

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

September 12, 2023

Mark Zuckerberg
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Meta
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, California 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

I write to express concern with Meta's role in the upcoming September 30 general elections in Slovakia. As a NATO ally, member of the European Union, and stalwart supporter of Ukraine in its fight against Russia's brutal full-scale invasion, the stakes of Slovakia's elections are high and have ramifications beyond the country's borders.

I am alarmed by recent reports¹ of social media platforms, like Meta's, amplifying Russian disinformation that have already resulted in the undermining of local mayoral elections in Slovakia. The same forces are mobilizing to undermine Slovakia's September 30 general elections on a massive scale with much larger consequences. We have repeatedly seen Russian actors try to undermine both the outcome of representative elections and faith in democratic processes as a whole throughout the world.

I have previously expressed concern about the fact that Meta has repeatedly failed to take meaningful action to stop enabling malicious actors, including Russia and China, from spreading disinformation and misinformation with the purpose of interfering in elections in multiple countries. I urge Meta to immediately dedicate renewed attention and resources to the upcoming elections in Slovakia, and request that you provide us with additional information regarding what steps Meta will take to prevent targeted foreign malign influence and election interference on its platform and avoid the significant, detrimental implications these activities may cause.

It is imperative that Meta take seriously Facebook and WhatsApp's emerging roles as tools used to support election interference in democratic countries, particularly in NATO and European Union member states targeted by Russian disinformation campaigns.

¹ Andrew Higgins, "It's One of Ukraine's Fiercest Allies. But an Election Could Change That," *The New York Times*, September 6, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/06/world/europe/slovakia-election-russia-ukraine.html>

I urge you devote prompt attention to these matters. I look forward to your response, and welcome your continued engagement in order to ensure that moving forward Meta's platforms reinforce, rather than undermine, human rights, transparency, and good governance worldwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

Robert Menendez
Chairman