

# Telegram's Embrace of Contradiction | Lawfare

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For people concerned with the human rights abuses occurring in Ukraine, the self-described encrypted messaging app Telegram is an instrument of freedom. In Brazil, the Supreme Court blocked the app, if only for two days. Telegram had ignored the Superior Electoral Court, which requested that Telegram establish legal representation in Brazil and detail how it would fend off disinformation there. (The company responded with a statement saying that it simply hadn't been checking the correct email and missed the requests.) Telegram, given its hardline stance in defense of the freedom of speech, has courted all kinds of purveyors of "unacceptable" speech, whether they be violators of norms or laws, "bad actors," or enemies of authoritarian states. Telegram exists in the nexus between East and West, as a breeding ground for misinformation and a battleground for democratic values. While working with those contradictions, the app has found its success. Both a social media and a messenger, encrypted and left in plain text, the app is far more dynamic than the other "free speech" social media platforms. Held together by an enigmatic CEO's supreme faith in the freedom of speech and the ability to quickly pivot between conflicting sides, Telegram looks here to stay.

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