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Olympic Chiefs Say Russian Disinformation Inevitable Ahead of Paris Games

By AFP

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The Olympics volleyball venue at the Eiffel Tower in Paris. **Lafargue Raphael / ABACA / TASS**

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said Saturday it was resigned to the Paris Games being targeted by disinformation attacks following recent incidents blamed on Russia.

IOC spokesman Mark Adams said he believed a campaign against the Paris Olympics was already under way as final preparations for the sports spectacular entered the home stretch.

"Clearly there is a campaign of some sort going on," Adams told a press conference.

"It's not the first or last time that the IOC will be targeted with misinformation. It's getting more and more sophisticated.

"I'm afraid it's one of those things that we have to live with...it's part of the divided world we

live in."

Adams was responding to a question concerning a feature-length fake documentary that emerged in 2023 titled "Olympics has Fallen" which used AI-generated audio to impersonate Hollywood star Tom Cruise.

The film, falsely purporting to be a Netflix documentary, was apparently designed to erode global support for the Olympics.

Earlier this year, the IOC said its President Thomas Bach was targeted by hoax phone calls from a group in Russia pretending to be representing the African Union Commission.

U.S. tech giant Microsoft's Threat Analysis Center meanwhile has said Russia has ramped up disinformation efforts against the Paris Games.

Russia has been barred from sending a formal team to compete at the Paris Olympics following the country's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Instead, only a small handful of Russian athletes will be allowed to take part in the Olympics competing under a neutral banner.

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