

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, URGING TWITTER, INC. AND OTHER MAJOR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS SUCH AS FACEBOOK, YOUTUBE, AND TIKTOK TO IDENTIFY AND BAN ANY RUSSIAN-SPONSORED STATE MEDIA AND VERIFIED RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS FROM ITS PLATFORM AMID RUSSIA'S UNLAWFUL INVASION OF UKRAINE AND THE ONGOING DISINFORMATION AND CYBER WARS THE COUNTRY IS WAGING TO SUPPORT AND JUSTIFY ITS BRAZEN, ILLEGAL INVASION OF A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY.

WHEREAS, on February 24, 2022, the verified Twitter account of Ukraine posted an appeal to the people of Twitter, asking them to demand that Twitter remove the official Russia account from the platform; and

WHEREAS, the request comes amid Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing disinformation and cyber wars the country is waging to support and justify its brazen, illegal invasion of a sovereign country; and

WHEREAS, the groundwork for Russia's invasion of Ukraine was seeded by a mass disinformation campaign that has been on-going for several years, painting Ukrainians as the aggressors and labeling the entire Ukrainian government as controlled by "neo-Nazis," using that as a pre-text to "liberate" and "de-nazify" Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, on February 27, 2022, the European Union has moved to ban the Russian state-backed channels RT and Sputnik in an unprecedented move, with the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, announcing that: "Russia Today and Sputnik, as well as their subsidiaries, will no longer be able to spread their lies to justify Putin's war and to sow division in our union. So we are developing tools to ban their toxic and harmful disinformation in Europe."; and

WHEREAS, the reach of Russian state-media outlets' regular posts remains massive – RT currently has 7.3 million followers on Facebook, 4.6 million subscribers on YouTube, 2.9 million followers on Twitter, 830,000 followers on Instagram and roughly 280,000 on Telegram; and

WHEREAS, with the military conflict in Ukraine showing no imminent signs of letting up, and with global sanctions still gaining steam, tech companies must take concrete steps to curb Russia-backed disinformation; and

WHEREAS, there is long list precedent for Twitter 's use of suspension: Twitter shut down terrorist organizations and accounts that promote terrorist action, such as those promoting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), QAnon conspiracy theorists, all accounts affiliated with Alex Jones and InfoWars for spreading disinformation, over 200,000 Chinese accounts believed to be part of a Chinese government influence campaign targeting the protest movement in Hong Kong, and recently, permanent suspension of former president Donald Trump's account,

citing his violation of Twitter's Glorification of Violence guidelines in connection with the January 6, 2022 attack on Capitol Hill; and

WHEREAS, as such, the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach urge Twitter and other major social media platforms to identify and ban any Russian-sponsored state media and verified Russian state accounts from its platform to help curb disinformation wars used by the Russian government to support its unlawful invasion of Ukraine.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby urge Twitter, Inc. and other major social media platforms such as Facebook, Youtube, and TikTok to identify and ban any Russian-sponsored state media and verified Russian government accounts from its platform amid Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing disinformation and cyber wars the country is waging to support and justify its brazen, illegal invasion of a sovereign country.

PASSED and ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2022.

Dan Gelber, Mayor

ATTEST:

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

(sponsored by Commissioner Alex J. Fernandez)

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION



City Attorney *EW*

3-1-22
Date