
War in Ukraine: Borrell (EU), “we stand by the Russian independent media”. Moscow’s fake news campaign continues

“Inside Russia, the crackdown on freedom of expression and freedom of the media has reached unprecedented levels”, said the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, in his address to the high-level conference “Beyond disinformation – EU responses to the threat of foreign information manipulation”. “We stand by the Russian independent media, by the civil society, the human rights defenders who, despite the continuous crackdown they are suffering, continue to defend the human rights and oppose authoritarianism and war”, he added. “When I say that, it is not just rhetoric. I cannot go into details, but believe me, we support them in practical terms”.

Misinformation and propaganda “are today a weapon of the Kremlin. It kills the capacity of the people of understanding what is going on, and, as a consequence, the position of governments and the decisions of international organisations”. Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov “is touring Africa again. Trying to spread lies about who is guilty for what is happening there”. According to Borrell, “this war is not only conducted on the battlefield by the soldiers. It is also waged in the information space”. Borrell stressed the need to conduct research on fake news campaigns on social media: “We need more transparency and accountability, not less. I call on Twitter – and on its owner – to ensure that all obligations that they have taken will be honoured”.

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