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Margarita Simonyan

Person

All actors • Russia

Official position/function regarding the conflict

Editor-in-chief of [RT \(Russia Today\)](#), MIA Rossiya Segodnya, and [Sputnik](#), Simonyan occupies key positions in propagandist media created for broadcasting to a foreign audience, including a Russian-speaking audience. She headed the holding of foreign language broadcasting Russia Today in 2005 (when she was 25 years old).

[Simonyan quite definitely speaks about the "mission" of her media: "In a sense, not having your own foreign broadcasting is like not having a Defense Ministry. When there is no war, it seems to be unnecessary. But damn it, when there is war, it is highly critical."](#)

["I absolutely do not like the fact that the world is dominated \(and only for the last few years, thanks to us and Al-Jazeera, it ceased to be dominated\) by a single view of something ... In 2008 \[during the Russian-Georgian war - author\], our coverage was not the best ... it was much smaller than it is now, so our voice drowned in this chorus, and now \[during the conflict with Ukraine - author\] we are heard"](#).

In relation to the conflict region, Simonyan takes a pro-imperial position and, if she criticizes the Russian government, it is only for weakness and lack of resolve. For example, from the very beginning of the conflict, she actively advocated for issuing passports to the population of ORDLO, but the Kremlin left such calls unanswered. [In June 2018, she wrote: "I will organize some](#)

Interests/goals in the conflict region

The media led by Simonyan, were created with the aim of promoting the Russian agenda in the world. They are part of a hybrid war against Ukraine and are spreading one-sided information, fake news, and lies. In general, the activities of the media of Margarita Simonyan contribute to the development in Russia and abroad of such a picture of the world which ultimately leads to massive crimes against humanity and the murder of thousands of innocent citizens on the territory of Ukraine.

Actions regarding the conflict region

Simonyan personally on her social networks, as well as her media, promoted a positive attitude to the annexation of Crimea and the actions of separatists in Donbas. Like other influencers, Simonyan calls the hostilities in the Donbas an “internal conflict” in Ukraine, denies Russia’s role in the MH17 disaster, and blames Ukraine for it. [The fact that her position does not change over the years, but only strengthens, is evidenced by her tweet in relation to the mass protests in Belarus: “In general, it’s time for polite people to put things in order there, of course. We know they can do it” \(August 2020\).](#)

The activities of Simonyan and the media she leads contribute to a positive assessment of Putin’s policy in Ukraine, as well as a negative attitude towards Ukraine and Ukrainians, among the part of the international community.

Simonyan’s efforts did not go unnoticed on both sides. In 2014, Vladimir Putin, by a secret decree, awarded her the Order of Merit to the Fatherland of the 4th degree, “for objectivity in covering events in Crimea.” [In May 2016, RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan, along with the heads of other propagandist media, was banned from entering Ukraine.](#)

[In 2016, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on combating propaganda from Russia and Islamist terrorist groups that says: “The Kremlin has intensified propaganda against the EU since the annexation of Crimea and the start of the hybrid war in Donbas ...” To do this, the Russian government uses “a wide range of tools,” including “multilingual TV companies \(e.g., Russia Today, or RT\), pseudo-news agencies and multimedia services \(e.g., Sputnik\), social networks and Internet trolls”.](#)

[In 2020, her personal Twitter account received the label “State-owned media, Russia,” which is used to label non-free government media. Twitter then refuses to promote accounts with such labels.](#)