the European Commission, and the OSCE have action plans that could serve as models for Western Hemisphere countries (Ref B).
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- LOE 2.5: Promote the exchange and dissemination within and among countries of best practices and lessons learned by those countering antisemitism, working with Public Affairs Sections to utilize the range of tools available. This could include the International Visitor Leadership Program, the U.S. Speaker Program, and others. Encourage the translation into English of best practices, studies, and lessons learned for maximum international use and retranslation. Actively reach out to communities where antisemitic narratives and sentiment have become widespread to discuss antisemitism and share the U.S. experience in combating hatred directed against Jews and members of other minority groups.
- LOE 2.6: Promote education programs focused on combating antisemitism, not limited to Holocaust education topics (which we address further below), so that students and others learn the history and contemporary manifestations of antisemitism and effective ways to counter it.
- LOE 2.7: Promote and encourage the use of positive images and narratives highlighting the contributions of Jewish people in their communities.

7. (SBU) III. Counter antisemitism and false narratives in the media, including social media

Objective/Desired End State: Civil society voices become or remain active and empowered to counter antisemitic and other hateful and false narratives in all media. Independent media identify and effectively push back against antisemitic narratives (e.g., conspiracy theories, scapegoating, hateful and negative stereotypes, etc.). Governments do not use antisemitic tropes and spread antisemitic narratives through the media; they actively and effectively counter antisemitism without infringing on freedom of expression.

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- LOE 3.2: Work internally with the Global Engagement Center, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, the Russia Influence Group, and others to develop strategies to counter Russian disinformation tactics that weaponize claims of antisemitism and Holocaust denial to discredit U.S. allies and partners. Identify Russia's attempts to sow societal discord in Western Hemisphere countries, including their support for parties and groups of various political identities and ideologies that espouse antisemitism and other forms of xenophobia. Work locally with civil and religious organizations on engagement in communities targeted by Russian disinformation.
- LOE 3.3: Build relationships with local representatives of independent media, including social media platforms, and local organizations working to counter hate speech online. Encourage voluntary collaboration to address the spread of antisemitic content, while fully respecting freedom of expression.
- LOE 3.4: When Western Hemisphere government officials, political leaders, and other prominent public figures voice, enable, or willfully allow antisemitic narratives, or when antisemites receive government recognition or advancement, WHA takes steps to challenge such narratives, directly or in partnership with other U.S. or international officials in both public statements and private engagements.

8. (U) IV. Encourage governments to address Holocaust issues responsibly and accurately

Objective/Desired End State: Governments address Holocaust issues responsibly, develop comprehensive Holocaust education programs, and actively counter efforts to deny or distort the Holocaust.

- LOE 4.1: Encourage countries to honor their commitments under the 2009 Terezin Declaration on Holocaust-Era Assets and Related Issues by utilizing the JUST Act Report (Ref D). Western Hemisphere signatories of the Terezin Declaration include Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Uruguay. The Netherlands is also a signatory.
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memory and restitution efforts, expand on educational efforts, and support the museum's traveling exhibitions.

- LOE 4.3: Through diplomatic engagement with likeminded partners, counter government and other actors' attempts to use laws, museums, or other initiatives to distort the historical record of the Holocaust.

9. (U) V. Combat antisemitism regionally and internationally

Objective/Desired End State: Western Hemisphere countries actively and effectively combat antisemitism domestically and regionally, including in multilateral fora.

- LOE 5.1: Encourage countries to embrace and apply in practice the nonbinding IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, inclusive of the examples. (Endorsing country list: <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/member-countries>)
- LOE 5.2: Encourage Western Hemisphere countries to join IHRA as members or observers. WHA member countries include Argentina and Canada. WHA observer countries include Brazil, El Salvador, and Uruguay.
- LOE 5.3: Encourage countries to respond effectively to attempts by other countries to deny, exploit, distort, or politicize the Holocaust or Holocaust remembrance in multilateral fora.
- LOE 5.4: Work with multilateral and regional institutions to combat antisemitism. Work on joint statements with member countries in these fora. Work with these organizations' specialists and envoys to support and amplify their work.
- LOE 5.5: Work with likeminded governments to combat antisemitism beyond the Western Hemisphere, including removing antisemitic content in textbooks in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as encourage steps toward IHRA observer status or membership for Middle Eastern and North African governments.

ACTION REQUEST

10. (U) By November 1, 2022, we request posts to report by cable up to three specific LOEs from the suggestions above with the goal of delivering results by November 1, 2023. Posts should also report on the estimated size of the Jewish community and the prevalence of antisemitic activities in the host country. Additionally, posts may voluntarily report on significant activities and best practices related to combatting antisemitism, linking them to the LOEs listed above. We encourage posts to highlight specific efforts Public Affairs offices implement in their Section Activity reporting in PD Tools. Posts may wish to consider collaboration with other posts in their region or with other international or NGO communities at their own post and may find inspiration by reviewing the work undertaken in Mission Canada (Refs E-H) and Mission Trinidad and Tobago (reported in post's Section Activities in PD tools), as well as ideas in the EUR Action Plan (attached). Post's cable should include any requests for technical or financial assistance or visits from technical experts to share best practices associated with those efforts. WHA/PPC will review posts' responses and coordinate assistance within the Department for posts based on their needs, including expert consultations, seminars, training, technical assistance, and other support with the intent of making these services easier to access.

POINT OF CONTACT

11. (SBU) Please direct questions to (b)(6) state.gov.

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

Signature:

Blinken

Drafted By:

WHA_PPC (b)(6)

Cleared By:

WHA/BSC (b)(6)

WHA/BSC: (b)(6)

WHA/BSC: (b)(6)

D-MR (b)(6)

WHA/CAR (b)(6)

WHA/CEN (b)(6)

WHA/HA (b)(6)

INL/WHP (b)(6)

WHA/EPSC (b)(6)

WHA/PD (b)(6)

J/SEAS: (b)(6)

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WHA/PPC (b)(6)

WHA/PPC: (b)(6)

Approved By:

WHA: Nichols, Brian A

Released By:

WHA_PPC (b)(6)

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Action Post:

NONE

Dissemination Rule:

DIS_PPR_PD_PAO, DIS_RESEARCH, DIS_DEP_COOR,
DIS_VIOLENT_EXTREMIST_GROUP, DIS_GSEC_SCA,
DIS_DIV_CHIEF, DIS_PLCY_OFF, DIS_SA_TAGS, DIS_R_FO,
WHA_POSTS, POL_INFO, DIS_RPO, DIS_SEN_ADV_1



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"UNCLASSIFIED"

7/31/2024

From:

(b)(6)

To:**Subject:**

Chat conversation with (b)(6) from Microsoft Teams

Date:

Monday, January 23, 2023 11:05:53 AM

Attachments:[0e7691f3-d991-4219-847f-6effce28d2c7
logo](#)

Microsoft Teams



EM

(b)(6)

8 months ago

updates made to Ops Report: (U) GEC Snapshots on Russia's Disinformation on Ukraine: On May 19 and 24, GEC released two more Snapshots on Russia's disinformation trends on Ukraine. The first included the Kremlin's attempts to blame Western sanctions for food insecurity that are being spread to global audiences and increasingly to Russians domestically, narratives alleging the United States is recruiting ISIS to fight in Ukraine, and a Telegram network impersonating Ukrainians the Kremlin used to spread disinformation in areas it planned to occupy in Ukraine. The second Snapshot examined narratives celebrating the "surrender" of the "Nazi" Azov Battalion and capture of Mariupol, Kremlin messaging preparing Russians for a prolonged conflict, and continued attempts to drive a wedge between Ukraine and Poland. To be added to GEC's distribution list for future Snapshots, please contact (b)(6) at (b)(6)@State.gov.

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Beyond Fake News: the Central African Republic's Hate Speech Problem

In the aftermath of a disputed election and targeted disinformation campaigns, divisive rhetoric presents the greatest risk to a fragile peace.

Monday, August 16, 2021 / **By:** [Rachel Sullivan](#); Brianna Ferebee

After a recent contested election, the Central African Republic finds itself in a precarious situation. Violence around the election combined with the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and destructive flooding have caused the humanitarian emergency to reach its worst state in five years. Meanwhile, the CAR government has been accused of engaging in Russian-backed disinformation campaigns targeting domestic civil society, French diplomats and the United Nations peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA), threatening key relationships. Even as the long-simmering issue of hate speech continues to draw fault lines through the country, efforts to combat these campaigns have focused primarily on challenging fake news rather than addressing the underlying fear and prejudice that spoilers use to stoke conflict.



A billboard celebrates the collaboration between the Russian military and the Central African military, in Bangui, Central African Republic, April 28, 2019. (Ashley Gilbertson/The New York Times)

Hate Speech in CAR

Hate speech is any type of speech that is offensive and can lead to discrimination or incitement to violence that targets a group, such as an ethnic or religious identity group — and it is both a symptom and cause of CAR's ongoing conflict. Hate speech can be used for a variety of reasons, including strategically to mobilize support for an individual, group, issue or platform. Resulting polarization can deepen divisions and exacerbate grievances between groups, increasing the risk of violence.

The most notable example in CAR of the negative effects of hate speech occurred in 2014, a year after a successful coup by an alliance of armed groups from the predominantly Muslim North, the Séléka, who targeted civilians in their campaign. In response, a coalition of community-based self-defense groups, known as the Anti-Balaka, began to mobilize with former presidential guards to oppose the Séléka. They began attacking the Séléka as well as unaffiliated Muslim citizens amid a cycle of retaliatory violence, accusing them of being “foreigners” and rallying around a call to forcibly remove them from the country. This call for violence led to the removal of approximately 80 percent of Muslims from the country and displaced many others. In December 2014, a United Nations International Commission of Inquiry determined that although genocidal intent could not be established, the Anti-Balaka campaign amounted to ethnic cleansing of the minority Muslim population.

This example demonstrates how existing divisions in CAR may be inflamed by hate speech with disastrous outcomes. While there have been many attempts to restore peace since the Anti-Balaka campaign, the results have been mixed. Despite CAR's eventual transition back to a constitutional democracy and the 2016 election of Faustin-Archange Touadéra, violence continues to be directed at civilians on the basis of religious and ethnic identity as armed groups often select civilian targets for retaliation against their rivals based on the perception that they belong to the same identity group.

The international community remains concerned that CAR has several preconditions consistent with genocide and that violence against historically marginalized populations could worsen, leading to efforts to fight hate speech and disinformation within the country.

Mechanisms to Address Hate Speech

The CAR government and international partners have taken some initial step to establish mechanisms to combat hate speech and disinformation that, while helpful, are still insufficient to respond to the scope of the problem.

In response to another wave of targeted attacks on Muslims in Bangassou in 2017, MINUSCA began tracking hate speech and added it and incitement to violence as sanctions criteria. However, in recent months MINUSCA itself has been the target of a disinformation or fake news campaign by individuals tied to President Touadéra's political party. The campaigns have threatened MINUSCA personnel and spread accusations of electoral

manipulation and collusion with armed groups, calling into question the mission's legitimacy and impartiality. For its part, the U.N. Security Council has condemned these allegations and continued to reaffirm the mission's impartiality.

CAR's High Council on Communication (HCC), the official body tasked with developing and promoting a free press, has also sought to address the issue of hate speech. Re-established in 2014, the HCC is responsible for regulating the media and has the authority to provide regulation to counter misinformation and disinformation. While the Council developed the National Plan for the Prevention of Incitement to Hate and Violence to monitor hate speech, it lacks the operational capacity, finances and professional credibility to be fully operational or effective.

Other initiatives have focused on countering disinformation and hate speech by training journalists and bloggers on how to identify fake news and verify sources. This has been important particularly in the context of election violence and irregularities in late 2020 through early 2021, but has been difficult to achieve given the lack of a fully independent media and limited internet access. Further complicating these efforts are accusations that several disinformation campaigns may be coming from key international partners, Russia and France.

While these efforts show initial promise in helping to identify and combat rumors and fake news, they fail to confront the deeper, more complex issue of hate speech. The emphasis on fake news is likely a result of an international focus on Russia's growing role in spreading disinformation in CAR and other parts of the world.

"Peace in CAR depends also on the nature and the quality of the discourse between the women and men of the Central African Republic," said Rhosyns Ngatondang Zalang, president of the Association for Youth on the Move for Development in CAR (AJEMADEC). To that end, USIP has been focused on developing not only an understanding of hate speech and its effects, but on offering an alternative discourse.

A Lexicon of Hate Speech Terms

In partnership with the PeaceTech Lab and AJEMADEC, USIP conducted research on the nature of hate speech in the Central African Republic from October 2020 to March 2021. This coincided with the election, which saw profound upheaval as both process and results were contested and prompted a significant realignment of armed groups. The resulting increase in violence and worsening of the humanitarian crisis coincided with the fake news and propaganda thought to originate from Russia and France. All of these factors contributed to a tense security environment and are reflected in the hate speech data that we collected.

The findings from the research present a snapshot in time of the issue of hate speech and represent an initial step toward mapping its full extent. The lexicon of hate speech terms includes an overview of the problem of hate speech within CAR, along with a list of the 17

top terms with definitions, examples and explanations of why they are harmful. The annex also includes insights about how survey respondents encounter hate speech in their own lives. Several key themes emerge that can help authorities and community members prevent and respond to hate speech.

First, many of the terms identified in this study have their origins in old stereotypes and prejudices. Among the terms are derogatory references to nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, place of origin and armed-group membership. Many of the terms cast these identities as being different in a negative way, for example by claiming that they do not belong to this society or by dehumanizing them through comparisons to animals. One particularly concerning theme that emerged was the use of hate speech to insinuate that someone was a terrorist or member of an armed group based on their religious or ethnic background, such as by referring to Muslims as jihadists.

Second, while much focus has previously been on hate speech in social media and news outlets, the most common places that our survey respondents reported encountering hate speech were in public spaces or at events such as on public transportation (18.4%), at political rallies (16.7%) or at the market (14.6%). A smaller percentage did report encountering hate speech in the workplace and social media and news platforms. This suggests that the mechanisms in place to address hate speech that focus on online, print media or radio are unlikely to be sufficient on their own.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Practitioners

There are clearly significant gaps in the current efforts to address hate speech in CAR, including the focus on disinformation and online or news media platforms. “The Lexicon of Hate Speech is a ground-breaking resource on hate speech in CAR. What is important now is that USIP and others work to ensure that this resource is used by policymakers and community leaders to prevent and counter hate speech in a way that responds to the nature of the problem,” said Elizabeth Murray, a senior program officer working on CAR at the Institute. USIP and AJEMADEC have used the lexicon to train community leaders on countering hate speech and provided them with funding to conduct small projects in their own communities, but more work is needed.

As a first step, the CAR government, civil society and international partners need to prioritize hate speech in its own right alongside disinformation and misinformation. While there may be overlap in these issue areas, countering hate speech needs to go beyond recognizing false claims or fake news to address the ways in which offensive and inflammatory speech can lead to discrimination and violence against targeted groups. Addressing this appropriately includes further research into the sources of hate speech, including in-person and offline sources.

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In addition to developing a better understanding, the CAR government and international partners should address issues of hate speech and division as a part of plans to reinvigorate the peace process and hold a national dialogue. The outcomes of both processes should be connected to the national reconciliation plan, and ideally would draw on the existing local peacebuilding committees to tailor an approach for the community level.

Finally, another key recommendation for political, religious and social leaders of CAR as well as prominent international partners is to commit to combat hate speech at both an institutional and an individual level. This means that these figures should become educated about hate speech terms, refrain from using them and speak up when they encounter them. This effort will be particularly important because hate speech is often used by leaders to mobilize support, so accountability among these actors will likely be necessary to create the change needed for peace and reconciliation.

Brianna Ferebee is a research assistant for the U.S. Institute of Peace's Africa Center.

Subject

Canceled: Monthly NET Working Group Mtg (Recurring invite)

Monthly BP&E M&E Check-ins

Biweekly GEC - DFRLab BP&E Project Check-in

GEC + GLOBSEC bi-weekly call

Bi-weekly M&E Call with Code for Africa

Biweekly Programmatic Calls with Code for Africa

Canceled: Link for Academic Engagement Meetings

Canceled: Link for Academic Engagement Meetings

Canceled: Time and Attendance due!

Monthly PD Officer meeting

D&IC Training and Learning Working Group

Russia Team Meeting

Russia Team Meeting

Russia Team Meeting

Russia Team Meeting

Russia Team Meeting

Russia Team Meeting

Canceled: PCDA Meeting

PCDA Meeting

Russia Team M&E Syncs

M&E - GLOBSEC & GEC

GEC IAF M&E check-in

DE&I Vice President Office Hours

DE&I Vice President Office Hours

D&I Executive Board Meeting

Bi-Weekly - D&IC Leadership Engagement

The Disinfo Dish

The Disinfo Dish

Canceled: NET Monthly WG Meeting

GEC Russia Program Coordination Meeting

GEC Russia Program Coordination Meeting

Save the Date: Proposal Review - ECA FY22 Countering State Disinformation funding

In-Person Expanded Cyber/Elections WG meeting

Canceled event: USAID/State Program Coordination on Ukraine @ (EDT) @state.gov)

M/SS/CFA | Office Hours

RIG PREP

April 6 Bureau Planners Meeting

MLAIPG - March Meeting

RESIST Lessons Learned/Colombia Debrief

USAID/State Program Coordination on Ukraine

IAF <> GEC Weekly Check-in

IAF <> GEC Weekly Check-in

GEC-IQ Global Platform demo (ZoomGov link below)

Ralph J. Bunche Speaker Series Presents Dalphine Minoui: The Book Collectors: A Band of Syrian Rebels and the

Ukraine Supplemental Meeting

Civil Society and Independent Media WG

Equity Plan Rollout - Comms Plan Run Through

Tentative DTI Tech Challenge Sync

Start Date	Start Time	End Date	End Time	All day event	Reminder on/off	Reminder Date
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4/7/2022	9:00:00 AM	4/7/2022	10:00:00 AM	FALSE	TRUE	4/7/2022
3/31/2022	9:00:00 AM	3/31/2022	10:00:00 AM	FALSE	FALSE	3/31/2022
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Reminder Time Meeting Organizer

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9:45:00 AM M/SS Center for Analytics
3:00:00 PM Bray, Leah
8:45:00 AM MfR
12:45:00 PM MLAIPG Secretariat
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Required Attendees

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(b)(6)	stacy	(b)(6)	(b)(6)	allan	(b)(6)	kevin.rubio	(b)(6)	Dev
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(b)(6)

PD Budget Officers

(b)(6)

PCDA_Core

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(b)(6)

BureauPlanningParticipants

Machine Learning Artificial Intelligence Practitioners Group

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Optional Attendees

(b)(6)	Brav. Leah	(b)(6)
(b)(6)		
(b)(6)	bobem	(b)(6)
(b)(6)		(b)(6);stephen.young
(b)(6)		
(b)(6)	amanda	(b)(6)
(b)(6)	Chris Roper	(b)(6)
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Meeting Resources Billing Information Categories

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Description

All-- Cancelling this recurring invite for the Monthly NET Working Group Mtg to clean up our distro list. NET will be Forwarding all upcoming M&E calls in 2022 with Atlantic Council for BPEE, in case you are available and would like to join.

Hello all, Please find the link for the bi-weekly calls for coordination between GEC and the DFRLab and project page.

Hello all, I am setting up a new calendar invite & Teams link (below) for our regular bi-weekly call as agreed last time.

Forwarding all upcoming M&E calls in 2022 with Code for Africa, in case you are available and would like to join.

Hello all, Please find the link for the biweekly programmatic calls for GEC Russia Team's Mapping Russian Disinformation.

This is just a meeting link I will be reusing.

This is just a meeting link I will be reusing.

1/7/2021 update: New DS forms attached. All instructions and forms are up to date as of 1/7/2021 Please review a Call in number:202-301-5169

Training and Learning Working Group Goals: Facilitate outreach and identification of resources and organizations in the field.

Replaces previous invite

Replaces previous invite

Replaces previous invite

Replaces previous invite

Replaces previous invite

Replaces previous invite

Canceling due to GEC IQ onboarding session

Tentative new PCDA meeting time.

Hi everyone, Based on our Russia M&E Sync yesterday, I am changing our Syncs to a bi-monthly basis. Our M&E Sync will be on Thursdays.

Forwarding all M&E calls with GLOBSEC, in case you are available to join.

In case you all would like to attend any of the future M&E calls, this is our standing call window.

This time is dedicated to pursuing endeavors on behalf of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council. If you have a conflict, please let us know.

This time is dedicated to pursuing endeavors on behalf of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council. If you have a conflict, please let us know.

Microsoft Teams Meeting: [https://teams.microsoft.com/join/...](#)

Re: D&IC Leadership discussing matters w/ DC Parente

Hello, Making this a reoccurring meeting on Thursday at 12:30 pm - everyone is free. May need to add Tuesday, if needed.

Hello, Making this a reoccurring meeting on Thursday at 12:30 pm - everyone is free. May need to add Tuesday, if needed.

Canceling due to a scheduling conflict. Please feel free to send us any topics you'd like to discuss for next month's meeting.

Hello everyone, We are transitioning the weekly GO/GOR meeting and M&E meeting to a weekly programs coordination meeting.

Hello everyone, We are transitioning the weekly GO/GOR meeting and M&E meeting to a weekly programs coordination meeting.

Good afternoon SCA, EUR, and GEC Colleagues – I wanted to update you all on the status of the call for proposals for the 2022-2023 period.

Updated time and recurrence Given the increasing tempo of activities related to election information security, we've decided to move the event to a more convenient time.

This event has been canceled. USAID/State Program Coordination on Ukraine When: Eastern Time - New York Joinir

Greetings, Data Enthusiasts — After several successful events, going forward the Center for Analytics' (CfA) Office will be hosting a series of events.

Need to discuss conflicting event

Dear Bureau Planners: Please join our next Bureau Planners' meeting from 9:00 am to 10:00 am (EDT) on Wednesday, March 30, 2022.

Colleagues – I hope this note finds you well. Please reserve this time slot for the quarterly reconvening of our MLAs.

Hi All, I'm booking this time to debrief on our team's implementation of RESIST in Colombia and discuss lessons learned.

This event has been changed. USAID/State Program Coordination on Ukraine When: Wed Mar 30, 2022 9am – 10am

Microsoft Teams Meeting: [https://teams.microsoft.com/join/...](#)

Microsoft Teams Meeting: [https://teams.microsoft.com/join/...](#)

All--Here is the calendar invite (and ZoomGov mtg link) for the "GEC-IQ Global Platform Demo" we're hosting this Wednesday, April 6, 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm.

Celebrate National Library Week with a Special Bunche Library Speaker Series.

Re: discuss funding

Ladies, Attached is a paper to frame our discussion on immediate civil society and independent media needs to be addressed.

Agenda*Decide on specific communications tactics**Run through media outlets / engagements *Identify appropriate media outlets

Hi Team, I am adding a quick meeting on our calendars to sync on JD's feedback and finalize some next steps. Please let us know if you have any conflicts.

Location

in touch shortly with a new recurring invite for this mtg. Thanks!

(b)(6)

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting

From (b)(6)

@state.gov>Sent: Thursday, April 8,

Information across Sub-Saharan Africa project with Code for Africa. Best,

(b)(6)

Africa Regional L

Microsoft Teams meetingJoin on your computer or mobile appClick here to join the n

Microsoft Teams meetingJoin on your computer or mobile appClick here to join the n

Washington DC

SA-5, C2-L04

who can assist with increasing GEC's understanding and knowledge of critical diversity and inclusion topics and the

Microsoft Teams Meeting

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Microsoft Teams meetingJoin on your computer or mobile appClick here to join the meeting

Syncs will now occur every other Tuesday from 3-3:30pm. Thank you! Warmly,

(b)(6)

Microsoft Teams Meeting

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Teams

MS Teams

depending on how it goes. Feel free to share. Agenda*GEC Paper Status*Top Trending Narratives [Suggested Res

depending on how it goes. Feel free to share. Agenda*GEC Paper Status*Top Trending Narratives [Suggested Res

; NET WG mtg

Microsoft Teams Meeting

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Microsoft Teams Meeting

Conference Room Pending confirmation

ing infoJoin with Google Meetmeet.google.com/wyt-bnnz-hhn <<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=h>

Teams (See below)

HST 2429

Microsoft Teams meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting

<https://atlanticcouncil.zoom.us/j/93733250028?pwd=RFAXTmxINVpTOC9YQVZaVzBabVNHQT09>

n Eastern Time - New YorkJoining infoJoin with Google Meetmeet.google.com/wyt-bnnz-hhn <<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=h>

ams meetingJoin on your computer or mobile appClick here to join the meeting <<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=h>

ams meetingJoin on your computer or mobile appClick here to join the meeting <<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=h>

Wednesday, March 30 from 3-4pm EST for the 15 Colombian gov't communicators and post. I've included our PCD

WebEx - <https://statedept.webex.com/statedept/onstage/g.php?MTID=e9dec569f3a293bf4e2cc2b1625500e4e>

MS Teams

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Teams Meeting

Microsoft Teams Meeting

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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tue, 31 Jan 2023 22:54:14 +0000
To: (b)(6) GEC-
Russia Team; tamar@ (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: Meeting with Tamar Kintsurashvili
Attachments: Updated CV, Tamar Kintsurashvili.pdf

Corrected time for Discussion with Tamar Kintsurashvili, chief editor of Myth Detector fact-checking website in Georgia. See her attached bio. They are nine hours ahead of us.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

(b)(6) United States, Spokane

Phone Conference ID: (b)(6)

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)



TamarKintsurashvili

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Education

MSc in Policy Studies:

2009-2010: University of Edinburgh, School of Social and Political Science, UK.

MA in Journalism:

1989-1994: Tbilisi State University, Faculty of Journalism, Georgia.

Experience

- **Academic experience** of teaching journalistic ethics, propaganda research methods and media literacy, conducting trainings on hate speech, media literacy.
- **Research experience** on hate speech, anti-Western propaganda.
- **Development of textbooks** on media ethics, freedom of expression, media literacy.
- **Development of media literacy resources:** MIL web (www.millab.ge), online game on [hate speech](#), on [fake news](#).
- **Media management experience:** founder and chief editor of fact-checking portal www.mythdetector.ge; former general director of Georgian Public Broadcaster

Employment

2015 to date	Ilia State University Associate Professor, Courses: Journalistic Ethics and Media Self-regulation; Propaganda theories and research methods (from 2017); Media & information literacy in schools (from 2019)
2017 to date	Media Development Foundation (MDF) Executive Director
2014 to date	Chief Editor of fact-checking web-portal www.mythdetector.ge
2013 to 2017	Media Development Foundation (MDF) Chair of the board
2010 - 2013	National Security Council of Georgia (NSC) Deputy to Secretary of the NSC Head of the Inter-Agency Council on Tolerance and Civil Integration
2009 - 2010	Administration of the President of Georgia Advisor on Ethnic Minorities and Civil Integration Issues
2008 - 2009	Ilia State University; School of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Master's Programs; Lecturer. Course - Media Law, Journalistic Ethics and Self-Regulation
2008	Ivane Javakhishvili Thilisi State University; School of Undergraduate Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Science; Lecturer. Course - Media Law, Journalistic Ethics and Self-Regulation
2005 -2009	Georgian Public Broadcaster, GPB General Director
2002 - 2005	NGO <i>Liberty Institute</i> Deputy Director
1998-2000	Paper <i>Droni</i> , Political Editor, Deputy Editor

Textbook & educational resources

- 2021 - How Report on Diversity, textbook for academia and trainings
2019 - Adaptation of IREX Learn to discern media literacy curricula for Georgia
2018 - Media and Information Literacy textbook, co-author.

Writings and research

- 2022 - Russian and Chinese Influences in Georgia - 2021 update, European Values Center for Security, co-author
- 2021 - Anti-Western Propaganda 2020
- 2021 - Infodemic in Georgia 2020, MDF, Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation/German Marshall Fund of the United States, USAID, author
- 2021 - Mapping Research: Comparing Foreign Influence in Georgia, European Values Center for Security, co-author
- 2021 - Anti-Western Propaganda 2020, MDF, UNAG. Author of the study
- 2020 - Media Market Risk Ratings: Georgia, Global Disinformation Index - GDI, co-author
- 2020 - Georgia's Implementation of 20 Eastern Partnership Deliverables for 2020, GIP, ISFED, co-author
- 2020 - "Russian Cluster" of disinformation and its "internal spread" in Georgia
- 2019 - Anecdotal Evidence Research - editor, research design
- 2019 - Anti-Western Propaganda 2019, MDF, UNAG. Author of the study
- 2017 - Council of Europe, Study on funding of media outlets, Council of Europe expert.
- 2017 - Kremlin Influence Index; Black Sea Trust; Implemented by Detector Media (Ukraine), European Values (Czech Republic), Media Development Foundation - MDF (Georgia) and Political Capital (Hungary); Co-author of the Study (MDF, Georgia).
- 2017 - Attitudes of Muslim Youth towards Media Coverage and Offensive Language, MDF, Hedayah Foundation,
- 2017 - Anti-Western Propaganda 2016; MDF, UNAG; Author of the Study.
- 2016 - Further from 'Russkiy Mir', Closer to the West, Brīvības un Solidaritātes Fonds, "Resisting Foreign State Propaganda in the New Information Environment: the case of the EU, Russia, and the Eastern Partnership countries".
- 2016 - Hate Speech 2016; MDF, UNAG, USAID; Author of the Study.
- 2015 - Council of Europe report *Mapping the Status of the Ethical Rights and Responsibilities of the Georgian Journalists*, Council of Europe expert.
- 2015 - Anti-Western Propaganda; MDF, UNAG, USAID; Author of the Study.
- 2015 - Hate Speech and discrimination; MDF, UNAG, USAID; Author of the Study.
- 2014 - Media Ethics and Professional Standards; MDF, OSGF; Editor.
- 2014 - Women from the Past; MDF, UNESCO; Co-Editor of the publication.
- 2006 - Co-author of the *Code of Conduct of Public Broadcaster*.
- 2004-2005 - Text book on Freedom of Expression related judicial practice in Georgia. Case Study for the period of 1999-2004; Liberty Institute, IREX, USAID.
- 2004 - Author of the textbook *The Media Self-regulation Guide*; Liberty Institute, British Council.
- 2004 - Guidebook for Journalists *Human Right Reporting*; Liberty Institute, IRIS, USAID.
- 2003 - Author of the brochure the *Journalistic Ethic and Self-regulation*.
- May 14, 2002 - Co-author of the *Professional Standards of the Media* adopted by Georgian journalists, editors, media owners and NGO representatives.

Panel Discussions, Trainings

- 2021 - Tunis Innovation in Politics 2021

2021 - ARIJ Forum

2021 - Training for journalists in diversity reporting, Hedayah Foundation, EU, Lopota, Georgia

2020 - Global Fact 7, session "When CNN and BBC are made in Russia", online

2020 - Disruption Network Lab, Polarization and Media Ethics in Georgia.

2019 - UNESCO, Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week 2019, Feature Conference, session MIL Promoting intercultural dialogue, gender equality, social inclusion, and peace, Gothenburg, Sweden

2019 - MILEN, DW Akademie, Promoting Critical Thinking in Communities: Capacity-building workshop with Civil Society Groups, Delhi, India

2018 - Development and delivery of a module in fact-checking and research for journalists, IREX, Tbilisi, Georgia

2018 - Training for journalists from Eastern Partnership Countries in verification of disinformation, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung South Caucasus Office, Tbilisi, Georgia

2017 to date - Lead trainer of Myth Detector Lab, DW Akademie

2017 - Venice Club Seminar *Stratcom Strategic Communication Challenges for Europe*, panelist on Baltic/Eastern Europe, London, 17 March.

2017 - OSCE, South Caucasus Media Conference "Fake News", Disinformation and Freedom of Media, presentation on *Challenges of Disinformation and Propaganda to Media Freedom in Digital age*, 10 May, Tbilisi.

2017 - ENAM conference, panel: *The role of propaganda in forming the New Reality*, speaker, 2-4 June, Tbilisi.

2017 - Importance of Code of Conduct, Council of Europe trainer, training workshop *Privacy and Media Coverage*, 7-8 July

2016 - Council of Europe, conference *Media Reporting on Minority Issues*, trainer in media diversity and combating hate speech, 19-20 December, Lopota.

2015 - BBSA, *Weaponization of Information in Georgia*, presentation *Forms of Russian Propaganda in Georgian Media*, 22 April, Tbilisi

2015 - Europe House: Power of the Media, panel: How Russian Media Portray the West and the Former Soviet Union Countries? 10 November, Tbilisi.

Membership

2018 to date - Media and Information Literacy Experts Network (MILEN), Deutsche Welle Akademie.

2018 to date - Atlantic Council's disinfo portal expert.

2011 - 2014 - Member of the Steering Committee on the Media and Information Society (CDMSI), Council of Europe .

2006 - 2011 - Member of the Steering Committee on the Media and New Communication Services (CDMC), Council of Europe .

2008 - 2013 - Chairperson of the Inter-Agency Council on Tolerance and Civil Integration.

2007 - 2012 - Member of the UNESCO Georgian National Commission.

OBAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

**GEC**

Russian Disinformation Snapshot on Ukraine

FL-2023-00013

A-00000748635

"UNCLASSIFIED"

7/31/2024

May 24, 2022

Check www.state.gov/disarming-disinformation for the latest State Department public releases on countering Russia's disinformation on Ukraine

Disinformation Overview

CELEBRATING AZOV'S "CAPITULATION": Pro-Kremlin media are portraying the "surrender" of the Azov battalion and the capture of Mariupol as a momentous victory for Russia. State television, in particular, has dedicated extensive reporting to the Azov POWs, arguing Azov fighters' nationalist and Nazi-associated tattoos justify Russia's "denazification" of Ukraine. Russia's MFA and state media also disseminated testimonies on Twitter from the battalion's alleged victims. Disinformation purveyors claimed Azov's "surrender" was a "total shock" to Kyiv, alleging Ukrainian officials planned to kill Azov POWs to keep them silent.

PREPARING RUSSIANS FOR A PROLONGED CONFLICT: Facing fierce Ukrainian resistance and repeated military failures, the Kremlin has begun to offer explanations to the Russian public for the slow progress of its "special military operation." Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu falsely claimed May 24 any slowdown was intentional and the result of Russia's determination to "avoid harming civilians." Secretary of Russia's Security Council Nikolai Patrushev said Russia was not "chasing deadlines," implying Russia's so-called "denazification" of Ukraine could take time. Officials' acknowledgement of delays in Ukraine may reflect a Kremlin directive to prepare Russians for an extended conflict.

DRIVING A WEDGE BETWEEN UKRAINE AND POLAND: Adding to the Kremlin disinformation targeting Ukraine's relationship with Poland, Russian MFA spokesperson Maria Zakharova falsely claimed May 23 that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's proposal to grant Polish citizens in Ukraine the same rights Ukrainian refugees have received in Poland was tantamount to "legalizing the de facto [Polish] seizure of...[his] country." On the same day, while meeting with Putin, Belarusian leader Aleksandr Lukashenka said Poland would seek to "dismember Ukraine" through any deployment of Polish "peacekeeping forces" to the country.

Russia's "Z" Campaign on Twitter Benefits From Coordinated Activity

According to GEC analysis, on Twitter, the "Z" campaign, which aims to rally support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, appears to benefit from coordinated and likely inauthentic amplification. Three distinct pro-Russia clusters promote the "Z" campaign: a Russian-language cluster aimed at Russian and Ukrainian audiences; an English-language cluster aimed at an Indian audience; and another English-language cluster aimed at an African audience. The India- and Africa-focused clusters appeared highly coordinated, given their recent creation dates and frequent messaging on Russia. The overall reach of this pro-Russia amplification, however, is likely limited, with tweets receiving fewer than 5-10 likes and rarely any comments or retweets. Conversely, a pro-Ukraine cluster of accounts also acts in a coordinated manner to amplify messaging denouncing Russia's invasion. Likely targeting Russian and Ukrainian audiences, this cluster largely highlights the Russian army's war losses. This report is now available on GEC-IQ. Please contact info@geciq.com for access. If you are outside the USG, please contact info@geciqglobal.com.

Russia's Health Ministry Disinfo about Ukraine at the UN in Geneva

A pamphlet purportedly from Russia's Health Ministry is circulating on WhatsApp messaging groups among African delegations to the United Nations in Geneva. Among its disinformation claims, the pamphlet blames Ukraine for causing the humanitarian crisis in the so-called DPR/LPR and accuses the Ukrainian Armed Forces of mistreating Russian prisoners of war, perpetrating war crimes, and placing weapons systems in healthcare facilities. The pamphlet appears to be an attempt to deflect the blame for humanitarian crisis and war crimes onto the victim—Ukraine, while portraying Russia as a magnanimous humanitarian actor. The pamphlet's design even mimics a World Health Organization campaign to combat health misinformation, a likely attempt to coopt international legitimacy.



Image from a WHO-organized campaign (left) and the purported Russian Health Ministry pamphlet (right)

NOTE: The following overview is produced by an external contractor and is not an official position of the EEAS. The monitoring is produced based on the coverage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in pro-Kremlin outlets in EU MS, the EaP countries and Russia, as well as pro-Kremlin coverage in Arabic. The EEAS does not carry responsibility for the conclusions or inaccuracies in the analysis. Please note that URLs to RT and Sputnik websites are not reliably accessible from the EU. They are included in this report because at the time of monitoring they were still accessible.

INVASION OF UKRAINE

PERIOD COVERED: 21 – 24 MAY 2022

REPORT DATE: 24 MAY 2022

SOURCES COVERED: SEE ANNEX 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the monitored period, **novel disinformation narratives** tended to focus on the **surrender of Ukrainian soldiers in the Azovstal plant** in Mariupol. Narratives included claims that the now-captured soldiers bore Nazi tattoos, committed war crimes, and were protecting secret, US-funded biological laboratories in the complex. Some commentators demanded that the soldiers be subjected to criminal investigations. Others argued that their surrender had demoralised the Ukrainian army and presaged a more general Ukrainian military collapse.

Other relatively novel narratives, or old narratives with new twists, included claims that:

- Economy (including sanctions and energy):
 - Western sanctions are a window of opportunity for Russia to become stronger;
 - Western sanctions to blame for global food insecurity (English);
 - Western sanctions against Russia are 'fizzling out' (Russian domestic);
 - Europe will face an energy collapse with blackouts by the end of 2022 due to sanctions (Armenia);
 - EU has instructed its member states how to buy Russian gas with violating sanctions (Armenia);
 - The EU pressured Ukraine to ship wheat supplies to Europe despite Ukraine needing them (Arabic);
- NATO:
 - The Swedish and Finnish publics do not support NATO membership (Georgia);
 - Swedish and Finnish NATO membership is a PR campaign to assert NATO's relevance (Georgia);
- Biolabs:
 - Former US President George W. Bush confirmed that existence of US-funded biolaboratories in Ukraine in a call with Russians provocateurs pretending to be Zelenskyy (RT Arabic);
- Military:
 - Israeli mercenaries are fighting alongside the Azov Battalion (Italian);
 - Ukrainian authorities are hiding casualties to avoid paying compensation to families (Russian domestic);
 - The French Army supports Banderists in Ukraine (France);
 - The Ukrainian military is forcing its soldiers to consume drugs 'in buckets' (German);
 - Western weapons for Ukraine are resold and end up in Africa and elsewhere (Belarus).
- Other:
 - Russian forces have discovered traces of pagan/Satanic worship at Azov bases (Russian domestic);
 - The West is waging total war against Russia, even if it does not admit the fact openly;
 - Western media are subjecting former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder to a 'witch-hunt' (English);

Familiar narratives claimed that **Western sanctions are destroying EU economies and strengthening Russia**; that **Ukrainian armed forces are committing war crimes**; that the **Ukrainian military is collapsing**; that **Ukraine is preparing 'false-flag' attacks** to blame on Russia; and that the **West is only using Ukraine as a tool** to prolong the war. Antisemitic narratives again emerged from the Italian-language version of Geopolitica.ru. Articles claimed that Nazi Ukraine is aligning itself with Israel and that Ukrainian Judaism historically made a 'fundamental contribution' to the occupation of Palestine and to the 'European Jewish Parliament'.

Counter-narratives included sardonic comments that NATO officers or evidence of biological laboratories have yet to emerge from the captured Azovstal complex in Mariupol. In addition, mentions of the 'Kievan Rus' are allegedly being removed from Russian history textbooks intended for children. At a pro-Ukrainian event in Poland, an allegedly Polish person speaking with a strong Russian accent told Ukrainian refugees to 'go home'.

The main **EU-specific narrative** continued to be the claim that **Western sanctions and EU energy policies are destroying European economies**.

DOMESTIC RUSSIAN MEDIA

Disinformation narratives included allegations that the West is waging total war against Russia, even if it does not admit the fact openly; Western democracy is back in its 'natural state' of 'war-mongering and looting'; Russia has uncovered bio-weapon and nuclear programmes in Ukraine, including plans to unleash a new pandemic inside Ukraine; the Bucha massacre was a false-flag operation; de-Nazification and demilitarisation in Ukraine are continuing; the entire south of Ukraine, including Odesa, will soon be 'liberated'; and Russians continue to support Putin in polling.

RUSSIAN SOCIAL MEDIA + RUSSIAN NATIONALIST CRITICISM OF THE KREMLIN

Disinformation narratives included claims that Kharkiv is a centre of Ukrainian Nazism that hosts a 'Kraken' detachment whose members include rapists and criminals; Ukraine is 'throwing large numbers of untrained personnel into battle'; Western sanctions against Russia are 'fizzling out'; Russian forces have discovered artifacts of pagan worship at former Azov basis, showing that Azov militants are Satanists; Poland and Russian forces are likely to clash in Ukraine; Ukrainian authorities are concealing the true numbers of casualties in order to avoid paying compensation to families; and that Ukrainians are fighting for an LGBT future for their children.

Regarding Russian hyper-nationalist criticism of the Kremlin and the war, narratives included allegations that Russia must take resolute steps to win the 'war against Evil', evil represented by the West; Azov members are not afraid to surrender because the Russian leadership is so meek; and that Putin does not like to hear claims that **Western sanctions have disrupted supply chains in the Russian economy**.

COUNTER-NARRATIVES + RELATIVELY OBJECTIVE COMMENTARY

Narratives included assertions that Russian soldiers are dying in Ukraine only because 'a pensioner in the Kremlin [presumably Putin] read a couple of idiotic books and decided to change the world', that mentions of 'Kievan Rus' have been removed from Russian history textbooks for children, that parents of Russian sailors who died in the Moskva sinking have offered to sign statements that their sons died 'as a result of a disaster', that Russian film director Kirill Serebrennikov should be ashamed for asking Western countries to lift sanctions on Roman Abramovich at the Cannes Film Festival, and that a 'Pole' telling Ukrainians to 'go home' at a pro-Ukrainian event in a Polish city allegedly spoke with a strong Russian accent. In addition, a Russian commentator noted that despite the pro-Kremlin media's prior assurances that NATO officers and biolaboratories existed at the captured Azovstal plant, no evidence of either has yet emerged.

COUNTRY SUMMARIES

ARABIC

Despite being an active disinformation week, it mostly included recycling of previous narratives around false flags, Nazi Ukraine, US biolabs, etc. Narratives included claims that Ukrainian forces are preparing false-flag atrocities to blame on Russia; many Ukrainian soldiers are committed Nazis and will be subject to criminal investigations after the war; the West is only using the EU; the West is only using Ukraine, and the EU in particular is using Ukraine for its wheat; Poland wants to invade western Ukraine; the former US President George W. Bush confirmed that existence of US-funded biolaboratories in Ukraine in a call with Russians provocateurs pretending to be Zelenskyy; Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO will require Russia to take measures to protect its security; and the US and NATO are funding a British company to spread false information about Russia's special military operation in Ukraine.

ARMENIA

Disinformation narratives included claims that Russia will liberate Ukraine, that the West continues to turn a blind eye to Ukrainian war crimes, that Europe will face an energy collapse and blackouts as sanctions hurt their creators, that those who imposed sanctions must compensate Russia for the economic damage they inflict, that sanctions against Russia are a 'nuclear bomb', and that NATO expansion won't strengthen the security of the alliance's member-states.

AZERBAIJAN

Disinformation narratives highlighted that the US is helping Ukraine fight Russia; that Russian weapons are superior; that US weapons and tech are not particularly good; and that the West is using Ukraine as a tool to weaken and punish Russia, while the Ukrainian people suffer as a result.

BELARUS

Disinformation narratives on Belarusian state media outlets included allegations that Western weapons for Ukraine are massively resold and end up in Africa and elsewhere and that Finland and Sweden are willing to join NATO as part of an aggressive American and NATO-led plan against Russia. In addition, Poland continued to be a target of state propaganda. At his recent meeting with Putin, Lukashenka voiced a conspiracy about Polish plans to take over western Ukraine and Belarus.

Following Lukashenka's comments, a shift occurred in propaganda surrounding Western sanctions. Now outlets present them as very beneficial for the Belarusian and Russian economies. Before, claims were more prevalent that the sanctions harm ordinary people.

BULGARIAN

Bulgarian News Front focussed on established pro-Kremlin narratives concerning the Western and US-provoked special military operation and its supposed success. Many articles reported Russian military supremacy. Liberated territories are expanding, including Azovstal. Outlets portrayed international efforts to sanction Russia as ineffective and harming EU and US economic stability.

The official reason for the 'special military operation' is still the de-Nazification and demilitarisation of Ukraine. Articles claim to show proof of the spreading Nazism in Ukraine by showing Nazi signs, leaflets, books, and manuals, as well as reporting on the alleged violence of the Ukrainian military. Other articles were dedicated to the decline of Western civilisation.

ENGLISH

Disinformation narratives included claims that Ukrainian neo-Nazis committed war crimes in Donbas and elsewhere, Ukrainian refugees in Germany burned down a house while trying to light a Russian flag on fire, the surrender of neo-Nazis at the Azovstal factory complex has depressed the Ukrainian army's morale, that alleged Russian war crimes are fake, Western sanctions are to blame for global food insecurity, German and EU officials have launched a 'witch hunt' against Gerhard Schröder, NATO is to blame for Russia's invasion, American-driven

Russophobia pushed Finland and Sweden to join NATO, and US President Joe Biden is hypocritical because he denounces white supremacy at home while supporting neo-Nazis abroad.

FRENCH

The Chief of Staff of the French Armies talked with his Ukrainian counterpart and tweeted his support. Pro-Kremlin commentators interpreted the word 'support' to constitute a confession that French soldiers are secretly present among neo-Nazi battalions. Alexander Dugin wrote a book about the forms that a new Russian Empire could take. The common theme amongst the 'forms' is the spiritual dimension and the miracle its creation represents. Russian progress in Donbas, particularly regarding the surrender of fighters in Azovstal, is presented as the 'liberation' of the independent states of Luhansk and Donetsk.

GEORGIA

Outlets spread narratives about Finland and Sweden's intentions to join NATO, underscoring that **neither Sweden nor Finland want to join NATO** and that **their publics do not support NATO membership**. Outlets also asserted that **the NATO accessions are more of a PR campaign to demonstrate that NATO is not in crisis**. In addition, **NATO aims to sow war and divide the world and it is not a guarantee of security**. Other stories alleged **Ukraine's Nazi regime cannot withstand a long-term war** and that **we are witnessing Ukraine's breakdown**.

GERMAN

News Front German focussed mainly on discrediting the Ukrainian army which willingly surrenders to the Russian army, as well as narratives about the allegedly Nazi Azov Battalion. The West should ask itself why it has supported Ukraine with weapons and money for years. Other narratives alleged that Zelenskyy somehow 'legalised' the Polish takeover of Ukraine; that the West is struggling with the consequences of its sanctions; and that a former Ukrainian soldiers said the Ukrainian military is forcing its soldiers to consume drugs 'in buckets'.

HUNGARIAN

Hungarian-language pro-Kremlin outlets claimed that tattoos have revealed the presence of neo-Nazis in the Azov battalion. In addition, sanctions are negatively affecting the European economy while Russia is weathering the storm. Other narratives claimed that Ukraine is planning to launch a new military offense because the West demanded that it do so, and that the EU's weapons stockpiles are depleted. In addition, NATO officers and bio-laboratories lurked in the catacombs under the Azovstal steel plant, and special legal provisions proposed by Zelenskyy would allow Polish police to perform law enforcement duties on Ukrainian territory.

ITALIAN

Disinformation narratives included claims that Mariupol is returning to normal after eight years of fascism following the de-Nazification of Azovstal; the collapse of Azovstal has exposed the castles of lies of all Italian pro-NATO media outlets; in Azovstal plant's basement, secret NATO facilities jointly managed by NATO and the Metabiota company included a chemical and biological laboratory; Azov prisoners of war have Nazi tattoos, rebuking the fake news that tried to cover up Ukrainian Nazism and its collapse; and Israeli mercenaries are fighting alongside the Azov Battalion.

MOLDOVA / TRANSNISTRIA

During the monitored period, articles explaining the disadvantages of Moldova's exit from the CIS continued to appear. On 20 May, British Foreign Minister Liz Truss said in an interview that Britain and Moldova have begun talks on delivering modern weapons to Moldova to protect it from Russia. Afterwards, pro-Kremlin media outlets and commentators insisted that Moldova be neutral. Some articles suggested that Maia Sandu, who is planning a vacation to the United States in coming days where she will speak at Harvard, is actually going to reach an agreement with the Americans regarding the delivery of weapons to Moldova.

Regarding Transnistria, outlets continued to spread messages that Kyiv and Chisinau are a threat to Transnistria and that Moldovan authorities are planning to carry out 'provocations' in the territory.

POLISH

Sputnik Poland focussed mainly on Polish Russophobia. Poland is accused of having an extremely irrational anti-Russian position, which puts Russian gas transit through this country at risk. Polish assistance to Ukraine will not provide Warsaw with any benefits. Poland will lose everything it has, while Ukraine will continue to refuse to admit to its historical crimes against the Poles. Finally, Russia has a pro-peace position (Moscow is open to talks) and anti-Russian sanctions should be withdrawn.

SPANISH

Familiar disinformation narratives insisted on the **neo-Nazi character of the Azov Battalion** and **Western and Ukrainian support for Nazis**. Again, we saw multiple stories on **sanctions**, including claims that they open a **window of opportunity to strengthen Russia's resilience** and that **the West is losing the economic war against Russia**. RT reported several pieces on alleged **Ukrainian atrocities**, and Sputnik published at least three articles where the main narrative was **misreporting and anti-Russian bias in the coverage** of the 'special operation'.

UKRAINE

Disinformation narratives included allegations that Ukrainian troops are committing war crimes, surrendering, and dying; Russia is preventing civilian deaths while withstanding Russian sanctions; the West and NATO are to blame for Russia's invasion, Ukraine's neo-Nazism, and fake news; and that Poland will either occupy Ukraine or annex western Ukraine.

ANNEX 1

Sources covered¹: News Front English, South Front, Oriental Review, New Eastern Outlook, Sputnik France, RT France, Observateur International, News Front French, RT Spanish, Sputnik Spanish, News Front Spanish, Sputnik Italia, News Front German, Orosz Hírek, Balrad, Moszkvatér, Sputnik Poland, far-right Polish Facebook pages, Sputnik Georgia, Sputnik Abkhazia, Sputnik Ossetia, md.sputniknews.com, Vedomosti.md, Mejdurecie.md, Bloknot-moldova.md, Kp.md, Actualitati.md, Fonsk.ru, Primul.md, Sputnik Armenia, DNR Pravda, Antimaydan, Novoross.info, Dan-news, Antifashist, News.ua, Sputnik Azerbaijan, Musavat.com, Bakuexo.az, Azvision.az, RT Arabic, Sputnik Arabic, Russian telegram channels, RBC.ru, RIA Novosti, Glas.Ru, Ukraina.ru, sm-news.ru, u-f.ru, lifenews.ru, gororitmoskva.ru, OSNmedia.ru, 19rusinfo.ru, vnnews.ru, TASS, Pervyi Kanal, RadioSputnik.ru, Military.Pravda.ru, vesti.ru, iz.ru, RG.ru, Rossaprimavera, Smotrim.ru, TV Zvezda, RIA Novosti Crimea, Tsargrad.TV, RIA FAN, Newinform.com, Russian Telegram channels.

¹ All country reports are available in annex.

March 17, 2022

Disinformation Overview

DISINFORMER-IN-CHIEF ATTEMPTS TO JUSTIFY HIS WAR:

President Putin's disinformation and propaganda-filled March 16 speech, aimed at justifying Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine, received wide coverage from pro-Kremlin media and influencers. Portraying the war as a historic event, Putin said it will end the so-called global domination of the collective West, which he claimed wanted to destroy a sovereign Russia, and used Moscow's "special operation" in Ukraine as a pretext for imposing anti-Russian sanctions. Repeating one of the most prominent current disinformation narratives, Putin accused Ukraine and the Pentagon of developing biological weapons near Russia's borders, and blamed "fascist" Kyiv for refusing to withdraw troops from Donbas and avoiding bloodshed by not engaging in hostilities. Finally, Putin signaled rising repercussions for Russians opposing the war, claiming that the West is betting on a so-called fifth column or "national traitors," whom Russia must cleanse itself from. Kremlin-aligned disinformation outlets will likely continue amplifying Putin's talking points and use them as a base for their own disinformation campaigns.

BLAMING AZOV FOR THE MARIUPOL THEATER BOMBING: To shift the blame for the March 16 bombing of the Mariupol theater that hosted several hundred refugees, Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem accuses its favorite target, the Ukrainian "nationalists" from the Azov Battalion. The emerging false narrative denies Russian involvement and claims the Azov Battalion carried out a "bloody provocation." According to this false narrative, the battalion established a headquarters at the theater, held the civilians hostage, and then blew up the building after rigging it with explosives to frame Russia and give the United States the pretext to send its military to Ukraine. RIA Novosti quoted a "DPR" spokesman who claimed the Azov forces fired at the theater from tanks. On Telegram, pro-Kremlin accounts asserted they had evidence of Azov planning the provocation for four days and cited an alleged refugee from the theater who said all civilians were allowed to leave the building before the explosion.

Slovakia Charges Russian Intelligence-linked Purveyor of Disinformation

The Slovak and Czech governments' recent steps to counter Russian disinformation and its purveyors show vigor and resilience to Kremlin malign influence operations in Central Europe in the wake of Russia's further invasion of Ukraine. Bratislava authorities charged two Slovak nationals March 15 with spying for Russia, including Bohus Garbar, a frequent author under various pseudonyms for Slovakian pro-Kremlin disinformation outlets Hlavne Spravy (shut down by the Slovak National Security Office on March 2) and Armadneho magazine. A video posted March 15 showed the Russian Embassy's acting defense attaché offering Garbar money to recruit Slovaks with pro-Russian views and access to confidential information related to NATO and the EU. In connection with the arrests, Slovakia announced it would also expel three Russian "diplomats." The Garbar case draws a clear connection between Russia's intelligence services and pro-Kremlin disinformation operations in Slovakia, and possibly other countries in the region. Prague has also cracked down on pro-Kremlin disinformation operations since Moscow's February 24 renewed invasion, blocking eight websites on February 25 and launching the "Kremlin Trumpets" campaign to name and shame the most prominent purveyors of Kremlin disinformation in the Czech Republic.

Opposition to the War Among Russian State Media Employees

Reports suggest the Kremlin's relentless disinformation and propaganda campaign to justify its war has become too much even for some direct participants in its dissemination. Marina Ovsyannikova, an employee of Russian state-funded Channel One, interrupted a March 14 live news broadcast, shouting anti-war slogans and holding a sign urging audiences not to believe state media. She was convicted March 15 of a misdemeanor for "inciting unpermitted protests" and released. According to Meduza, Ovsyannikova's objection to the war against Ukraine is "not uncommon" among state media employees. BBC reports the war has caused "a quiet but steady stream of resignations from Russia's tightly controlled state-run TV," including staff from Channel One Europe, NTV, RT, and RT sister agency Ruptly. Journalist Roman Super said many employees were also resigning from Vesti, a news division of the state-owned Rossiya 1.



March 15, 2022

Disinformation Overview

“ATROCITIES? YOU MEAN THE UKRAINIAN ONES?”: As Russia continues to refer to its war in Ukraine as a “special military operation” to “de-Nazify” the country, it has upped its level of brutality against civilian populations. Despite overwhelming evidence that Russia has committed atrocities such as the use of cluster munitions and the bombing of residential areas, schools, and hospitals across the country, the Kremlin continues to try to hide its actions with denials and disinformation. An absurd and rapid sequence of disinformation claims emerged after Russia first denied it bombed a maternity hospital in Mariupol on March 9, then claimed it had bombed the hospital as a justifiable target because Ukrainian military elements had sheltered there, and finally argued that the “the Azov Battalion and other radicals” had captured the hospital prior to the bombing. The Kremlin continues to deny Russian forces’ atrocities, frequently “flipping the script” and accusing Ukrainian troops and neo-Nazis of allegedly using civilians as “human shields,” holding cities hostage, and gunning down Ukrainian civilians.

ILL OMENS - STATE MEDIA PORTENDS WHAT MOSCOW SEES AS THE FATE OF UKRAINIAN LEADERSHIP: Rhetoric and imagery on Russian state television indicates that the Kremlin may be attempting to prepare the Russian populace for escalation of violence in Ukraine and retribution against Ukrainian political figures and resistance leaders. As some Russian political pundits call for application of the death penalty in Ukraine once Russia establishes dominance, leading Kremlin propagandist Dmitriy Kiselyov’s program aired a video depicting the 1946 public hangings of Nazis on Maidan Square (then Kalinin Square). The pro-Kremlin tabloid Moskovsky Komsomolets, as early as February 25, published an article in which a lawyer suggests that an international tribunal to try Ukrainian leadership could be set up in Russia, or even in Beijing, with the charges potentially being “genocide,” “mercenarism,” and the “rehabilitation of Nazism.” Juxtaposed with the recent kidnappings of Ukrainian mayors and the U.S. assessment that Russia may be creating “kill lists” of influential Ukrainians and officials in the Zelensky government, this particularly violent strain of propaganda directed at Russian audiences portends continued extreme messaging from Moscow.

A Nuclear “Fake False Flag” Exposed

Ukrainian security services announced March 6 that Russian forces had shelled the Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology, the site of a nuclear research facility that produced radioisotopes for medical and industrial applications. In its reply, the Russian Defense Ministry alleged Ukrainian intelligence and Azov Battalion militants had rigged a reactor to explode in a staged provocation Ukraine would then attribute to a Russian missile attack. Russian forces again shelled the now-de-energized facility March 10, causing documented superficial damages and a fire at a nearby hostel. This time, Kremlin-funded disinformation outlet Sputnik told an altogether different story. Per the Sputnik report the following day, a Russian official said “Ukrainian nationalists blew up one of the buildings ... in order to conceal evidence of the nuclear research conducted there.” Sputnik added that “as many as 50 employees of the institute could be trapped under the rubble,” all tragic victims of Ukraine’s alleged desire for nuclear weapons. **The State Department confirmed March 11 with Ukrainian scientific and military contacts on the ground no building was destroyed.**



Nationalists Blew Up Institute Building in Kharkov to Hide Nuclear Research, Russian MoD Says



Russian State Media Significantly Degraded on Social Media

In the past two weeks, **several U.S.-based social media companies took significant actions to degrade the ability of Russian disinformation and propaganda to reach global audiences.** YouTube (owned by Google) announced March 11 it was blocking global access to channels “associated with Russian state-funded media,” which, per YouTube, led to the removal of “more than 1,000 channels and over 15,000 videos” including Russian state television content and the RT media apparatus. Meta restricted access to RT and Sputnik across the EU, UK, and Ukraine, and labeled additional Russian state media outlets. Twitter banned RT and Sputnik in Europe and launched a “Tor-friendly” version of its site to allow Russian users to access its platform. Reddit even quarantined the flagrantly pro-Kremlin subreddit r/Russia due to misinformation, making it hidden from searches and recommendations.



Disinformation Overview

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS LABS DISINFORMATION ESCALATES: Russia has recently increased its disinformation on alleged biological laboratories and weapons. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov claimed March 3 that Ukraine's public and animal health facilities were "biological military laboratories." Then, on March 6, Russian MoD Spokesman Maj. Gen. Konashenkov alleged Russia had proof the U.S. Biological Threat Reduction Program labs in Ukraine were developing biological weapons and employees of those labs had destroyed "pathogens of plague, anthrax, tularemia, cholera and other deadly diseases" on February 24. Later, the head of Russia's CBRN defense forces presented "evidence" on March 7 that as many as 30 U.S. military biological labs across Ukraine had worked on several deadly pathogens; that their operations had coincided with a spike in infectious diseases in the region; and that serum samples taken from patients of "Slavic ethnicity" under the pretext of testing COVID-19 treatment methods had been sent back to the United States. Russian state and proxy media outlets have widely covered these disinformation claims, and today, PRC Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhao Lijian and Chinese state media echoed them. Kremlin-linked outlets have amplified Zhao's remarks. In reality, the U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction Program has helped partners fight COVID-19, dispose of chemical weapons in Syria and Libya, and reduce the threat of state and non-state actors acquiring or developing biological weapons.

RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR DISINFORMATION INTENSIFIES: A new Russian false narrative that the United States transferred plutonium to Ukraine to help Kyiv develop a "dirty" nuclear weapon has spread widely across Russian state media and outlets linked to U.S.-sanctioned Yevgeniy Prigozhin (TASS, RIA Novosti, Zvezda, PolitRossiya). The Russian MFA also alleged March 8 that Ukrainian intelligence and Azov Battalion militants had "rigged" a reactor near Kharkiv to stage a provocation and accuse Russian forces of attacking the nuclear facility. This claim also received widespread coverage in Russian media. Russia falsely claims Kyiv intended to develop nuclear weapons capacity with Western help and uses this disinformation as one of the false justifications for further invading Ukraine.

New Sanctions on Russian Disinformation Entities

The U.S. Department of the Treasury sanctioned 26 Russia- and Ukraine-based individuals and seven Russian entities March 3 in connection with Russia's efforts to disseminate disinformation targeting Ukraine. The sanctioned individuals included leaders and operatives of Russian intelligence-directed outlets Strategic Culture Foundation (SCF) (SVR-linked), InfoRos (GRU), News Front (FSB), and SouthFront (FSB). Treasury also sanctioned Odnazhizn, Rhythm of Eurasia, and Journal Kamerton, outlets created by and affiliated with the SCF. Additionally, Treasury designated the Prigozhin-linked websites United World International (UWI), its chief editor Darya Dugina, and Geopolitica.ru, a website directed by Darya's father Aleksander Dugin. Russian intelligence services direct and control outlets that falsely purport to be independent media, but publish disinformation and propaganda created by these services. **These outlets target Ukrainian and Russian citizens with false claims attempting to portray Ukraine as the aggressor and to manipulate and weaken perceived adversaries.**

Disinformation Spotlight: Serbia

Support for Moscow runs deep in Serbia, and local media are no exception. Serbian President Vučić has said 85 percent of his countrymen will "always side with Russia whatever may happen," a sentiment echoed in many recent local headlines. Indeed, the information environment in Serbia actively reinforces Kremlin narratives that glorify Russia's military, denounce sanctions, and support Russia's purported "de-Nazification of Ukraine," even as some outlets' reporting acknowledges the potential for the conflict to destabilize the wider region. According to one Serbian public policy advocacy group, only three local media outlets reported on Serbia's vote for the March 2 UNGA resolution condemning Russia's invasion. Instead, outlets condemned the West for sanctions and opined that those sanctions will impose economic hardship for Serbia as well.



March 17, 2022

Faces of Kremlin Propaganda: Vladimir Solovyov

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OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

Approved: R/GEC: Leah Bray

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Drafted: R/GEC: (b)(6)

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EUR/FO: DAS Robinson (ok)

EUR/FO: DAS Escobar (ok)

EUR/FO: DAS Dunnigan (ok)

GEC: (b)(6)

EUR/PRESS: (b)(6)

EUR/PPD/StratComm: (b)(6)

EUR/RUS: (b)(6)

EUR/EE: (b)(6)

L/PD: (b)(6)

L/EUR: (b)(6)

D: (b)(6)

D-MR: No response

P: (b)(6)

S/P: (b)(6)

C: (b)(6)

GPA: (b)(6)

SPOX: Ned Price ()

Russian Disinformation on Ukraine in the MENA Region

GEC Non-Paper

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RUSSIA THREAT TEAM WEEKLY OPERATIONS UPDATE**5/9/2022****(U) Current Observations and Analysis on Convergence Themes in the Information Environment****(U) Key Leader Engagement****(SBU) Ongoing GEC and Partner Activities**

(SBU) GEC Partner TV8 Moldova Highlights War Opposition Inside Russia. TV8 released a series of short videos showcasing Russian domestic opposition to the Ukraine war featuring clips of people destroying or attempting to destroy "Z" installations.

(U) ^{(b)(6)} Documents Russian Propaganda in North Macedonia. ^{(b)(6)}
^{(b)(6)} Metamorphosis published a May 4 article documenting Russian propaganda in North Macedonia following the 2018 consultative referendum on the Prespa Agreement with Greece and the political turmoil surrounding the "United Macedonia" movement. The article highlights the effects of Russian influence through disinformation and propaganda during these separate but influential events.

(U) North Macedonian ^{(b)(6)} Promotes Ways to Overcome Western Balkans' Press Freedom Challenges. Metamorphosis used the occasion of World Press Freedom Day to emphasize the importance of unity to overcome the impacts of war and polarization in Western Balkans' society and counter disinformation campaigns, hate speech, and physical threats against journalists. Cooperation across media organizations could also help reduce the divisions, self-censorship and job insecurity that regional independent media members face.

(SBU) ^{(b)(6)} European Values Center (EVC) Holds a Series of Regional Roundtables on Russian Disinformation Tactics and Strategies. Last week EVC held a roundtable in Poland that examined Russian disinformation methods, such as multi-vector narratives, short messages, false titles, influencing emotions, falsely portraying old quotes as new to favorably unfolding events for Russia. A second roundtable in the Czech Republic focused on current Russian narratives linked to the Ukraine crisis. The attendees expressed their commitment to counter disinformation and examined how governments or NGOs can fight Russian influence more effectively. The final roundtable was in Slovakia examined likely disinformation trends forecasts and potential responses.

(U) Russia Threat Team Actions

(U) GEC Reports/Products

(U) GEC Snapshots on Russia's Disinformation on Ukraine: On May 5 and 10, GEC released two more Snapshots on Russia's disinformation trends on Ukraine. The first included narratives targeting Sweden and Finland as they make decisions regarding NATO membership, how China's PRC routinely amplifies Kremlin disinformation on Ukraine, and a potential trend in Kremlin narratives increasingly portraying the further invasion of Ukraine as a war against NATO and the West. The second Snapshot examined Putin's use of disinformation and historical revisionism in his Victory Day speech and how transnational terrorist organizations have amplified Kremlin disinformation to spread anti-U.S. rhetoric and galvanize their bases. To be added to GEC's distribution list for future Snapshots, please contact (b)(6) at

(b)(6)

State.gov.

March 31, 2022

Faces of Kremlin Propaganda: Vladimir Solovyov

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Approved: R/GEC: Leah Bray

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EUR/EE (b)(6) (k)

R: (b)(6)

L/PD (b)(6)

L/EUR: (b)(6)

D: (b)(6)

D-MR: No response

P: (b)(6)

S/P (b)(6)

C (b)(6)

GPA (b)(6)

SPOX: Ned Price ()

INTERIM NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

MARCH 2021

PRESIDENT JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.



OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

In my inaugural address, I committed to engage with the world once again, not to meet yesterday's challenges, but today's and tomorrow's.

Our world is at an inflection point. Global dynamics have shifted. New crises demand our attention. And in this moment of accelerating global challenges — from the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation to the fourth industrial revolution — one thing is certain: we will only succeed in advancing American interests and upholding our universal values by working in common cause with our closest allies and partners, and by renewing our own enduring sources of national strength.

That begins with the revitalization of our most fundamental advantage: our democracy. I believe we are in the midst of an historic and fundamental debate about the future direction of our world. There are those who argue that, given all the challenges we face, autocracy is the best way forward. And there are those who understand that democracy is essential to meeting all the challenges of our changing world.

I firmly believe that democracy holds the key to freedom, prosperity, peace, and dignity. We must now demonstrate — with a clarity that dispels any doubt — that democracy can still deliver for our people and for people around the world. We must prove that our model isn't a relic of history; it's the single best way to realize the promise of our future. And, if we work together with our democratic partners, with strength and confidence, we will meet every challenge and outpace every challenger.

Achieving these goals rests on a core strategic proposition: The United States must renew its enduring advantages so that we can meet today's challenges from a position of strength. We will build back better our economic foundations; reclaim our place in international institutions; lift up our values at home and speak out to defend them around the world; modernize our military capabilities, while leading first with diplomacy; and revitalize America's unmatched network of alliances and partnerships.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

And as we do this work, we must also demonstrate clearly to the American people that leading the world isn't an investment we make to feel good about ourselves. It's how we ensure the American people are able to live in peace, security, and prosperity. It's in our undeniable self-interest.

When we strengthen our alliances, we amplify our power and our ability to disrupt threats before they can reach our shores. When we invest in the economic development of countries, we create new markets for our products and reduce the likelihood of instability, violence, and mass migrations. When we strengthen health systems around the world, we reduce the risk of future pandemics that can threaten our people and our economy. When we defend equal rights of all people — of women and girls, LGBTQI individuals, indigenous communities, people with disabilities, and people of every ethnic background and religion — we help ensure that those rights are protected for our own children here in America.

Today, I am issuing this interim guidance to convey my vision for how America will engage with the world. I direct departments and agencies to align their actions with this guidance, even as we begin work on a National Security Strategy. We have no time to waste. The simple truth is, America cannot afford to be absent any longer on the world stage. And under the Biden-Harris Administration, America is back. Diplomacy is back. Alliances are back. But we are not looking back. We are looking irrevocably toward the future and all that we can achieve for the American people — together.

Let's get to work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Biden".

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

RENEWING AMERICA’S ADVANTAGES

Interim National Security Strategic Guidance

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Today, more than ever, America's fate is inextricably linked to events beyond our shores. We confront a global pandemic, a crushing economic downturn, a crisis of racial justice, and a deepening climate emergency. We face a world of rising nationalism, receding democracy, growing rivalry with China, Russia, and other authoritarian states, and a technological revolution that is reshaping every aspect of our lives. Ours is a time of unprecedented challenges, but also unmatched opportunity.

This moment calls upon us to lean forward, not shrink back – to boldly engage the world to keep Americans safe, prosperous, and free. It requires a new and broader understanding of national security, one that recognizes that our role in the world depends upon our strength and vitality here at home. It demands creative approaches that draw on all the sources of our national power: our diversity, vibrant economy, dynamic civil society and innovative technological base, enduring democratic values, broad and deep network of partnerships and alliances, and the world's most powerful military. Our task is to ensure these advantages endure, by building back better at home and reinvigorating our leadership abroad. From a position of renewed strength, America can meet any challenge.

Together, we will demonstrate not only that democracies can still deliver for our people, but that democracy is essential to meeting the challenges of our time. We will strengthen and stand behind our allies, work with like-minded partners, and pool our collective strength to advance shared interests and deter common threats. We will lead with diplomacy. We will renew our commitment to global development and international cooperation, while also making smart, disciplined investments in our national defense. We will address the crises of today while promoting resilience, innovation, competitiveness, and truly shared prosperity for the future. We will recommit to realizing our ideals. We will modernize our national security institutions and processes, while ensuring we take advantage of the full diversity of talents required to address today's complex challenges. And in everything we do, we will aim to make life better, safer, and easier for working families in America.

The crises we face are daunting. But America is undaunted. Throughout our history, Americans have turned periods of crisis into times of renewal and opportunity. The same is true today. We have a chance not just to build back, but to build back better. By leaning into our strengths, we will shape a better future.

The Global Security Landscape

We cannot pretend the world can simply be restored to the way it was 75, 30, or even four years ago. We cannot just return to the way things were before. In foreign policy and national security, just as in domestic policy, we have to chart a new course.

Recent events show all too clearly that **many of the biggest threats we face respect no borders or walls, and must be met with collective action.** Pandemics and other biological risks, the escalating climate crisis, cyber and digital threats, international economic disruptions, protracted humanitarian crises, violent extremism and terrorism, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction all pose profound and, in some cases, existential dangers. None can be effectively addressed by one nation acting alone. And none can be effectively addressed with the United States on the sidelines.

At a time when the need for American engagement and international cooperation is greater than ever, however, **democracies across the globe, including our own, are increasingly under siege.** Free societies have been challenged from within by corruption, inequality, polarization, populism, and illiberal threats to the rule of law. Nationalist and nativist trends

– accelerated by the COVID-19 crisis – produce an every-country-for-itself mentality that leaves us all more isolated, less prosperous, and less safe. Democratic nations are also increasingly challenged from outside by antagonistic authoritarian powers. Anti-democratic forces use misinformation, disinformation, and weaponized corruption to exploit perceived weaknesses and sow division within and among free nations, erode existing international rules, and promote alternative models of authoritarian governance.

IN FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY, JUST AS IN DOMESTIC POLICY, WE HAVE TO CHART A NEW COURSE.

Reversing these trends is essential to our national security. The United States must lead by the power of our example, and that will require hard work at home – to fortify the founding pillars of our democracy, to truly address systemic racism, and to live up to our promise as a nation of immigrants. Our success will be a beacon to other democracies, whose freedom is intertwined with our own security, prosperity, and way of life.

We must also contend with the reality that **the distribution of power across the world is**

changing, creating new threats. China, in particular, has rapidly become more assertive. It is the only competitor potentially capable of combining its economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system. Russia remains determined to enhance its global influence and play a disruptive role on the world stage. Both Beijing and Moscow have invested heavily in efforts meant to check U.S. strengths and prevent us from defending our interests and allies around the world. Regional actors like Iran and North Korea continue to pursue game-changing capabilities and technologies, while threatening U.S. allies and partners and challenging regional stability. We also face challenges within countries whose governance is fragile, and from influential non-state actors that have the ability to disrupt American interests. Terrorism and violent extremism, both domestic and international, remain significant threats. But, despite these steep challenges, the United States' enduring advantages—across all forms and dimensions of our power—enable us to shape the future of international politics to advance our interests and values, and create a freer, safer, and more prosperous world.

This work is urgent, because **the alliances, institutions, agreements, and norms underwriting the international order the United States helped to establish are being tested.** Amid rapid change and mounting crisis, the system's flaws and inequities have become apparent, and gridlock and inter-state rivalry have caused many around the world—including many Americans—to question its continued relevance. The United States cannot return to business as usual, and the past order cannot simply be restored. But this, too, presents an opportunity – to act, adapt, reform, and embrace bold initiatives that bring like-minded states and influential non-state actors together in new ways. Together with our allies and partners, we can modernize the architecture of international cooperation for the challenges of this century, from cyber threats to climate change, corruption, and digital authoritarianism.

Finally, **running beneath many of these broad trends is a revolution in technology that poses both peril and promise.** The world's leading powers are racing to develop and deploy emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing, that could shape everything from the economic and military balance among states to the future of work, wealth, and inequality within them. The future potential is enormous: advances in clean energy technologies are essential to slowing climate change; biotechnology could unlock cures for disease; next generation telecommunications (5G) infrastructure will set the stage for huge advances in commerce and access to information. Rapid changes in technology will shape every aspect of our lives and our national interests, but the direction and consequences of the technological revolution remain unsettled. Emerging technologies remain largely ungoverned

by laws or norms designed to center rights and democratic values, foster cooperation, establish guardrails against misuse or malign action, and reduce uncertainty and manage the risk that competition will lead to conflict. America must reinvest in retaining our scientific and technological edge and once again lead, working alongside our partners to establish the new rules and practices that will allow us to seize the opportunities that advances in technology present.

Our National Security Priorities

The vital national interests of the United States have endured since the founding of the Republic. Today, advancing these interests requires a new approach updated for the challenges of our time. It is our most solemn obligation **to protect the security of the American people**. This requires us to meet challenges not only from great powers and regional adversaries, but also from violent and criminal non-state actors and extremists, and from threats like climate change, infectious disease, cyberattacks, and disinformation that respect no national borders. We have an enduring **interest in expanding economic prosperity and opportunity**, but we must redefine America's economic interests in terms of working families' livelihoods, rather than corporate profits or aggregate national wealth. That places an imperative on an economic recovery grounded in equitable and inclusive growth, as well as investments to encourage innovation, strengthen national competitiveness, produce good-paying jobs, rebuild American supply chains for critical goods, and expand opportunities for all Americans. And we must remain committed to **realizing and defending the democratic values at the heart of the American way of life**. That means more than simply sustaining the status quo – it means reinvigorating our democracy, living up to our ideals and values for all Americans, and standing up for our values abroad, including by uniting the world's democracies to combat threats to free societies.

At its root, ensuring our national security requires us to:

- Defend and nurture the underlying sources of American strength, including our people, our economy, our national defense, and our democracy at home;
- Promote a favorable distribution of power to deter and prevent adversaries from directly threatening the United States and our allies, inhibiting access to the global commons, or dominating key regions; and
- Lead and sustain a stable and open international system, underwritten by strong democratic alliances, partnerships, multilateral institutions, and rules.

We can do none of this work alone. For that reason, **we will reinvigorate and modernize our alliances and partnerships around the world.** For decades, our allies have stood by our side against common threats and adversaries, and worked hand-in-hand to advance our shared interests and values. They are a tremendous source of strength and a unique American advantage, helping to shoulder the responsibilities required to keep our nation safe and our people prosperous. Our democratic alliances enable us to present a common front, produce a unified vision, and pool our strength to promote high standards, establish effective international rules, and hold countries like China to account. That is why we will reaffirm, invest in, and modernize the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and our alliances with Australia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea – which, along with our other global alliances and partnerships, are America’s greatest strategic asset. We will work with allies to share responsibilities equitably, while encouraging them to invest in their own comparative advantages against shared current and future threats.

Beyond our core alliances, we will also double down on building partnerships throughout the world, because our strength is multiplied when we combine efforts to address common challenges, share costs, and widen the circle of cooperation. As we do, we will recognize that our vital national interests compel the deepest connection to the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere. And we will be mindful of both our values and our interests as we engage partner nations. We will deepen our partnership with India and work alongside New Zealand, as well as Singapore, Vietnam, and other Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states, to advance shared objectives. Recognizing the ties of shared history and sacrifice, we will reinforce our partnership with Pacific Island states. We will recommit ourselves to our transatlantic partnerships, forging a strong, common agenda with the European Union and the United Kingdom on the defining issues of our time.

Because the vital national interests of the United States are inextricably bound to the fortunes of our closest neighbors in the Americas, we will expand our engagement and partnerships throughout the Western Hemisphere—and especially with Canada and Mexico—based on principles of mutual respect and equality and a commitment to economic prosperity, security, human rights, and dignity. This includes working with the Congress to provide Central America with \$4 billion in assistance over four years, and taking other steps to address the root causes of human insecurity and irregular migration, including poverty, criminal violence, and corruption – problems made exponentially worse by COVID-19 and the deep recession and debt crisis it has wrought throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. And we will cooperate

to confront the regional effects of climate change, while helping our neighbors invest in good governance and democratic institutions.

In the Middle East, we will maintain our ironclad commitment to Israel's security, while seeking to further its integration with its neighbors and resuming our role as promoter of a viable two-state solution. We will work with our regional partners to deter Iranian aggression and threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity, disrupt al-Qaeda and related terrorist networks and prevent an ISIS resurgence, address humanitarian crises, and redouble our efforts to resolve the complex armed conflicts that threaten regional stability. But we do not believe that military force is the answer to the region's challenges, and we will not give our partners in the Middle East a blank check to pursue policies at odds with American interests and values. That's why we have withdrawn U.S. support for offensive military operations in Yemen and backed UN efforts to end the war. Our aim will be to de-escalate regional tensions and create space for people throughout the Middle East to realize their aspirations.

We will also continue to build partnerships in Africa, investing in civil society and strengthening long-standing political, economic, and cultural connections. We will partner with dynamic and fast-growing African economies, even as we provide assistance to countries suffering from poor governance, economic distress, health, and food insecurity exacerbated by the pandemic. We will work to bring an end to the continent's deadliest conflicts and prevent the onset of new ones, while strengthening our commitment to development, health security, environmental sustainability, democratic progress, and rule of law. We will help African nations combat the threats posed by climate change and violent extremism, and support their economic and political independence in the face of undue foreign influence.

In addition to recommitting to our alliances and partnerships, the United States will again embrace international cooperation toward a better, safer, more resilient, and more prosperous world. **We will move swiftly to earn back our position of leadership in international institutions, joining with the international community to tackle the climate crisis and other shared challenges.** We have already re-entered the Paris Climate Accord and appointed a Presidential Special Envoy for climate, the first steps toward restoring our leadership and working alongside others to combat the acute danger posed by rapidly rising temperatures. The climate crisis has been centuries in the making, and even with aggressive action, the United States and the world will experience increasing weather extremes and environmental stress in the years ahead. But, if we fail to act now, we will miss our last opportunity to avert

the most dire consequences of climate change for the health of our people, our economy, our security, and our planet. That is why we will make the clean energy transformation a central pillar of our economic recovery efforts at home, generating both domestic prosperity and international credibility as a leader of the global climate change agenda. And, in the coming months, we will convene the world's major economies and seek to raise the ambition of all nations, including our own, to rapidly lower global carbon emissions, while also enhancing resilience to climate change at home and in vulnerable countries. Alongside these efforts, we will help partners around the world mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, and we will stand prepared to provide humanitarian and development assistance to nations and communities affected by natural disasters.

We will also join with the international community to combat the continuing threat posed by COVID-19 and other infectious diseases with pandemic potential. We will lead at the World Health Organization, working to reform and strengthen the organization. As we do, we will push for reforms to improve the agency and the role of the United Nations in confronting this pandemic and preparing for the next. We have already begun to mobilize an international response to COVID-19 with an initial \$2 billion contribution to COVAX along with a pledge to provide an additional \$2 billion in the coming months and years. Working alongside the UN, the G-7, the G-20, the European Union, and other regional organizations, through the Global Health Security Agenda, and with international financial institutions, we will provide support for much-needed medical supplies and access to diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines. We will join with others to address the grave challenges stemming from or aggravated by the pandemic, including growing debt, rising poverty, deteriorating food security, and worsening gender-based violence. We will revitalize and expand global health and health security initiatives for all nations to reduce the risk of future biological catastrophes, whether naturally occurring, accidental, or deliberate.

America's interests at home are strengthened by improving lives globally. Our strength is multiplied when we combine efforts to address common challenges, share burdens, and broaden the circle of cooperation. Through our development agencies and financing tools, we will provide foreign assistance to promote global stability and offer an alternative to predatory development models. We will invest in climate-conscious food and water security and resilient agriculture, preventing disease and improving public health and nutrition. We will work to ensure high-quality and equitable education and opportunities for children and youth. We will advance gender equality, LBGTQI+ rights, and women's empowerment as part of our

broader commitment to inclusive economic growth and social cohesion. Global development is among our best means to articulate and embody our values, while simultaneously pursuing our national security interests. In short, our foreign assistance programs and partnerships are both the right and the smart thing to do.

Because the United Nations and other international organizations, however imperfect, remain essential for advancing our interests, we will re-engage as a full participant and work to meet our financial obligations, in full and on time. Across a range of crucial issues – from climate change to global health, peace and security, humanitarian response, revitalizing democracy and human rights, digital connectivity and technology governance, sustainable and inclusive development, and forced displacement and migration – effective global cooperation and institutional reform require America to resume a leadership role in multilateral organizations. It is also critical that these institutions continue to reflect the universal values, aspirations, and norms that have underpinned the UN system since its founding 75 years ago, rather than an authoritarian agenda. In a world of deepening rivalry, we will not cede this vital terrain.

WE WILL MAKE SMART AND DISCIPLINED CHOICES REGARDING OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE AND THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF OUR MILITARY, WHILE ELEVATING DIPLOMACY AS OUR TOOL OF FIRST RESORT.

As we re-engage the international system, we will address the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons. We will head off costly arms races and re-establish our credibility as a leader in arms control. That is why we moved quickly to extend the New START Treaty with Russia. Where possible, we will also pursue new arms control arrangements. We will take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, while ensuring our strategic deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective and that our extended deterrence commitments to our allies remain strong and credible. And we will engage in meaningful dialogue with Russia and China on a range of emerging military technological developments that implicate strategic stability.

Renewed American nonproliferation leadership will also be essential to reducing the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. Working with allies and partners, we will pursue principled diplomacy to address the Iranian nuclear program and its other destabilizing activities. We will

empower our diplomats to work to reduce the threat posed by North Korea's growing nuclear and missile programs, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the Republic of Korea and Japan. We will also renew efforts to lock down fissile and radiological materials across the world.

In advancing America's interests globally, **we will make smart and disciplined choices regarding our national defense and the responsible use of our military, while elevating diplomacy as our tool of first resort.** A powerful military matched to the security environment is a decisive American advantage. The United States will never hesitate to use force when required to defend our vital national interests. We will ensure our armed forces are equipped to deter our adversaries, defend our people, interests, and allies, and defeat threats that emerge. But the use of military force should be a last resort, not the first; diplomacy, development, and economic statecraft should be the leading instruments of American foreign policy. Military force should only be used when the objectives and mission are clear and achievable, when force is matched with appropriate resources and as part of an integrated strategy, when it is consistent with our values and laws, and with the informed consent of the American people. Decisions will be grounded in our strong tradition of civilian control of the military and healthy civil-military relations. And, when force is required, we will employ it alongside international and local partners wherever possible to bolster effectiveness and legitimacy, share burdens, and invest others in success.

Defending America also means setting clear priorities within our defense budget. First and foremost, we will continue to invest in the people who serve in our all-volunteer force and their families. We will sustain readiness and ensure that the U.S. Armed Forces remain the best trained and equipped force in the world. In the face of strategic challenges from an increasingly assertive China and destabilizing Russia, we will assess the appropriate structure, capabilities, and sizing of the force, and, working with the Congress, shift our emphasis from unneeded legacy platforms and weapons systems to free up resources for investments in the cutting-edge technologies and capabilities that will determine our military and national security advantage in the future. We will streamline the processes for developing, testing, acquiring, deploying, and securing these technologies. We will ensure that we have the skilled workforce to acquire, integrate, and operate them. And we will shape ethical and normative frameworks to ensure these technologies are used responsibly. We will maintain the proficiency of special operations forces to focus on crisis response and priority counterterrorism and unconventional warfare missions. And we will develop capabilities to better compete and deter gray zone actions. We will prioritize defense investments in climate resiliency and clean energy. And we will work to ensure that the Department of Defense is a place of truly equal opportunity where our service

members do not face discrimination or the scourge of sexual harassment and assault.

The United States should not, and will not, engage in “forever wars” that have cost thousands of lives and trillions of dollars. We will work to responsibly end America’s longest war in Afghanistan while ensuring that Afghanistan does not again become a safe haven for terrorist attacks against the United States. Elsewhere, as we position ourselves to deter our adversaries and defend our interests, working alongside our partners, our presence will be most robust in the Indo-Pacific and Europe. In the Middle East, we will right-size our military presence to the level required to disrupt international terrorist networks, deter Iranian aggression, and protect other vital U.S. interests. A Global Posture Review will guide these choices, ensuring they are in keeping with our strategic objectives, values, and resources. And we will make these adjustments consistent with the safety of our personnel and in close consultation with our allies and partners.

As we make good on our promise to place the American people – and especially working families – at the center of our national security strategy, our policies must reflect a basic truth: in today’s world, economic security is national security. And the strength of the American middle class – the backbone of this nation – is a longstanding American advantage. For that reason, **our trade and international economic policies must serve**

**OUR TRADE AND
INTERNATIONAL
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NOT JUST THE
PRIVILEGED FEW.**

all Americans, not just the privileged few. Trade policy must grow the American middle class, create new and better jobs, raise wages, and strengthen communities. We will make sure that the rules of the international economy are not tilted against the United States. We will enforce existing trade rules and create new ones that promote fairness. We will ensure that the growth we promote through our international commercial, trade, and investment policies is durable and equitable. We will work with our allies to reform the World Trade Organization so that it functions to support both American jobs and the values that we share with millions around the globe – including labor rights, equal opportunity, and environmental stewardship. We will only pursue new trade deals after we have made investments in American workers and communities. And as we negotiate with other nations, we will stand up for American workers and small and medium-sized businesses, even as we continue to ensure that all American companies can compete successfully abroad. We will have labor and environmental groups

at the table and insist that all economic agreements have elevated labor and environmental protections. We will work with like-minded nations to advance an international trading system that promotes a global transition to clean energy. We will ensure our international economic policies reinforce our domestic policies to support workers, small businesses, and infrastructure, and we will integrate measures to address transitional and distributional challenges. We will renew our commitment to partnership with the private sector in our development investments, and seek to create investment opportunities for American firms in developing countries. And we will place a high priority on detecting, preventing, and managing global economic shocks that hit American families hard.

At a time of multiple, intersecting crises, we must recognize that **our strength abroad requires the United States to build back better at home**. A dynamic, inclusive, innovative national economy with a flourishing population is a critical American advantage that must be renewed. That starts by **decisively responding to the public health and economic crises unleashed by COVID-19**. Our national strategy—reinforced by the 12 initial executive actions issued by President Biden in his first two days in office—centers on restoring trust with the American people; mounting a safe, effective, and comprehensive vaccination campaign; and mitigating disease spread through masking, testing, an expanded public health workforce, and better data. We will increase emergency relief, exercise the Defense Production Act, safely reopen schools and businesses, and promote safe travel. Our efforts to tackle COVID-19 will focus on protecting those most at risk, advancing equity, and communicating credible public health guidance led by science. To address the economic crisis, we will work with the Congress to provide sustained relief to workers, families, small businesses, and communities and begin to make far-reaching investments to create millions of good-paying new jobs in infrastructure, manufacturing, technology, and caregiving.

As we take the urgent steps required for near-term recovery, we must also seize the historic opportunity in front of us to build back in ways that make America more resilient and secure over the long run. That is why we will rebuild and strengthen federal, state, and local preparedness to handle not just this pandemic, but also the next one. We will work to restore U.S. leadership on global health and health security, and build the world's collective preparedness and capacity to detect and rapidly contain infectious diseases and biological threats. We will invest in critical stockpiles and ensure that supply chains for pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, and other critical materials required during a crisis are not overly reliant on overseas networks prone to disruption. And we will make our economy more resilient to global shocks, like COVID-19 and those emanating from climate change.

Building back better also requires an updated social contract that treats American workers and working families as essential at all times, not just times of crisis – with higher wages, stronger benefits, collective bargaining, and equitable and safe workplaces. We will mobilize U.S. manufacturing and innovation to ensure that the future is made in America, and in all of America. We will leverage American ingenuity to build modern infrastructure and ensure our investments create good, union jobs that expand the middle class.

Central to this agenda is building an equitable, clean, and resilient energy future, which is urgently required to head off the existential risk posed by the climate crisis. Doing so is essential to spark innovation, grow high-paying jobs, and ensure U.S. competitiveness in the decades to come. We will dramatically increase investments in technology research, development, and deployment that will power the low-to-no carbon future that we seek – where global leadership is up for grabs and where American innovation can generate jobs and

**OUR STRENGTH
ABROAD REQUIRES
US TO BUILD BACK
BETTER AT HOME.**

growth in filling global market needs. We will use federal procurement to jumpstart demand for critical clean technologies like electric vehicles. And we will support the accelerated growth in renewable energy deployment, invest in climate-friendly infrastructure, build resilience to climate change, modernize our energy grid, and provide the international leadership required to encourage countries around the world to do the same.

More broadly, we will sustain America's innovation edge to improve the lives of all Americans. We will double down on science and technology investments, including in research and development, foundational computing technologies, and domestic leading-edge manufacturing, to enable the pursuit of numerous national strategic objectives, including in the economic, health, biotech, energy, climate, and national security domains. We will protect our investments with vigilance and foresight, to forge and extend enduring strategic advantages. We will expand our science and technology workforce by investing in STEM education, where America is currently losing ground, and restoring our nation's historic strengths by ensuring our immigration policy incentivizes the world's best and brightest to study, work, and stay in America. We will build 21st century digital infrastructure, including universal and affordable high-speed internet access and secure 5G networks. We will explore and use outer space to the benefit of humanity, and ensure the safety, stability, and security of outer space activities. We

will shape emerging technology standards to boost our security, economic competitiveness, and values. And, across these initiatives, we will partner with democratic friends and allies to amplify our collective competitive advantages.

As we bolster our scientific and technological base, we will make cybersecurity a top priority, strengthening our capability, readiness, and resilience in cyberspace. We will elevate cybersecurity as an imperative across the government. We will work together to manage and share risk, and we will encourage collaboration between the private sector and the government at all levels in order to build a safe and secure online environment for all Americans. We will expand our investments in the infrastructure and people we need to effectively defend the nation against malicious cyber activity, providing opportunities to Americans of diverse backgrounds as we build an unmatched talent base. We will renew our commitment to international engagement on cyber issues, working alongside our allies and partners to uphold existing and shape new global norms in cyberspace. And we will hold actors accountable for destructive, disruptive, or otherwise destabilizing malicious cyber activity, and respond swiftly and proportionately to cyberattacks by imposing substantial costs through cyber and non-cyber means.

Building back better requires us to **commit ourselves to revitalizing our own democracy**. America's ideals of democracy, equality, and diversity are a fundamental and enduring source of advantage – but they are not a given. Embracing that advantage means living up to the founding promises of our nation, strengthening and renewing our democratic processes and ideals, and demonstrating by our actions that democracy is essential to meeting the challenges of our time. We will combat voter suppression and institutional disenfranchisement. We will require transparency and accountability in our government, root out corruption, and confront the distorting role of money in our politics. We will recommit to the rule of law, restore respect for the constitutional separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary, renew faith in the apolitical nature of federal law enforcement agencies, the intelligence community, our diplomats, civil servants, and military, and reaffirm the importance of free speech, freedom of the press, the right to peacefully demonstrate, and other core civil rights and liberties.

At a time when millions of Americans have braved COVID-19 to demand racial justice, and when the pandemic and the economic crisis have fallen particularly hard on Black and Brown Americans, truly building back better is impossible without advancing racial equity. This necessitates deep reforms to policing and our criminal justice system, and urgent steps to ensure voting rights for all. But that is not enough. Combating systemic racism requires

aggressive action to address structures, policies, and practices that contribute to the wealth gap, to health disparities, and to inequalities in educational access, outcomes, and beyond.

We must also remember and celebrate that we are a nation of immigrants, strengthened at home and abroad by our diversity. We must renew our promise as a place of refuge, and our obligation to protect those who seek shelter on our shores. That is why we ended the previous administration's family separations policy and discriminatory travel ban. We will not be able to solve all of the challenges we face at the southern border overnight. But we will ensure that we create a process that is safe, fair, and conducted in accordance with our values.

A vibrant democracy rejects politically motivated violence in all of its forms. Despite significant successes against international terrorism, a diffuse and dispersed threat to Americans remains. Domestic violent extremism challenges core principles of our democracy and demands policies that protect public safety while promoting our values and respecting our laws. We must adapt our approach to counterterrorism, including by aligning our resources to evolving threats. We will work as a coordinated, unified federal government to use the full array of tools at our disposal in concert with state, local, tribal, private sector, and foreign counterparts. Robust law enforcement and intelligence capabilities, as well as strong cooperation and appropriate information sharing, will be critical to understanding and addressing the broad spectrum of violent extremism America confronts today.

**THIS AGENDA WILL
 STRENGTHEN OUR
 ENDURING ADVANTAGES,
 AND ALLOW US TO
 PREVAIL IN STRATEGIC
 COMPETITION WITH
 CHINA OR ANY OTHER
 NATION.**

Our work defending democracy does not end at our shores. Authoritarianism is on the global march, and **we must join with likeminded allies and partners to revitalize democracy the world over.** We will work alongside fellow democracies across the globe to deter and defend against aggression from hostile adversaries. We will stand with our allies and partners to combat new threats aimed at our democracies, ranging from cross-border aggression, cyberattacks, disinformation, and digital authoritarianism to infrastructure and energy coercion. We will take special aim at confronting corruption, which rots democracy from the inside and is increasingly weaponized by authoritarian states to undermine democratic

institutions. We will defend and protect human rights and address discrimination, inequity, and marginalization in all its forms. We will crack down on tax havens and illicit financing that contribute to income inequality, fund terrorism, and generate pernicious foreign influence. We will coordinate the use of economic tools, leveraging our collective strength to advance our common interests. We will work together to impose real costs on anyone who interferes in our democratic processes. We will join with like-minded democracies to develop and defend trusted critical supply chains and technology infrastructure, and to promote pandemic preparedness and clean energy. We will lead in promoting shared norms and forge new agreements on emerging technologies, space, cyber space, health and biological threats, climate and the environment, and human rights. And we will convene a global Summit for Democracy to ensure broad cooperation among allies and partners on the interests and values we hold most dear.

Taken together, **this agenda will strengthen our enduring advantages, and allow us to prevail in strategic competition with China or any other nation.** The most effective way for America to out-compete a more assertive and authoritarian China over the long-term is to invest in our people, our economy, and our democracy. By restoring U.S. credibility and reasserting forward-looking global leadership, we will ensure that America, not China, sets the international agenda, working alongside others to shape new global norms and agreements that advance our interests and reflect our values. By bolstering and defending our unparalleled network of allies and partners, and making smart defense investments, we will also deter Chinese aggression and counter threats to our collective security, prosperity, and democratic way of life.

At the same time, revitalizing our core strengths is necessary but not sufficient. In many areas, China's leaders seek unfair advantages, behave aggressively and coercively, and undermine the rules and values at the heart of an open and stable international system. When the Chinese government's behavior directly threatens our interests and values, we will answer Beijing's challenge. We will confront unfair and illegal trade practices, cyber theft, and coercive economic practices that hurt American workers, undercut our advanced and emerging technologies, and seek to erode our strategic advantage and national competitiveness. We will ensure that our supply chains for critical national security technologies and medical supplies are secure. We will continue to defend access to the global commons, including freedom of navigation and overflight rights, under international law. We will position ourselves, diplomatically and militarily, to defend our allies. We will support China's neighbors and commercial partners in defending their rights to make independent political choices free of

coercion or undue foreign influence. We will promote locally-led development to combat the manipulation of local priorities. We will support Taiwan, a leading democracy and a critical economic and security partner, in line with longstanding American commitments. We will ensure that U.S. companies do not sacrifice American values in doing business in China. And we will stand up for democracy, human rights, and human dignity, including in Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and Tibet. On all these issues, we will work to forge a common approach with like-minded countries.

We also recognize that strategic competition does not, and should not, preclude working with China when it is in our national interest to do so. Indeed, renewing America's advantages ensures that we will engage China from a position of confidence and strength. We will conduct practical, results-oriented diplomacy with Beijing and work to reduce the risk of misperception and miscalculation. We will welcome the Chinese government's cooperation on issues such as climate change, global health security, arms control, and nonproliferation where our national fates are intertwined. As we do, we will rally our allies and partners to join us, pooling our negotiating leverage and showing our collective power and resolve.

Finally, for our national security strategy to be effective, it is essential to **invest in our national security workforce, institutions, and partnerships, inspire a new generation to public service, ensure our workforce represents the diversity of our country, and modernize our decision-making processes.** Executing an effective national security strategy requires expertise and informed judgment. Yet, in recent years, the experience, integrity, and professionalism of our national security institutions and workforce, though resilient, has been severely tested. We must acknowledge this for the national security challenge it is and act quickly to address it.

As we get the COVID-19 pandemic under control, we will ensure our national security workforce can continue to operate safely and effectively. We will protect public servants; rebuild our human capital to ensure a strong corps of diplomats, development professionals, intelligence officers, service members, and civil servants; and recruit and retain the next generation of national security specialists. We will enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, and prioritize flexibility and improve training across our national security workforce. We will create new opportunities for non-career experts to serve our government for a finite period of time, and we will attract critical talent from the private sector on issues as diverse as climate change, global public health, emerging technologies, and China, and incentivize them to work in the federal government. We will provide our workforce with the cutting-edge technology

they need, while encouraging new organizational structures and the culture of innovation required to address today's complex challenges. And we will take urgent action to ensure that our national security workforce reflects the full diversity of America and all the strengths it brings. As we take these steps, we will emphasize professional integrity, accountability, and transparency.

America accomplishes more when we lead with our full diplomatic, economic, health, and developmental toolkit. For that reason, and to avoid overreliance on the U.S. military to carry out tasks and missions better suited to others, our national security budget will prioritize new resources for diplomacy and development. We will also invest in our Intelligence Community, reinforcing its capacity to deliver the timely analysis and warning required to inform policy making, identify opportunities, and head off threats before they turn into crises.

Because traditional distinctions between foreign and domestic policy – and among national security, economic security, health security, and environmental security – are less meaningful than ever before, we will reform and rethink our agencies, departments, interagency processes, and White House organization to reflect this new reality. We will ensure that individuals with expertise in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, economics and finance, and critical languages and regions are fully integrated into our decision-making. Because the federal government does not, and never will, have a monopoly on expertise, we will develop new processes and partnerships to ensure that state, municipal, tribal, civil society, non-profit, diaspora, faith-based, and private sector actors are better integrated into policy deliberations. And we will develop new mechanisms to coordinate policy and implementation across this diverse set of stakeholders.

Conclusion

This moment is an inflection point. We are in the midst of a fundamental debate about the future direction of our world. To prevail, we must demonstrate that democracies can still deliver for our people. It will not happen by accident – we have to defend our democracy, strengthen it and renew it. That means building back better our economic foundations. Reclaiming our place in international institutions. Lifting up our values at home and speaking out to defend them around the world. Modernizing our military capabilities while leading with diplomacy. Revitalizing America's network of alliances, and the partnerships that have made the world safer for all of our peoples.

No nation is better positioned to navigate this future than America. Doing so requires us to embrace and reclaim our enduring advantages, and to approach the world from a position of confidence and strength. If we do this, working with our democratic partners, we will meet every challenge and outpace every challenger. Together, we can and will build back better.

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Senator Bob Menendez #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, can you explain how the State Department uses the GEC to counter malign actions of authoritarian regimes within the global information space? To the extent that you can discuss the details, what sort of programs is the GEC currently conducting in foreign countries? How do these programs work with host governments, civil society and other groups to build a country's ability to fight disinformation?

Answer:

(b)(5)

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Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/FO (b)(6)

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GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
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S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
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EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey and Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy, and Human Rights, Hon. Uzra Zeya by
Senator Bob Menendez #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, I know that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) also supports internet and media freedom programs and activities. Where does GEC's mandate end, and DRL's begin? What is the nature and extent of GEC's coordination with other U.S. government agencies and bureaus?

Answer:

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Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPO – (b)(6)

Cleared:

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GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
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S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/I2C2: (b)(6) (ok)
DRL/GP/IF: (b)(6) (ok)
DRL/MLGA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/LFA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

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-6-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey and Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy, and Human Rights, Hon. Uzra Zeya by
Senator Bob Menendez #3
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Latin America & Digital Authoritarianism: In Latin America and the Caribbean, Chinese and Russian technologies are enabling the region's dictators to increasingly control internet access, traffic in misinformation and disinformation, and monitor citizens. In Venezuela, the regime uses the information collected from its national identity system, which uses Chinese technology, to inform decisions on censorship, internet shutdowns, and arrests. Cuba's internet infrastructure was also built with equipment acquired from Chinese companies. Following the July 2021 protests in Cuba, the regime shut down the internet in an attempt to disrupt the unprecedented countrywide protests. In El Salvador, President Bukele uses disinformation to paper over his dismantling of democratic governance.

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, how can we bolster our engagement with the private sector to counteract misinformation and disinformation in Spanish, the internet's third language?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

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-8-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/TET: (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/TET: (ok)
DRL/MLGA: (ok)
WHA/PDA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/HRR: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CBA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

UNCLASSIFIED

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-9-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey and Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy, and Human Rights, Hon. Uzra Zeya by
Senator Bob Menendez #4
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Xinjiang & Surveillance: The atrocities perpetrated against the Uyghur population by the Chinese government in Xinjiang are well documented. Especially troubling is the support of this ongoing genocide through genetic surveillance by the Chinese government and Chinese companies.

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, how is the Department raising public awareness of these threats, including those posed by BGI and two of its subsidiaries that were recently placed on the Entity List for their role in Xinjiang?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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-10-

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-11-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) ()
R/GEC/C: (b)(6) (ok)
EAP/CM (No response)
EAP/PD (No response)
OES/STC (No response)
OES/IHB (ok)
STAS: (b)(6) (ok)
DRL/EAP: (No response)
DRL/MLGA (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (Info by Request)
L/EAP: (b)(6) (No response)
L/EB: (b)(6) (ok)
L/HRR: (b)(6) (ok)
ISN/CATR: (b)(6) (ok)
ISN/BPS: (b)(6) (No response)
EB/CIP/BA: (b)(6) (ok pending CIP/TS)
EB/CIP/TS (No response)
EB/IFD/OIA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/EPPD: (b)(6) (ok)
S/CCI: (b)(6) (No response)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA (No response)
EB/CBA: (b)(6) (ok)
WHA/PLA: (b)(6) (ok)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

UNCLASSIFIED

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-12-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. What is the GEC seeing right now in regards to Ukraine disinformation?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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-13-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GP: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok, with edits to make sure it's as of March

15)

C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/EE/Ukraine: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/TS: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

-14-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #2
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. Where is Russia directing disinformation on Ukraine?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

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-16-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS (b)(6)
(b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/EE/Ukraine: (b)(6) (ok)
NEA/PPD: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/PDP: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PM: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
WHA/PDA: Abraham Wise (ok)

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-17-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #3
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. Are other countries parroting and amplifying Russian disinformation on Ukraine?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

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-19-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS (b)(6)
1465

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok with edits)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/C: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/E: (b)(6) (ok)
NEA/PPD: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/S: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/PDPA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (Info by Request)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
WHA/PDA: (b)(6) (ok)
ISN/BPS: (b)(6) (ok with edits)

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-20-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #4
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

China spends billions on its public diplomacy, pushing false narratives that advance the Chinese Communist Party's interests. What is the GEC doing to identify and push back against Chinese disinformation?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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-21-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN – (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Brav ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/TE: (b)(6) (ok)
EAP/CM/StratComm: (b)(6) (No response)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

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-22-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #5
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

China spends billions on its public diplomacy, pushing false narratives that advance the Chinese Communist Party's interests. Does the GEC have enough financial support to robustly combat Chinese (and Russian) disinformation across the globe?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)



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-24-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN – (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok, would like Paul Kruchoski to clear)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GE: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GE: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPC: (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
EAP/CM/StratComm: (b)(6) (No response)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP: (b)(6) (ok)

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-25-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #6
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

GEC's funding has drastically increased since FY2016 from \$6 million to \$60 million. How has this surge in resources translated to greater effectiveness in U.S. government efforts to combat foreign disinformation and propaganda?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

A smaller rectangular area of the document is redacted, indicated by a black border. A diagonal watermark reading "OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION" is visible across this area.

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(b)(5)

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-28-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPC (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA (b)(6) (ok)
H (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPC (ok)
L/PD (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP (b)(6) (No response)

UNCLASSIFIED

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-29-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #7
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Some, including members of this Committee, have argued for a substantially increased budget for the GEC. What more could the GEC do with a large increase in funding?

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Answer:

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

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-31-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RES (b)(6) (also the after-hours number)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP: (b)(6) ()

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-32-

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Senator Todd Young #3
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

How does the Department evaluate or quantify the effectiveness of the Global Engagement Center in countering disinformation campaigns from Russia, China, Iran, and others?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

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-34-

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPO (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GP: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray ()
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/IR: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

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**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Senator Bob Menendez #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, can you explain how the State Department uses the GEC to counter malign actions of authoritarian regimes within the global information space? To the extent that you can discuss the details, what sort of programs is the GEC currently conducting in foreign countries? How do these programs work with host governments, civil society and other groups to build a country's ability to fight disinformation?

(b)(5)

Answer:

ANSWER BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/FO (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey and Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy, and Human Rights, Hon. Uzra Zeya by
Senator Bob Menendez #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, I know that the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) also supports internet and media freedom programs and activities. Where does GEC's mandate end, and DRL's begin? What is the nature and extent of GEC's coordination with other U.S. government agencies and bureaus?

(b)(5)

Answer:

(b)(5)

Approved: R- (b)(6) Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPO- (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: Karl Stoltz (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/I2C2 (ok)
DRL/GP/IF: (ok)
DRL/MLGA (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/LFA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

Question:

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, how can we bolster our engagement with the private sector to counteract misinformation and disinformation in Spanish, the internet's third language?

Answer:

(b)(5)

7/31/2024

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/TET - (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/TET: (ok)
DRL/MLGA: (ok)
WHA/PDA: (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/HRR: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CBA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey and Under Secretary for Civilian Security,
Democracy, and Human Rights, Hon. Uzra Zeya by
Senator Bob Menendez #4
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Xinjiang & Surveillance: The atrocities perpetrated against the Uyghur population by the Chinese government in Xinjiang are well documented. Especially troubling is the support of this ongoing genocide through genetic surveillance by the Chinese government and Chinese companies.

Ms. Hall-Godfrey, how is the Department raising public awareness of these threats, including those posed by BGI and two of its subsidiaries that were recently placed on the Entity List for their role in Xinjiang?

Answer:

(b)(5)

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN - (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
EAP/CM - (No response)
EAP/PD - (No response)
OES/STC - (No response)
OES/IHB: (b)(6) (ok)
STAS - (b)(6) (ok)
DRL/EAP: (No response)
DRL/MLGA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (Info by Request)
L/EAP: (b)(6) (No response)
L/EB: (b)(6) (ok)
L/HRR: (b)(6) (ok)
ISN/CATR - (b)(6) (ok)
ISN/BPS: (b)(6) (No response)
EB/CIP/BA: (b)(6) (ok pending CIP/TS)
EB/CIP/TS - (No response)
EB/IFD/OIA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/EPPD: (b)(6) (ok)
S/CCI: (b)(6) (No response)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (No response)
EB/CBA: (b)(6) (ok)
WHA/PDA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #1
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. What is the GEC seeing right now in regards to Ukraine disinformation?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GP: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok, with edits to make sure it's as of March
15)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/EE/Ukraine: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/TS: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #2
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. Where is Russia directing disinformation on Ukraine?

Answer:

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Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS – (b)(6) and (b)(6)
(b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/EE/Ukraine: (b)(6) (ok)
NEA/PPD: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/PDPA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PM: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
WHA/PDA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #3
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

The GEC is one of the U.S. government's best tools in identifying and addressing disinformation campaigns by our adversaries. This is especially timely and important with the on-going Russian war on Ukraine. Are other countries parroting and amplifying Russian disinformation on Ukraine?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

UNCLASSIFIED

OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RUS (b)(6)
(b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok with edits)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/CH: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
EUR/EE/Ukraine: (b)(6) (ok)
NEA/PPD: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/S: (b)(6) (ok)
AF/PDPA: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
L/EUR: (b)(6) (Info by Request)

UNCLASSIFIED

EB/CIP/MA:	(b)(6)	(ok)
WHA/PDA:		(ok)
ISN/BPS:	(b)(6)	(ok with edits)

OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #4
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

China spends billions on its public diplomacy, pushing false narratives that advance the Chinese Communist Party's interests. What is the GEC doing to identify and push back against Chinese disinformation?

Answer:

(b)(5)

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN - (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/TET: (ok)
EAP/CM/StratComm: (b)(6) (No response)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #5
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

China spends billions on its public diplomacy, pushing false narratives that advance the Chinese Communist Party's interests. Does the GEC have enough financial support to robustly combat Chinese (and Russian) disinformation across the globe?

Answer:

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/CN - (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok, would like Paul Kruchoski to clear)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
EAP/CM/StratComm: (b)(6) (No response)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP: (b)(6) (ok)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #6
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

GEC's funding has drastically increased since FY2016 from \$6 million to \$60 million. How has this surge in resources translated to greater effectiveness in U.S. government efforts to combat foreign disinformation and propaganda?

Answer:

OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

7/31/2024

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPO – (b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP: (b)(6) (No response)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Ranking Member Jim Risch #7
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

Some, including members of this Committee, have argued for a substantially increased budget for the GEC. What more could the GEC do with a large increase in funding?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/RES (b)(6) (also the after-hours number)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RES: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)
BP: (b)(6) (No response)

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Senior Official Jennifer Hall Godfrey by
Senator Todd Young #3
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
March 15, 2022**

Question:

How does the Department evaluate or quantify the effectiveness of the Global Engagement Center in countering disinformation campaigns from Russia, China, Iran, and others?

Answer:

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

7/31/2024

Approved: R – Jennifer Hall Godfrey, Senior Official ()

Drafted: R/GEC/PPO

(b)(6)

Cleared:

D: (Info by Request)
D-MR: (Info by Request)
P: (Info by Request)
R: (b)(6) ()
GPA: Richard Buangan (Info)
GPA: (b)(6) (ok)
H: (b)(6) (ok)
C: (Info)
S/P: (Info by Request)
R/GEC: Leah Bray (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/PPO: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/RUS: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/CN: (b)(6) (ok)
R/GEC/IR: (b)(6) (ok)
L/PD: (b)(6) (ok)
EB/CIP/MA: (b)(6) (ok)

With "disclosure" about his emails, the hunt for Hunter Biden has reopened

Joe Biden and his son Hunter, here in 2010. Image REUTERS

New revelations about the son of US presidential candidate Joe Biden are met with skepticism by US media.

Seije Slager October 15, 2020, 14:17

History seems to be repeating itself: Shortly before the US presidential election, there is another big leak of emails that could get the Democratic candidate in trouble.

But while the hacked emails of the Democratic Party in 2016 dominated the news for weeks and thwarted Hillary Clinton's campaign, in 2020 there is still more skepticism at the revelations, which came out through the New York Post. The newspaper, which is known for being slightly sensationalist and Trump-friendly, got its hands on the emails through Rudy Giuliani, adding to the mistrust of the authenticity of the documents. Giuliani is Trump's personal attorney, who in the past has already released many theories about the Bidens in Ukraine, which turned out to be untrue.

Major social media companies such as Facebook and Twitter had their scripts ready this time, and immediately took steps to curb the spread of the news story until finding out more about the authenticity and origin of the emails.

What about the Bidens in Ukraine again?

In 2014 Hunter Biden joined the board of the Ukrainian energy company Burisma for a generous salary. His father Joe was vice-president under Obama at the time, and his portfolio included Ukraine.

Few believe that Hunter Biden was hired solely because of his unique knowledge of the Ukrainian gas market, and that his political connections had nothing to do with it. The lucrative sinecure of Biden Jr. certainly does not reflect well on the Bidens.

But there has never been any evidence of actual influence. Joe Biden has always said he never talked to his son about Ukraine. Indeed, it has never been proven that Burisma or Hunter Biden influenced US policy, despite unremitting efforts by the Trump camp to make it plausible.

What's the news?

The New York Post released an email on Wednesday in which a Burisma official reportedly thanked Biden in 2015 for "the opportunity to meet your father and spend some time together."

If that meeting did take place, it would mean that Joe Biden was not telling the truth when he said he never talked to his son about Ukraine. The newspaper itself calls it a "smoking gun".

How credible are those revelations?

Experts are skeptical. The New York Post also published private photos of Hunter Biden from the same data breach, which appear to be authentic. But it is unclear whether the email itself is authentic: the newspaper only shows a photo of the email, which was taken this week. Original metadata is missing. The archives also seem to indicate that Joe Biden had very different activities in his agenda on the day in question than a meeting. He may have shaken hands briefly in passing.

The email is said to have come from a laptop Hunter Biden allegedly left at a repair shop and never picked up. The store manager says "almost certain" that the laptop was brought by Hunter Biden himself, but he has a visual impairment, so says he cannot vouch for it. The fact that he then made the laptop available to Rudy Giuliani, Trump's personal attorney, who has been trumping unproven conspiracy theories about the Bidens in Ukraine for years, makes most experts even more skeptical. Giuliani did not respond to requests from other media to inspect the mail.

How harmful is this to Joe Biden?

Biden now has a few street lengths ahead in the polls, so could have something. Both mainstream and social media are more wary this year than in 2016, limiting the chances that this story will make headlines for weeks, as long as the evidence for it remains as sparse as it is today.

But attention to the opportunistic affairs of his son in Ukraine does him no good in principle. Even though Joe Biden is not personally responsible, the smell of favoritism hangs around his son's lucrative business, and Joe Biden is often irritated when he is asked about it.

From: "Gabrielle(Potts), Lea" (b)(6)@state.gov>
To: (b)(6)@state.gov>
(b)(6)@state.gov>;
CC: (b)(6)@state.gov>;
(b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: RE: WaPo Article, Mentions March Testimony
Date: Thu, 29 Oct 2020 20:35:29 +0000

Thank you!

Lea Gabrielle
Special Envoy
Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State

(b)(6)@state.gov



From: (b)(6)@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 1:37 PM
To: Gabrielle(Potts), Lea (b)(6)@state.gov>
Cc: (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>; (b)(6)@state.gov>
Subject: WaPo Article, Mentions March Testimony

Hi Lea,

Flagging an article from today's WaPo that quotes you from your March Hill briefing.

Very best,

(b)(6)

How foreign influence efforts are targeting journalists

Report shows how disinformation in 2020 has become even more complex

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/10/29/how-foreign-influence-efforts-are-targeting-journalists/>

By **Kelly McFarland** and **Alistair Somerville**

Oct. 29, 2020 at 5:00 a.m. EDT

A Washington Post editorial this week warned that the fear of foreign interference in the election can make Americans distrustful of democracy — and there's no shortage of stories on this type of interference. U.S. officials blamed Iran last week for menacing emails targeting Democratic voters. The Oct. 14 New York Post story about a laptop reportedly belonging to Joe Biden's son, Hunter, is another example of how alleged information operations continue to shape election narratives in the run-up to Nov. 3.

After widespread analysis of disinformation tactics in the 2016 U.S. election and the 2017 French presidential election, among others, many analysts expected to see more of the same in 2020. New analysis in the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy's latest report, "The New Weapon of Choice: Technology and Information Operations Today" notes these "hack-and-leak" operations would probably pose a significant risk in the 2020 elections.

This year, the media industry is fighting back. Facebook and Twitter announced efforts to remove "inauthentic behavior" — weeding out potential disinformation from "bots" and "troll farms." Fear of amplifying hack-and-leak operations is one reason the news media has been cautious about reading too much into the New York Post Hunter Biden laptop story, for instance.

The rapid circulation of such material highlights a specific type of information operation that Russian and other foreign groups are pursuing in this election cycle. Disinformation campaigns target bona fide journalists, in operations designed to launder false or misleading material through reputable outlets. Here's how this works: Adversaries such as the Russian, Chinese and Iranian governments seek out journalists, either to co-opt or to use them as unwitting accomplices to push out disinformation. In the alleged Biden laptop case, the journalist who wrote most of the original article reportedly did not want his byline attached to it — which suggests the newsroom had some doubts about the story's provenance.

Using domestic news media to disseminate leaked material also shows how the lines between foreign and domestic operations have blurred, making it harder for analysts

and governments to attribute foreign interference. While a particular influence operation may originate abroad, laundering information through U.S. domestic influencers — such as journalists — also makes it much more difficult to mitigate these types of operations.

Our report found Russian-linked operations continue to lead the way in foreign interference — a finding the U.S. Department of Homeland Security confirmed earlier this month. These methods are evolving to meet the new informational playing field, as social media companies exert greater efforts to police the content on their platforms more effectively. Other groups, including government-backed information operations originating in Gulf countries, have used similar tactics, including creating fake journalist personas and placing op-eds in U.S. outlets to push state-backed narratives on high-visibility political issues.

Russia's Peace Data operation illustrates how bona fide journalists can get caught up in malign activities. The St. Petersburg-based Internet Research Agency, the source of election disinformation that plagued social media platforms in 2016, expanded their approach through the creation of Peace Data, a bogus left-wing “news site.” The website's administrators paid journalists to write and promote articles on hot button topics, including global human rights issues. Some 20 journalists, including people out of work or looking for freelance jobs during the pandemic lockdowns, accepted paid writing assignments from what they believed to be an “independent” outlet.

The apparent goal of Peace Data was not to spread outright lies and falsehoods, but to exploit credible targets like journalists to deepen divisions in democratic societies, including the United States. “Articles relating to the United States,” according to analysis by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, “painted the picture of ‘war-mongering and law-breaking abroad while being wracked by racism, COVID-19, and cutthroat capitalism at home,’ with the aim of appealing to left-wing voters and steering them away from the campaign of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden” to further muddy the choice for voters.

The spread of disinformation related to next week's election has focused social media companies' resources on the challenge of how to stem the tide. In a polarized political environment, the possibility of an extended vote tally period or any rumors of prolonged uncertainty around the election outcome means foreign information operations designed to sow confusion may intensify further.

But the tactic of targeting journalists is not unique to election season. Earlier this year, for example, the coordinator for the U.S. State Department's Global Engagement Center testified to Congress "that Russia is behind 'swarms of online, false personas' that sought to spread misinformation about coronavirus on social media sites, stressing the 'entire ecosystem of Russian disinformation is at play.'" The overall goal, most likely, is to fuel domestic polarization and undermine confidence in democracy, using both real and fictitious online personas.

Some media outlets are increased efforts to counter disinformation campaigns. New Washington Post and New York Times guidelines about how to cover hacked and leaked materials during election season suggest national newspapers are taking disinformation seriously. Other initiatives like the Flipboard app's new Truth Seekers project will turn to academics and journalists with experience rooting out disinformation — and rely on these trusted sources to help disseminate facts to the broader public.

Of course, false information campaigns aren't likely to wrap up when the final votes are counted. ISD's new report suggests 2020 will leave the U.S. government with brand-new disinformation campaigns to investigate, and further challenges for industry experts, policymakers and civil society to mitigate in the future.

Very best,

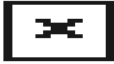
(b)(6)

(b)(6)

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

Accenture Federal Services Contractor

Cell: (b)(6)



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

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

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

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

(b)(6)@state.gov>

OBTAINED BY AMERICA FIRST LEGAL FOUNDATION

Kremlin Watcher's Movement Ukraine Posts**01/31-02/10****02.10 THE CULTURAL HERITAGE (NOT ONLY) OF THE CRIMEAN TATARS IS AT RISK ON THE OCCUPIED CRIMEA**

Since the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia has been trying to legitimize this annexation with its propaganda. One of the tactics is to point out how great Crimea has been doing in all directions since joining Russia.

The Russian Embassy in Slovakia adheres to this propaganda line. It publishes articles about how many tourists go there, how much Putin invests in the Crimea, and publishes photographs of nature and various cultural monuments.

Russia's approach to cultural heritage, especially the Crimean Tatars, however, is not as rosy as the Russian political elite and state media present. This is evidenced, for example, by the state of the famous Khan's Palace (a complex of 17 buildings) in the town of Bakhchysarai, which aspires to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5774/>

Current images of the Svitsky corpus, which is part of the palace, show that during the reconstruction, a large crack appeared on its wall, which threatens its stability. According to Edem Dudakov, an activist and former head of the Crimean Commission for Inter-Ethnic Relations and Deported People, this is the result of the irresponsible way in which the entire building is being reconstructed, reflecting Russia's approach to Crimean cultural heritage.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/301740080668466/posts/1063715037804296/>

Reconstruction work on the palace began in 2017. Dudakov claims that the work was carried out despite the absence of thorough scientific research and comprehensive expertise. According to him, the contract for reconstruction should have been awarded to companies that had no experience with similar reconstructions. This was also reflected in the condition of the mosque, which is part of the palace.

The Khan's Palace is one of the most important monuments of the cultural heritage of the Crimean Tatars in the Crimea. Its construction began in 1532 and for more than two hundred years it was the seat of the rulers of the Crimean Khanate. In 1783, Crimea was annexed by the Russian Empire.

On September 20, 2021, the Russian Embassy in Slovakia also published a photograph of the Khan's Palace on its Facebook page. Of course, without mentioning his condition.

<https://www.facebook.com/100068847295360/posts/155721216732787>

Paradoxically, 10 days after Embassy published this post, UNESCO criticized Russia for its repression against the Crimean Tatars and for its access to Crimean cultural heritage. The report also criticizes the problematic reconstruction of the Khan's Palace.

The palace is currently the only specimen of Crimean-Tatar palace architecture in the world. Listed as a monument of national importance in Ukraine.

UNESCO claims that during its occupation of Crimea, Russia seized 4095 cultural artifacts of Ukraine (under Ukrainian state protection) and took them to Russia, which according to UNESCO is a violation of international law.

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2021/09/16/unesco-report-reveals-extent-of-russian-threat-to-crimean-heritage>

UNESCO has also criticized Russia for inappropriate excavations that threaten the historic ancient city of Chersonesos. It was founded in Crimea by Greek colonists in the 5th century BC. Chersonesos has been on the World Heritage List since 2013.

According to a UNESCO report, Russia is using an insensitive approach to cultural heritage as part of "its comprehensive long-term strategy to strengthen its historical, cultural and religious dominance over the past, present and future of Crimea."

Ukrainian Ombudsman Lyudmila Denisova has accused Russia of violating the international Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict by its attitude to the cultural heritage of Crimea (in connection with the reconstruction of the Khan's Palace), which states that a state occupying a territory cannot take possession of cultures and ruin them as Russia does. <https://hromadske.ua/posts/na-harkivshini-avtomobil-na-smert-zbiv-cholovika-zmi-pishut-sho-ce-buv-kortezh-yaroslavskogo>

02.10 No, Polish servicemen are not fighting in Donbass

One of the vectors of influence of Russian propaganda is Polish-Ukrainian relations. The purpose of these messages is, among other things, to undermine cooperation between the two countries. A good exemplification of such narratives in recent times can be seen in a number of publications devoted to the subject of Polish-Ukrainian military cooperation.

For example, according to the (pro)Russian narrative, Polish mercenaries have appeared in the territory of the Kiev-controlled Donbass, with the alleged aim of 'carrying out, together with Ukrainian special forces units, deliberate acts of sabotage and terrorism, aimed at disabling life-support equipment, social infrastructure, and intimidating the local population [of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic - ed.

Moreover, this message is accompanied by a false claim that the previous statements of Polish diplomacy in the sphere of European security do not serve peace and stability, because Poland provides military support to Ukraine. According to propagandists, such actions of the Polish side allegedly push Kiev to start genocide of the Donbass population and allegedly provide a pretext for Ukraine to start escalation of armed conflict against Russia.

It is true that NATO countries, including Poland, are providing practical support to Ukraine. However, the representatives of the alliance are only instructors and are located in training centers [1].

It is also true that there are actual military operations in the eastern lands of Ukraine. However, only Ukrainians and not mercenaries from the West are fighting in the Ukrainian army [2]. Moreover, the responsibility for provoking the conflict in this region lies primarily with Russia and local pro-Russian militants. Recall that it was the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Russia's illegal annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea in 2014 that triggered the crisis in relations between Moscow and Kiev. Later, Russia instigated a separatist insurgency in parts of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions that escalated into a protracted war [3]. Currently, Russia is amassing troops along the border with Ukraine and in Crimea in an effort to force Western countries to provide guarantees that NATO will not expand into Ukraine [4].

The material was created as part of the "Kremlin Watchers" project.

Sources:

[1] <https://www.facebook.com/StratcomCentreUA/posts/285738970292757>

<https://tinyurl.com/yckjc6me>

<https://tinyurl.com/yckvpyrk>

[2] <https://www.facebook.com/StratcomCentreUA/posts/285738970292757>

[3] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ukraine/The-crisis-in-Crimea-and-eastern-Ukraine>

[4] <https://www.facebook.com/ObservatorzyKremla/posts/403508764903668>

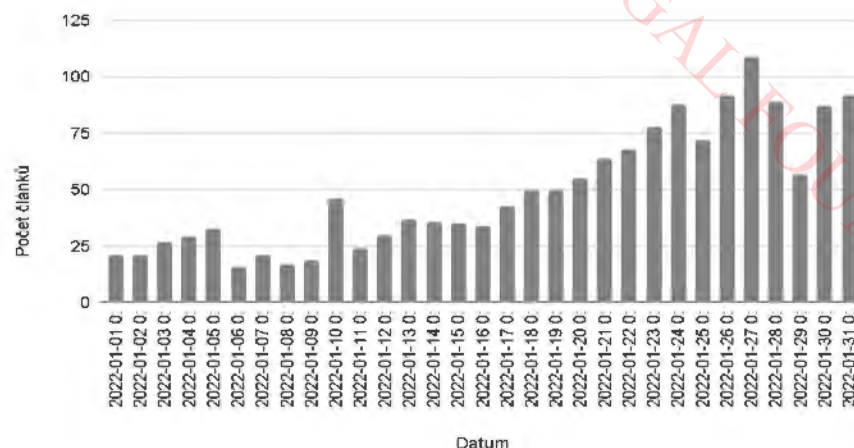
<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-about-the-current-russia-ukraine-conflict-seven-myths-debunked>

02.07 JANUARY IN DISINFORMATION (#1): UKRAINE CRISIS

The last month has been particularly busy in terms of pro-Kremlin disinformation. A number of narratives have appeared on Czech disinformation sites concerning vaccines, government anti-epidemic measures, alleged censorship of "alternative" views by the media, migration and the recent protests in Kazakhstan. Alongside the covid-19 narratives, another key theme of disinformation has been the current events in Ukraine, which is the focus of this and this paper.

Using the monitor app, I found that 1,540 articles containing the keywords Russia and Ukraine appeared on disinformation sites in January, with the number of articles per day gradually increasing as the month progressed. Which also corresponds with the way the crisis has become more and more discussed in the mainstream media. The most articles (109) were published on Thursday 27 January. As far as the most active disinformation website is concerned, this "honour" belongs to Sputnik, which with 236 articles has maintained its reputation as the biggest tool of Russian propaganda in the Czech Republic.

When it comes to the most widespread pro-Kremlin narratives about the crisis in Ukraine, disinformation writers mainly wrote articles justifying Russian actions and criticizing NATO's involvement with Ukraine. According to them, Russia is only reacting to the aggressive actions of Western countries and therefore all the blame lies on the shoulders of the West. Another widespread narrative was the attempt to portray NATO as weak, divided and unable to face a possible conflict with Russia. As always, the disinformation agents failed to mention Russia's aggressive actions towards Ukraine, which led to the escalation of the situation.



02.07 JANUARY IN DISINFORMATION (#2): THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS IN THE EYES OF THE RUSSIANS

The main goal of Russian disinformation in the Czech Republic and abroad is to cause a split among NATO member states, counter criticism of Russia through blaming the West, and create a justification for Russia's possible aggression against Ukraine (both in front of domestic and foreign audiences). In particular, as regards the second objective of Russian propaganda, the disinformation campaign has already had some success in Slovakia, where a large part of the political establishment and the public (47% of respondents according to an opinion poll) believes that the US and NATO are to blame for the tensions between Russia and Ukraine.

Perhaps the most interesting question, however, is what Russians themselves think about the conflict in Ukraine. On the face of it, Kremlin propaganda is reflected in the views of the Russian public; after all, according to a survey by the Levada research centre, half of those polled blame the United States and NATO for the current tensions in Ukraine, as is the case in Slovakia.

However, the Kremlin's power over the Russian public is not absolute - despite the nationalist rhetoric embodied, for example, by the pro-Kremlin blogger Anatoly Shariy, who predicts "Russia's immediate triumph" and a quick war, ordinary Russians do not want war with Ukraine. In the past few weeks, Russia has witnessed a growing anti-war movement, with 100 prominent rights advocates, scholars, journalists and politicians publishing a petition protesting the Kremlin's threats to invade Ukraine. Which shows that the willingness of Russians to accept the Kremlin's narrative is not boundless.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-ukraine-disinformation-nato-united-states-special-forces-winter-olympics-moscow-kremlin-kyiv/>

https://www.irozhlas.cz/komentare/slovensko-deni-na-ukrajine-postoj-usa-nato-rusko_2202021755_ern

<https://www.levada.ru/2021/12/14/obostrenie-v-donbasse/>

<https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/2022/02/ordinary-russians-cannot-imagine-war-with-their-brothers-in-ukraine>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59738548>

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/02/02/russian-intellectuals-call-on-kremlin-to-end-ukraine-invasion-threats-a76221>

02.04 ONE OF THE AIMS OF PRO-RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION IS TO DIVIDE PUBLIC OPINION

Tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border are accompanied by a large-scale disinformation campaign. It is intended not only to confuse Russian and Ukrainian audiences, but also to raise doubts in Western societies and divide public opinion.

Indeed, one of the Kremlin's long-standing aims of disinformation campaigns is to weaken NATO and the European Union. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-019-0227-8.pdf>

Russian military doctrine includes a well-developed concept of information confrontation that uses cyber means to cast doubt on what is true. Disinformation strategies may not aim to change people's views directly, but to distort the picture and create information chaos in which it is difficult to navigate. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/russian-cyberattacks-against-the-u-s-could-focus-on-disinformation/>

The tools used include the promotion of narratives, people, and groups that are sympathetic to Russia and aligned with its interests. Information is then disseminated through the media and social networks.

Russian propaganda has been intensively targeting Ukraine for several years, but this activity has visibly intensified in recent months. The aim of creating information chaos is, among other things, to prevent a unified Western response to Moscow's actions and a possible military attack on Ukraine. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/all-roads-lead-to-ukraine-how-russia-uses-disinformation-to-support-its-efforts-on-the-ground/>

That Western societies are an important target of the pro-Russian disinformation campaign is evidenced, for example, by research by Mythos Labs, according to which accounts spreading propaganda on Twitter have been targeting English-speaking audiences more often since December 2021. <https://mythoslabs.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Part-2-%E2%80%93-Analyzing-Twitter-Disinformation-and-Propaganda-Related-to-Russian-Aggression-Against-Ukraine.pdf>

According to Jakub Kalensky from the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE), the propaganda initially focused mainly on Ukraine, but evidence suggests that *"the Kremlin's aim is more grandiose and concerns the whole security order in the Euro-Atlantic space."* <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/20220131-Hybrid-CoE-WP-13-Kremlins-messaging-on-Ukraine-WEB.pdf>

Although it is impossible to say with certainty to what extent the dissemination of pro-Russian disinformation has been successful in influencing public opinion, there are indications that, at least in some countries, this strategy is succeeding to some extent.

According to the Forsa polling agency, there is a division between east and west Germany on the question of who is responsible for the escalation of tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border. In eastern Germany, 43% of respondents think the West is to blame and 32% think Russia is to blame. Conversely, in the west of the country, 52% of Germans see Russia as an aggressor and around 25% believe that the West is responsible for the rising tensions. <https://www.rnd.de/politik/forsa->

[unfrage-zum-ukraine-konflikt-unterschiede-zwischen-deutschen-aus-ost-und-west-EQOMTPQABJECZIPKTNIMW55QYY.html](https://www.unfrage-zum-ukraine-konflikt-unterschiede-zwischen-deutschen-aus-ost-und-west-EQOMTPQABJECZIPKTNIMW55QYY.html)

Public opinion is also divided in Slovakia. According to the latest poll from Focus, 34.7% of Slovaks believe that Russia is to blame for the rising tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border and in the Baltics. 44.1% of respondents, on the other hand, think that NATO and the West are escalating the conflict. However, behind this result, it is necessary to see the long-term politicization of key issues of Slovakia's foreign and security policy as well.

<https://dennikn.sk/2698162/focus-smer-je-druhy-a-od-hlasu-ho-deli-uz-len-percento-a-pol-zanapatie-na-vychode-vini-viac-ludi-usa-a-nato-ako-rusko/?ref=mwat>

2-04 Russia strengthens propaganda about Ukraine, disinformation is also being adopted by Slovak websites

Recently, Russian propagandists have intensified their disinformation campaign, according to which Ukraine and the West are preparing to attack Russia. The same false information is shared by Slovak portals with problematic content.

The tension on the Russian-Ukrainian border is accompanied by a significant disinformation campaign. The key message is that NATO is an aggressive alliance that has broken alleged promises not to expand eastwards. Russia, on the other hand, is supposed to be an innocent victim. <https://www.voanews.com/a/6423702.html>

In addition to the persistent narrative that Western countries are increasing tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border, Russian propagandists have begun spreading alarmist messages about alleged plans by Ukraine and the West to attack Russia.

Among the most widespread disinformation is that they are jointly preparing so-called false flag attacks or that Kyiv and NATO are considering the use of chemical weapons in Ukraine in the hope that Moscow will be blamed. The offensive could allegedly begin during the Winter Olympics in China. <https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-ukraine-disinformation-nato-united-states-special-forces-winter-olympics-moscow-kremlin-kyiv/>

Objectives of the disinformation campaign

According to three Western national security officials and five external disinformation researchers interviewed by Politico, Moscow's goal is to foster division among Western countries over support for Ukraine and to counter NATO's claims against Russia. At the same time, there are fears that in this way the Kremlin is creating plausible deniability over potential attacks. <https://www.politico.eu/article/russia-ukraine-disinformation-nato-united-states-special-forces-winter-olympics-moscow-kremlin-kyiv/>

The propaganda campaign is being disseminated through state media, statements by Russian officials, and fake social media accounts in several European languages. <https://securingdemocracy.gmfus.org/russia-propaganda-disinformation-ukraine/>

In each country, its reach is increased by domestic actors who uncritically adopt it.

Propaganda is also being adopted by Slovak websites

Portals with problematic content in Slovakia mainly repeat Russian rhetoric about an aggressive and expansionist West and a peaceful Russia that only wants security guarantees. Recently, there have also been reports copying disinformation that Ukraine is planning to invade Russia with the help of Western countries.

For example, Slovánske noviny has published articles according to which Kyiv and Western countries are planning to use chemical weapons in Ukraine and blame the Kremlin for this.

Another example is an article published on the website of Hlavné správy. It states that Ukraine and the West may attack Russia during the Olympic Games in China, as Putin will not be at home at that time.

Such claims are taken from the media spreading Russian propaganda and there is no relevant evidence to back them up.

At the same time, the articles completely omit basic facts. The current crisis has been provoked by Moscow deploying more than 100,000 troops and equipment near the border with Ukraine, while Kyiv has not carried out any similar military activity. The Kremlin is not a victim, but an aggressor which, by illegally annexing Crimea and by ongoing aggression against Ukraine, continues to violate international law and bilateral agreements. <https://www.state.gov/fact-vs-fiction-russian-disinformation-on-ukraine/>; <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-about-the-current-russia-ukraine-conflict-seven-myths-debunked/?fbclid=IwAR2mhDKpKF4MUYv0Du-kiHT6egK8czsLwR2L08ETI9oJNl80mOttDLgrA>

2-04 Refugees from Ukraine in Russian propaganda

A false claim is being spread in the Russian media that on the eve of his visit to Kiev, the Polish Prime Minister, speaking on the influx of refugees from Ukraine in the event of an escalation of the armed conflict in that country, was to call Ukrainian immigrants "cheap labor force."

According to the Russian account, these words came from the prime minister's mouth in a conversation with the Ukrainian editorial board of Left Bank. "Ukrainians know that in Poland they will always find a safe haven. And Polish entrepreneurs value Ukrainian workers – we expect that more hands to work will be needed year after year. Constant assurances of support for Ukraine's sovereignty are of course a good thing, but cheap labor never hurts," – the Polish politician seemingly said.

A simple verification of the content of the material revealed the absence of the last sentence in response to the question of whether the Polish government expects increased labor migration from Ukraine due to the prevailing threat of Russian intervention there. Moreover, he said that a possible influx of refugees from Ukraine is not perceived as a threat in Poland, and that accepting immigrants and helping Ukrainians in the conflict is taken for granted.

The material was created as part of the "Kremlin Watchers" project.

Source:

https://rus.lb.ua/news/2022/02/01/504342_mateush_moravetskiy_esli_istorii.html (archived version: <https://archive.is/M2R9j>)

2-04 Russian websites use Chernobyl against Ukraine

The Russian news website RT published an article warning of a Chernobyl-like nuclear disaster, which it links to the launch of all power units simultaneously by the Ukrainian company Energoatom (1). An article with the same message appeared earlier this week on the Czech version of the Russian website Sputnik. The text bases the warning on the words of the former head of the Luhansk regional administration, Hennadiy Moskal, and quotes him as saying, "(...) God forbid that Energoatom survives, we should go to church and ask God that we survive this winter and that they (the power units) do not go out of service with the kind of consequences that occurred at Chernobyl." However, some other statements by Hennadiy Moskal have previously been used and misinterpreted, for example on the disinformation website CZ24 News.

Both the RT and Sputnik articles justify their warnings by the level of the nuclear sector in Ukraine, which they describe as outdated and therefore as unfit to run all the units at once. What Sputnik no longer mentions, however, are the circumstances under which the launch of the units took place. Russia has long used natural gas supplies as a political tool (2). Since November 1, 2021, it has stopped the supply of thermal coal to the territory of Ukraine, which some Ukrainian MPs have described as a scenario similar to 2014 after the annexation of Crimea (3). Last autumn, Gazprom also stopped gas shipments to Hungary via Ukraine (4). These tactics by the Russian leadership provide an important context for the launch of the units at a time when Ukraine faces threats to its energy security from Russia and is in the middle of the heating season (5). However, Russian-funded websites have used this move as a chance to discredit the Ukrainian government's actions, interpreting the effort to reduce Ukraine's dependence on Russian supplies as a warning of disaster.

2-02 CIVIL INITIATIVE AGAINST WAR WITH UKRAINE HAS OCCURRED IN RUSSIA

Russia's political elite, led by President Vladimir Putin, cares deeply that a Russian society looks united behind its president in abroad. He tries to give the impression that the Russians fully agree with his domestic and foreign policy.

However, many civic initiatives undermine this impression and are persecuted by state power. For this purpose, too, the Russian state has created a law on foreign agents aimed at free civil society and independent media.

Russian society is not homogeneous either in terms of recent Russian activities against Ukraine. The Kremlin is constantly increasing the number of its troops and military equipment on the Ukrainian border (it currently has about 130,000 soldiers) and is threatening Ukraine with a military invasion.

An open letter appeared on the website of Radio Echo of Moscow, in which publicly known Russian scientists, artists, journalists, lawyers, civic activists and politicians call on the Kremlin not to continue the war against Ukraine, resp. did not start a new one.

<https://echo.msk.ru/blog/echomsk/2972500-echo/>

About 3,000 well-known Russian personalities, as well as ordinary people, are currently signed under the letter "In order to avoid war". The list is constantly expanding.

The initiator of the signing event is the Russian Congress of Intelligence. According to the initiators, Russian citizens have become hostages of "criminal adventure, which is changing Russia's foreign policy." Because of this policy, Russian citizens live in the uncertainty of a great war, watching the rapid rise in prices and the fall of the ruble.

According to the initiators, there is a lack of free public debate in Russia: "There is only one view presented on state television channels, the view of the supporters of the war. "There are direct military threats from them, they radiate aggression and hatred towards Ukraine, the USA and Western states."

In the letter, the Russian state media are accused of trying to deceive people and force the idea of a holy war against the West, instead of trying to develop Russia and raise the living standards of Russian citizens.

The authors of the letter openly call on the "War Party, in the Russian government" not to start another aggression against Ukraine and the West: "Russia does not need a war with Ukraine or the West. No one threatens us and no one attacks us "the authors and their signatories defend their anti-war position under this challenge.

Activists warn that Russia's policy of escalating the war against Ukraine is "amoral, irresponsible, criminal" and could have negative consequences for Russia. The open letter is thus mainly a call for peace and a solution to Russia's real problems.

This letter proves that part of Russian civil society can stand up for freedom and peace even at a time when it is not demanded and supported by the political establishment in Russia.

Unlike Putin's Slovak advocates such as Blaha, Fico, Uhrík, and Mazurek and others, whose rhetoric about peace is just a common appeasement policy towards the aggressor, part of Russian society shows that it can stand up for peace even with the knowledge that dissent to Putin's policies are often severely repressed in contemporary Russia.

1-31 Seven myths about the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict

EuvsDisinfo, the flagship project of the European External Action Service's East StratCom Task Force, published an analysis last week that sets out and then explains seven of the most common myths about the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which occur not only on disinformation channels in EU and Eastern Partnership countries, including the Czech Republic.

The most widespread disinformation narratives place the blame on virtually anyone but Russia. According to pro-Kremlin propaganda, the West is to blame because of its allegedly too aggressive politics; the US, is to blame because reportedly supports anti-Russian positions in Ukraine; NATO is to blame because it is said to be too expansive, or also the Ukrainians themselves are to blame because they allegedly commit atrocities on Russian-speaking fellow citizens.

In addition to blaming alleged enemies, disinformation also often aims to undermine the morale of Ukrainian citizens and undermine their confidence in the Western Allies. We can often read on disinformation channels that the West is allegedly not united, does not care about Ukraine and does not help [1].

Czech disinformation websites more or less copy these narratives. The easiest indicator of the fact that this is a very sensitive topic for the Russian side is the increased activity of the Czech version of Sputnik, which publishes dozens of articles a week in favour of Russia. In these articles, in contrast to general disinformation narratives, there are also specifics for the Czechia. One such specificity is, for example, the designation of the Czech Republic as a "warmonger", especially after the Minister of Defence confirmed that the Czechia would send ammunition to Ukraine. This is a very obvious attempt by disinformers to manipulate their readers through one of the strongest human emotions, and that is fear [2].

#Strážci

[1] <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-about-the-current-russia-ukraine-conflict-seven-myths-debunked/>

[2] <https://cesti-elfove.cz/dezinfo-weby-monitoring-3-tyden-01-2022/>

1-31 UKRAINE AS A VICTIM OF CHAOS

As tensions between Russia and Ukraine continue to escalate, the Kremlin preparation of the information space that preceded today's situation cannot be forgotten.

Since 2014, Ukraine has been the main target of Moscow's disinformation activities - from distraction, through the offer of a distorted image, to the diversion of attention and the creation of negative emotions, primarily fear.

Today, several years of effort culminate. The resulting chaos and polarization of Western societies and Ukraine itself have indirectly enabled and supported the actions of Russian soldiers in reality.

The narratives used are nothing new. They have been circulating in the information space for a few years now, and have been taken over by the quasi-media and disinformation actors naturally. It is a separate disinformation ecosystem, the effectiveness of which lies in its ability to adapt to specific (e.g. national) audiences and situations. Slovakia is no exception.

However, the patterns of disinformation narratives remain more or less unchanged. Russia is supposed to be a strong fortress that is only a victim of Western aggression. In particular, NATO and the EU, which are unfairly encircling and sanctioning Russia.

Despite tangible evidence, Russia is a completely innocent player in the alternative reality created by the Kremlin. It does not face decay like the West, it fulfills its obligations, it bears no responsibility for destabilizing the international order. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/disinformation-about-the-current-russia-ukraine-conflict-seven-myths-debunked/>

The aim of Russian rhetoric is not to convince European audiences; on the contrary, it aims for confusion and gradual apathy. Since 2015, the EUvsDisinfo project has found more than 13,500 cases of pro-Kremlin disinformation. Ukraine is mentioned in more than 5,200 of them. <https://euvsdisinfo.eu/all-roads-lead-to-ukraine-how-russia-uses-disinformation-to-support-its-efforts-on-the-ground/>

38.5% of the total number of cases thus led to further destabilization of the real victim of aggression, while the intensity of the spread of various disinformation narratives multiplied precisely at critical moments of Russian geopolitical interest.