

# Twitter, International Unlimited Company

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Dear Honourable Members of the European Parliament, Dear representatives of the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism, Dear representatives of the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association,

Our CEO, Mr. Parag Agrawal, has asked me to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of April 25 and reply on his behalf to set out how Twitter is responding to this crisis.

Since the first signs of an escalating crisis arose a number of weeks ago, we have been actively working with a cross-functional team within the company to assess the level and scale of Twitter's response and remediations. That team is composed of experts from a range of functions across the company, including our safety and integrity units. We are monitoring the situation in Ukraine for potential risks associated with the conflict, including identifying and disrupting attempts to amplify false and misleading information and to advance the speed and scale of our enforcement.

I have included below a summary of our actions to date, but conscious of your time and that this is an ever-evolving situation, you will find a much more extensive (and regularly updated) list of our efforts in our blog on <u>our ongoing approach to the war in Ukraine</u>.

The challenges we face during times of war are complex and constantly evolving. Industry and Twitter cannot address these alone. Nor is our industry monolithic in its approach to this issue – each of us has different services, varying business models, and often complementary but distinct principles that guide the respective countermeasures to this pressing issue. This should be recognised as we continue our engagement and navigate through the digital repercussions of this war.

In the meantime, we look forward to continuing the fruitful engagement we have been having with elected officials, governments' representatives and civil society and remain at your disposal should you have further questions.

Kind Regards,

**Karen White** 

Head of Public Policy, EMEA

Varen White

### **Elevating reliable information**

 In April, we announced that we would not amplify or recommend government accounts of states that limit access to free information and are engaged in armed interstate conflict, beginning with Russian government accounts. Our approach has proven effective – for Russian government accounts, early results show that:

- Account impressions decreased by 49%;
- Engagements per Tweet decreased by approximately 25%;
- The number of accounts that engaged with those Tweets decreased by 49%.
- Our <u>curated Twitter Moments</u> about the war in Ukraine share real-time news and resources in multiple languages, and have been viewed more than 20 billion times.
- Our <u>dedicated event pages</u> are available in 12 languages and in more than 67 countries – we continue to expand this tool.

### **Our Approach to Monetization**

- Taking a step back, it's important to keep in mind that since 2017 we've banned advertising from all accounts owned by Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik and donated the profits to NGOs working on digital literacy, misinformation, and election integrity. In 2019, we banned all state-backed news media advertising and political advertising.
- Beyond not recommending or amplifying accounts or Tweets of <u>State-affiliated media</u>, advertisements and the promotion of content from state affiliated news media is also prohibited on Twitter.
- We have temporarily paused advertisements in Ukraine and Russia to ensure critical public safety information is elevated and that advertisements don't detract from it.
- At the same time, content that discusses or focuses on the Russia-Ukraine conflict is not eligible for monetization under Twitter's Brand Safety Policy. Content that is considered false or misleading under the Twitter Rules is also not eligible for monetisation. Additionally, we are demonetizing Search terms related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, preventing ads from appearing on the Search results pages for these words.

## Our approach to state-affiliated media

- <u>Since 2020</u>, we have not recommended or amplified state-affiliated media accounts from certain countries and have added labels, including to Russian-linked entities. Last month, we expanded our approach, adding labels to Tweets that share links to Russian state-affiliated media websites.
- Since February 28, we've labeled more than 260,000 unique Tweets in this expanded category. As noted above, and as is standard with our labels, these Tweets are not eligible for amplification, meaning they aren't recommended in your home timeline, notifications, and other places on Twitter. Our interventions have made a difference, contributing to a 30% reduction of the reach of this content.
- We've now begun **adding additional labels** to multiple state-affiliated media accounts from Belarus. We have also labeled one state-affiliated media account in Ukraine.

#### On broader rule enforcement

- Since the war in Ukraine began, we have **removed more than 100,000 accounts** for violations of our platform manipulation and spam policy.
- We have also seen a substantial increase in the volume of media shared with deceptive, misleading, or inaccurate context, including old videos of conflicts, shared as if they're taking place in Ukraine. In line with our <u>synthetic and manipulated media policy</u>, we have labeled or removed more than 50,000 pieces of content.