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E-000999/2022

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(6.5.2022)

The European Union measures against Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik adopted on 2 March 2022 have resulted in the temporary suspension of broadcasting or emission rights of these two channels, to disarm instruments of Russia's war propaganda – at a time when it is waging a war against Ukraine. The President of the General Court has recently rejected RT's request for interim relief against those measures<sup>1</sup>.

RT and Sputnik are directly financed and controlled by the Russian leadership, with the aim to exacerbate fragmentation and polarisation and manufacture support for Putin's war. Russia's engagement in a systematic, global campaign of disinformation to enhance their strategy of destabilisation poses a significant and direct threat to the Union's values and goals and to its democracies. Since 2015, the EU has taken significant steps to counter this threat.

The High Representative declared at the European Parliament on 8 March 2022: 'Democracy is a system fuelled by information. If information is wrong, then democracy is bad. If information is systematically biased and contaminated by lies, citizens cannot be fully aware of the reality and their political judgement is biased'<sup>2</sup>.

Given the substantial state backing, disinformation is able to target different audiences with various narratives, techniques and procedures. No one is fully immune to disinformation, and it is the EU's duty to protect its citizens. In this sense, the Commission considers that media literacy is critical to empower citizens to identify disinformation. The Commission supports Member States across various initiatives, including the Media Literacy Expert Group, Expert Group on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy in education and training.

This reflects the situation as of 13 April 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> Order of the President of the General Court of 30 March 2022 in Case T-125/22 R, RT France v. Council, available at:  
<https://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=256901&pageIndex=0&doclang=FR&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=723967>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/disinformation-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-ep-debate\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/disinformation-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-ep-debate_en)