

Question for written answer E-003022/2024/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 144

Hanna Gedin (The Left), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left)

Subject: Israel's disinformation campaign against UNRWA

The Israeli Government has paid for ads on Google and on billboards in cities across the world in which the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) is labelled as a terrorist organisation¹². This is a clear case of a disinformation campaign. It not only puts UNRWA staff in danger, it also risks stopping aid from reaching the starving population in Gaza. The UNRWA is now calling for regulation to stop the dissemination of such damaging messaging.

In 2022, the EU imposed sanctions on several Russian media outlets and holdings, suspending their transmission and broadcasting within the EU following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine³. In her 2024 election campaign, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen proposed a 'European Democracy Shield' to counter foreign information manipulation and interference⁴.

1. What actions will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) take to hold the Israeli Government accountable for the disinformation campaign against the UNRWA?
2. What actions will the VP/HR take to prevent Israel's disinformation campaign from spreading throughout the Member States?
3. What will the VP/HR do to reaffirm the EU's support for UNRWA?

Submitted: 18.12.2024

¹ UNRWA, 'The state of Israel continues disinformation campaign against UNRWA', 4 December 2024, <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/state-israel-continues-dis-information-campaign-against-unrwa>.

² Sveriges Radio, 'Israelisk reklam misskrediterar Unrwa – sprids på svenska nyhetssajter', 3 December 2024, <https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/israelisk-reklam-misskrediterar-unrwa-sprids-pa-svenska-nyhetssajter>.

³ Social Europe, 'Russia, disinformation and Europe's battle for truth', 8 May 2024, <https://www.socialeurope.eu/russia-disinformation-and-europes-battle-for-truth>.

⁴ Euractiv, 'Von der Leyen promises 'European Democracy Shield' to combat foreign interference at EU level', 15 May 2024, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/news/von-der-leyen-promises-european-defence-shield-to-combat-foreign-interference-at-eu-level/>.