

Letter to online platforms and social networks from the Prime Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland

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Dear Parag Agrawal,

Dear Sundar Pichai,

Dear Susan Wojcicki,

Dear Mark Zuckerberg,

We address you amid Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine. This was preceded by a lengthy and well documented disinformation campaign aiming to create fertile ground for Russian invasion and its false justification and rationalization both in international community and within Russian domestic population.

The Russian government seeks to spread lies, confusion and doubt about what is happening and to undermine the morale and unity of the democratic world. The Russian government has also engaged in a massive disinformation campaign to justify to the world and to its own people its war of aggression and to hide the crimes that are being committed in its course.

Although the online platforms have undertaken significant efforts to address the Russian government's unprecedented assault on truth, they have not done enough. Russia's disinformation have been tolerated on online platforms for years; they are now an accessory to the criminal war of aggression the Russian government is conducting against Ukraine and the free world.

At the same time, the Russian government spares no effort on preventing its own citizens from getting real information on Russia's war against Ukraine. The Kremlin is further tightening an already enormous grip on its own information space. Russia's "media watchdog" *Roskomnadzor* is tightening restrictions on user access to independent media outlets and undertake administrative measures against any information outlets that spread information diverging from the Kremlin's narrative. Punitive measures will also apply for publicly calling Russia's war on Ukraine a war instead of a "special operation".

The online platform providers and tech companies need to take a stand as authoritarian regimes seek to weaponize the openness of our societies to undermine peace and democracy. Companies – signatories of the EU's Code of Practice on Disinformation have acknowledged as much. Now is time for decisive action. We urge you to take several immediate steps:

Pro-actively suspend accounts engaged in denying, glorifying or justifying wars of aggression, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Several appeals are already being prepared to the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court regarding Russia's war against Ukraine, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed on its territory. Your own, as well as independent fact-checking capabilities, allow you already now to root out the content of such nature.

Suspend the official accounts of Russian and Belarusian government institutions, state-controlled media as well as personal accounts of these countries' leadership and their close associates, that consistently disseminate disinformation about situation in Ukraine. Our experts stand ready to help you identify and assess many such accounts still available on online platforms.

Comply with the restrictions introduced by several national regulators against Russian state-controlled media and prevent them from using your services to circumvent these restrictions. This applies, among others, to social media assets and web streaming channels run by *RT, Sputnik, RTR Rossija, Rossija 24* and other channels. Our respective regulatory authorities can provide you with detailed information and legal assessments.

Engage with local fact-checking initiatives to find volunteers who could help to reinforce content monitoring, especially in

Russian and Ukrainian languages, to quickly address inauthentic behavior, illegal content and disinformation. Currently in some cases, fact-checker's efforts are hindered by sloppy monitoring procedures.

Immediately take measures, including adjusting your search and recommendation algorithms, to help users find trustworthy information on the war in Ukraine and to inform users exposed to disinformation.

Fully and immediately demonetize all accounts - purveyors of disinformation controlled by the Russian and Belarusian governments.

Resist the pressure from the Russian government to censor or restrict access to your platforms on Russia's territory for Russian citizens, civil society and independent media.

We stand ready to provide any assistance and further information in support of the implementation of these and other measures that are vital to protecting not only Ukraine, but also the democracies we cherish and nourish in the free world.

Kaja Kallas

Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia

Krišjānis Kariņš

Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia

Ingrida Šimonytė

Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania

Mateusz Morawiecki

Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland

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