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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(3.9.2025)

The EU stands for freedom of expression and freedom of media – within and outside its borders. This is why it takes measures such as sanctioning media outlets very seriously. In each case, the Council ensures it has sound evidence, solid legal basis, and consensus for undertaking such measures.

In the context of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, certain media outlets may be subject to restrictive measures, including a broadcasting ban in the EU. Media outlets are included in Annex XV to Regulation (EU) 833/2014¹ and Annex IX to Decision 2014/512/CFSP² if they are found to be engaged in systematic propaganda actions related to Russian unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. Each of those banned outlets is under the control of the Russian state and is essential in justifying the aggression.

Additionally, the Council now also has a possibility to ban the broadcast of media under Regulation (EU) 2024/2642³ and Decision (CFSP) 2024/2643⁴, which impose sanctions against Russia in response to its destabilising activities against the EU and its Member States. For such potential designations, the involvement in information manipulation and interference, as well as the control of Russian state, has to be demonstrated.

At the moment there is no legal basis in any other sanctions regime to ban the broadcast of Al Jazeera. The decision to impose sanctions is for Member States in the Council to take, acting by unanimity.

¹ Council Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02014R0833-20250720>.

² Council Decision 2014/512/CFSP of 31 July 2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02014D0512-20250701>.

³ Council Regulation (EU) 2024/2642 of 8 October 2024 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's destabilising activities: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02024R2642-20250715&qid=1755594396342>.

⁴ Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/2643 of 8 October 2024 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's destabilising activities: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02024D2643-20250715&qid=1755594396342>.