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Russia Trolls U.S. State Department's Ukraine Twitter Campaign

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Russia's Foreign Ministry has decided to give social media trolling a whirl by commandeering a Twitter hastag campaign that Washington came up with to show support for Ukraine.

The U.S. State Department started posting messages on Twitter with the identifying tag #UnitedforUkraine in late March, but the Foreign Ministry's English-language account has started adding the phrase to its own tweets.

The ministry has used the hashtag more than a dozen times since Thursday, adding it to statements from Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Russia's Ambassador to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, including those criticizing U.S. policy.

Responding to the social media appropriation, State Department spokeswoman Jen Paski posted on her Twitter account, "The world stands #UnitedforUkraine. Let's hope that the #Kremlin & @mfa_russia will live by the promise of hashtag."

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>
> — Jen Psaki (@statedeptspox) 24 апреля 2014

This is the not the only example of the U.S. and Russia exchanging barbs over media maneuvers.

Lavrov took exception to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's characterization of Russian state-run television station RT as a "propaganda bullhorn." According to a statement on the Foreign Ministry's website, Lavrov said Friday that Kerry had spoken with the tone of a prosecutor and that his comments were "unacceptable" and "not very cultured."

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