

18 July 2019

Joel Simon, Executive Director
Committee to Protect Journalists
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United States of America



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Secretary of State

Dear Mr. Simon,

Thank you for your letter of 9 July. I am proud that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office hosted, with our Canadian colleagues, the first ever Global Conference for Media Freedom. This event is central to the UK Government's campaign to defend Media Freedom and protect journalists reporting across the world.

Tackling the challenge of disinformation was a major theme of the Global Conference for Media Freedom. In today's complex media landscape, it is challenging to deal effectively with organisations that pump out state propaganda while presenting themselves as being on a par with genuine, objective journalists. It would have been inappropriate for organisations such as RT and Sputnik which, as you note, actively spread disinformation, to have taken part.

Over 100 countries participated at the Global Conference for Media Freedom, with over 1500 delegates from all regions of the world, including representatives from a number of media outlets in Russia. The conference is set to become an annual event, gathering the world's governments, civil society and media to take stock of the state of media freedom around the world, with Canada hosting the next conference in 2020.

As part of the ongoing global campaign, media freedom will be bolstered through the new Global Media Defence Fund, an international task force to help governments design better national frameworks and action plans, and an independent high-level panel of legal experts. It is tremendous that so many of the participants are committing to firm action in order to protect journalists and a free media.

I welcome your engagement in the debate, and your support for the Global Conference for Media Freedom.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Hunt

THE RT HON JEREMY HUNT MP