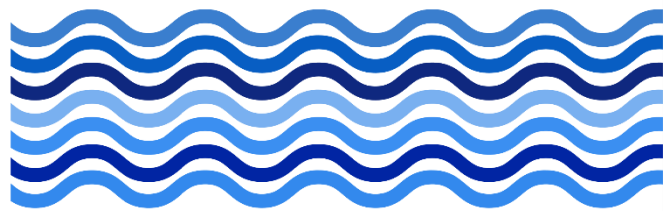


United Kingdom 2021



Defending Democracy from Foreign Threats and Championing Shared Values

London, May 5, 2021

The G7 share common democratic values and respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights, and the rule of law. We are committed to the protection, promotion and encouragement of open societies and the democratic systems that underpin them.

Foreign malign actors persist in their attempts to undermine democracies, and some states seek to promote their own authoritarian systems of governance and geopolitical objectives. The G7 is committed to working together to show global leadership and take action to expose and deter these actors and to defend democracy.

Across the G7 and other democracies we see attempts to interfere taking a number of forms, including, but not limited to:

Disinformation and other forms of information manipulation:

Attempts to undermine trust in democratic institutions and processes, influence independent media, manipulate civic discourse, close civic space, damage social cohesion and threaten public health. This may include:

- The artificial distribution or amplification of false and/or misleading information, especially on the safety and efficacy of vaccines and undermining vital public health messages, threatening global efforts to tackle Covid-19.
- Attempts to increase division and sow hatred, particularly against minority groups, damaging social cohesion.
- Manipulating and intentionally distorting civic discourse in support of objectives that run counter to our national interests.

Election Interference:

Attempts to undermine democratic processes and their outcomes, as well as public confidence and trust in them. This may include:

- Artificially spreading false and/or misleading information intending to harm the integrity of election systems or the outcome of an election.
- Compromising computer systems of election officials, political parties, or candidates to obtain and publish damaging information.
- Attempting to prevent or impede citizens from voting or registering to vote.
- Intimidating or threatening candidates, particularly women and minorities.

Interfering with fundamental freedoms and human rights:

Attempts to influence, pressure or threaten individuals with the intent of preventing them from exercising their legitimate human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression. This may include:

- Attempting to silence human rights defenders, civil society activists and journalists critical of state actors.



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- Intimidating or threatening human rights defenders, civil society activists and journalists.

Since its creation in 2018, the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) has provided a valuable forum for identifying and responding to diverse and evolving threats to our democracies. Through sharing threat assessments in real time, exchanging best practices and lessons learned, and working towards coordinated action, we have strengthened our collective understanding of the threat and sharpened our respective capacities to counter it, thereby boosting the resilience of our societies and our ability to support fellow democracies.

We commit to strengthening the RRM by building on its successes. We will:

1. Release an annual report to raise awareness of the activity of the RRM and the issues it is working to address.
2. Strengthen the relationship with other international partners, including NATO, and expand the mechanism.
3. Develop and sharpen our analytical capacities and continue to step up information exchange.
4. Work towards a shared understanding of what constitutes illegitimate activity in the information space.
5. Coordinate outreach with critical partners, including civil society, academia and industry.

We will stand together against the threat of foreign interference, guided by our shared values of democracy, transparency and openness.