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Head of US state media put RT on same challenge list as ISIS, Boko Haram

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Lack, the first chief executive of the BBG, mentioned RT in an [interview](#) with The New York Times.

*“We are facing a number of challenges from entities like Russia Today which is out there pushing a point of view, the Islamic State in the Middle East and groups like Boko Haram,” he said. “But I firmly believe that this agency has a role to play in facing those challenges.”*

RT never expected to find itself on a list with the two most dangerous terrorist groups of the day and is seeking clarification on the comment.

*“We are extremely outraged that the new head of the BBG mentions RT in the same breath as world’s number one terrorist army,” said Margarita Simonyan, RT’s editor-in-chief. “We see this as an international scandal and demand an explanation.”*

Apart from BBG itself, RT is also seeking clarification from the US State Department and the US Embassy in Russia.

It’s not the first time the BBG, a bipartisan agency that supervises government-sponsored media, targeting international audiences, has referred to RT as a ‘challenge.’

*“Let’s put together a plan of how much that would cost and how to do something that we could compete with Russia Today [RT] and then let’s go to the Hill and then let’s go to the White House and tell them what it’s going to cost to compete, and let’s see if we can do it,”* BBG

chairman Jeffrey Shell said in August 2014.

[READ MORE: American broadcasters see RT as major challenge, want to try to compete](#)

This time the New York Times article mentions RT's "*significant American presence*" and argues Russia "*poured millions*" into its US bureau and the Sputnik news agency.

US politicians have lashed out at RT in the past. John Kerry attacked the channel for its coverage of the Ukraine crisis last spring and called RT a "*propaganda bullhorn*."

Following Kerry's rant, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov decried John Kerry's comments about RT as "*uncivilized*" and "*prosecutorial*."

*"[The West] has been convinced for some time that it has a full monopoly on mass media,"* said Lavrov in a statement. *"Russia Today has won a large audience in the US and Western Europe, not to mention in Latin America and the Arab world."*

[READ MORE: 'Propaganda bullhorn': John Kerry attacks RT during Ukraine address](#)

US television professionals have, however, been more amenable to RT and have nominated its reporting for media awards. RT received an Emmy nomination for its series of Guantanamo hunger strike reports in 2014, and the channel was earlier nominated for Emmies in 2010 and 2012.

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