



PRESS RELEASE

06.02.2019

AFP EXPANDS ITS GLOBAL FACT-CHECKING OPERATIONS TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA THROUGH NEW CONTRACT WITH FACEBOOK

AFP IS FURTHER DEVELOPING ITS GLOBAL FACT-CHECKING OPERATIONS THROUGH A MAJOR NEW CONTRACT WITH FACEBOOK COVERING THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA. ARABIC IS BEING ADDED TO FACT-CHECKING IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE THAT IS CARRIED OUT BY AFP TEAMS IN 16 COUNTRIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

The articles produced in this new collaboration with Facebook will be publicly accessible on a new version of the [AFP Fact Check blog](#), which was launched in 2017 to verify and debunk fake news and disinformation being spread online.

Production of the articles, which include fact-checks of content posted on Facebook and flagged by the platform, follows the same editorial procedures as the rest of the Agency's production. AFP selects the content to be fact-checked in full independence.

Based in Beirut, the new fact-checking team will work in liaison with journalists in the region's bureaux and will verify factually suspect content being spread in the Middle East and North Africa, with additional context provided where necessary.

The agreement with Facebook includes verification of images, an area in which AFP has a recognised expertise.

"We are delighted to extend our fact-checking project with Facebook into the Middle East and beyond", said Phil Chetwynd, AFP Global News Director. "Information verification is at the heart of AFP's mission and its expertise and is something that our clients benefit from daily in this era of fake news and disinformation".

Rita Daou, the head of AFP's Arabic service and the Agency's deputy Middle East editor, added: "This new contract with Facebook to the Middle East and Africa marks an important new step for AFP, the leading international news agency in Arabic."

The new contract is the latest of numerous initiatives taken by AFP in the fight against disinformation that demonstrate the Agency's expertise and credibility in this field. They include :

- Participation in CrossCheck, a collaborative journalism project run by First Draft to debunk fake news during the 2017 French presidential election.
- Becoming one of [65 signatories of the International Fact-Checking Network's Code of Principles](#), which involves meeting a set of strict professional criteria;
- Becoming a partner in the Journalism Trust Initiative launched by Reporters Without Borders, an innovative project to fight disinformation.
- Collaboration with Africa Check, a pioneering fact-checking site in which AFP had a founding role.
- The launch of a new story format with the slug FactCheck that is used on the Agency's news wires and its Fact Check blog.

AFP's fact-checking operation already extends to 16 countries – South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cameroon, Colombia, Spain, France, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Senegal.

About AFP:

AFP is a global news agency delivering fast, accurate, in-depth coverage of the events shaping our world from conflicts to politics, economics, sports, entertainment and the latest breakthroughs in health, science and technology. With 2,400 staff spread across almost every country, AFP covers the world 24 hours a day in six languages. AFP delivers the news in video, text, photos, multimedia and graphics to a wide range of customers including newspapers and magazines, radio and TV channels, web sites and portals, mobile operators, corporate clients as well as public institutions.

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