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## **CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF FORMING NEW INFORMATION COLLABORATION**

With development of information technology and the Internet advent, the media space has been rapidly transforming. At the end of the 20th century, the concept of “New Media” appeared, which at that time marked the beginning of integrating printed publications into the web space. However, in recent years, during continuous digitalization and informatization of society, which was clearly manifested during the coronavirus pandemic, consumption of information in digital format has come to the fore, leaving traditional media in a vulnerable position before the power of digital progress.

According to the Global Digital 2024 Report, at the beginning of 2024, there are 5.35 billion Internet users in the world (~66% of the global population), 5.61 billion people use mobile phones, which is almost 70% of the total world population, and 52% of Internet users (~2.7 billion people) use it daily, for keeping up to date with news and current events.<sup>2</sup>

At present, the term “New Media” means not only “re-location” of traditional media to the digital space by creating their own electronic versions (websites, mobile applications, platforms for Internet radio and TV broadcasting), but also development of the latest digital formats for collecting and transmitting information (social networks and messengers, Telegram channels, blogs, podcasts, etc.), which implies users’ active participation in creating and distributing the content.

Emergence of new actors in the information field triggered growth in the flow of filterless data oversaturated it and caused increasing consumption of short, understandable content, which is clear and succinct explanation of the topic of interest.

Concurrently, increasing the number of actors in the media space, each of whom is an informational influencer, often spreading unverified information to the multi-million audience, contributes to aggravation of the problem of fakes, stove-piping and disinformation. Users of social networks post unverified messages in messengers, bloggers broadcast their subjective viewpoint, ignoring the fact that they start the chain of spreading false information and lead to loss of trust in the media as a whole, extinction of their influence all over the world.

Herewith, cybercrime remains the most serious problem for stable operation of the media. Global and domestic media suffer annually hundreds of thousands of DDoS attacks. According to available data, in 2023, the number of DDoS attacks on Russian publications increased by 69 times, compared to 2021 (46,130 versus 670 incidents, respectively). Alongside this, cyberattack methods are being improved, and their new mechanisms are being developed. If earlier they attacked without web-security analysis, now attackers check availability of protection and its stability, which greatly increases chances of disabling the website.

Media-targeted attacks in cyberspace are particularly sensitive in terms of possible data leakage and disclosure of confidential information. This not only directly affects credibility of news sources, but also creates preconditions for potential conflicts. Breach of confidentiality in the information space can have irreversible consequences, up to an international conflict to undermine global stability. Thus, data security in the media sector is not only a strategic issue of ensure operational sustainability, but also represents an important aspect of global safety.

Countering these challenges to threaten global credibility of the media requires common efforts and solidarity from global media community. Unfortunately, among global media, there is currently the destructive trend of disunity and politicization, which facilitates rapid worsening of the crisis in the global media space.

Today, there are more than a hundred news agencies operating in the world. Definitely, the processes taking place at the forefront of the international arena cannot but affect the work of those who report on them.

The crisis of the international relations system has recently become the obvious phenomenon in global politics. The rise of international structures advocating formation of a new, more just and equitable architecture of international relations has currently become a natural phenomenon.

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<sup>2</sup> Статистика Интернета и соцсетей на 2024 год – цифры и тренды в мире и в России // WebCanape : [сайт]. URL: <https://www.web-canape.ru/business/statistika-interneta-i-socsetej-na-2024-v-mire-i-v-rossii/#7> (accessed: 02/16/2024).

Throughout its history, the Russian News Agency TASS has never stopped its work, honorably fulfilling its mission to bring to large audience official assessments, positions and views of Russia and its leaders on topical issues on the international agenda.

Since 2022, repeated attempts have been made to shake the international position of TASS as a full participant and one of the leaders of the global information community, advocating its exclusion from one of the top international media organizations – the European Alliance of News Agencies. Nevertheless, TASS managed to defend its membership in the structure.

TASS continues to work as an active full member in all global and top regional media alliances. Moreover, our agency has been able to strengthen its position in the Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies (OANA), members of which provides two thirds of the total global information flow. At the 18th General Assembly of OANA, held in October 2022 in Tehran, TASS was re-elected Vice-President of OANA. Moreover, by majority of votes, we were given the opportunity to hold the 19th OANA General Assembly in 2025 in Russia. Such a decision certainly indicates the great trust in our agency and the high authority of TASS among the member agencies.

To date, TASS continues participating in world summits, forums, congresses, international and regional conferences, exhibitions, competitions, seminars, and developing strategically important ties with our traditional partners, primarily with the media of China, Vietnam, Mongolia, North Korea, Turkey, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and other leading global media.

At present, TASS has successfully operated news feeds in all official languages of the United Nations. 57 representative offices in 52 countries allow quickly receiving and disseminating unbiased information about events in Russia and the world to the largest possible audience.

In 2024, Russia's foreign policy is focused on its presidency in the BRICS, the interstate association to be considered as a platform capable of turning into a centre for consolidating new forces. Currently, over 40 countries have expressed their desire to join the BRICS association, and 23 of these countries have already officially submitted their applications.<sup>1</sup>

The 15th BRICS summit, held in August 2023 in Johannesburg, the capital of South Africa, was dubbed "historic" by the media, as it marked a qualitatively new stage in the group development. According to its results, from January 1, 2024, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Ethiopia joined the association, thereby the recognizable "five" turned into a full-fledged "ten", expanding its geography to the Middle East and North Africa.

The BRICS countries' goal is what Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov called "the new polycentric system of international relations", which is the fair consensus of original countries-civilizations that have an equally important voice in global development issues.<sup>2</sup> Recognition of the primacy of international law and the coordinating role of the United Nations, rejection of interfering independent

states' internal affairs, as well as willingness to uncompromisingly defend their interests and understand decisions of other countries are the cornerstones, on which it is based.

The task of TASS as the leading information partner of the state, strictly following its fundamental professional principles, is impartially and holistically outlining the country's position on key international issues, maintaining contacts with more than 200 world media at the highest possible professional level, for the purpose of continuing to contribute to formation of the positive, balanced and unifying international agenda.

News agencies' role in shaping the news worldview is extremely important. By promptly generating information and providing it, the media are one of the key links in efficient operation of the global community. If the media listen to different positions, comprehending them, they can play a significant and often decisive role in eliminating misunderstandings and settling conflicts.

TASS values its reputation and professional honour. There is a specific person behind each of our news (correspondent, journalist, source of the information). Reliability and accuracy are the most important priorities for TASS. Each employee of TASS can be said to give a kind of "Hippocratic Oath". Like doctors, we refrain from causing any harm and injustice, so TASS has always expressed its willingness to share its own experience in using tools for verifying and fact-checking information, and has repeatedly initiated creation of charters of global media, for combating disinformation and fake news.

Even in the period of disunity, the world media community should not forget about its professional duty and global creative mission to contribute to the deepening and development of the cultural and inter-civilizational dialogue of all countries on the equal and fair basis, strengthen mutual understanding between peoples all over the world, and peaceful and stable development of the planet. And completing this mission requires media cooperation in full.

In this regard, TASS continues open, active and honest interaction with all colleagues, who are interested in this. In 2024, the agency will make efforts on promoting principles of objective journalism and the original, honest partnership of sovereign participants in the TASS information process in framework of international professional alliances and its own events, the key of which will be the BRICS Media Summit. It will be attended by over 100 heads of the BRICS countries' leading media and their like-minded people. I am confident that, following principles of cooperation based on mutual respect, equality and common advantage, the media will be able to bring information interaction to a fundamentally new level in qualitative and quantitative terms.

So, in addition to solving the already traditional problems of countering the spread of fakes and disinformation, combating cybercrime, developing digital progress opens up for the media new areas for collaboration, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), the use of artificial intelligence (AI), development of audio and podcast projects, introduction of blockchain technologies to ensure transparency and reliability of information, as well as creation of new content monetization models, such as micropayments or subscriptions. I would like to believe that the ICT use by modern media for the benefit of society will contribute to improving the quality of their work and further development of digital progress.

<sup>1</sup> Шерпа ЮАР заявил, что страны Глобального Севера «стучат в двери» БРИКС // Новости в России и мире – ТАСС : [сайт]. URL: <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/19851915> (accessed: 17.04.2024).

<sup>2</sup> Лавров С. В. Подлинная многосторонность и дипломатия против «порядка, основанного на правилах» // Россия в глобальной политике. 2023. Т. 21, № 4. С. 72–81.

In view of rapid transformation of the world and emergence of new challenges that professional media have to face today, their impartiality, constructiveness and solidarity will not only contribute to increasing public confidence in news and its official sources, but also

serve as a basis for strengthening stability in the information space, will demonstrate to the entire world society a positive example of new collaboration. Whether we will be able to achieve the stated goals depends on ourselves.