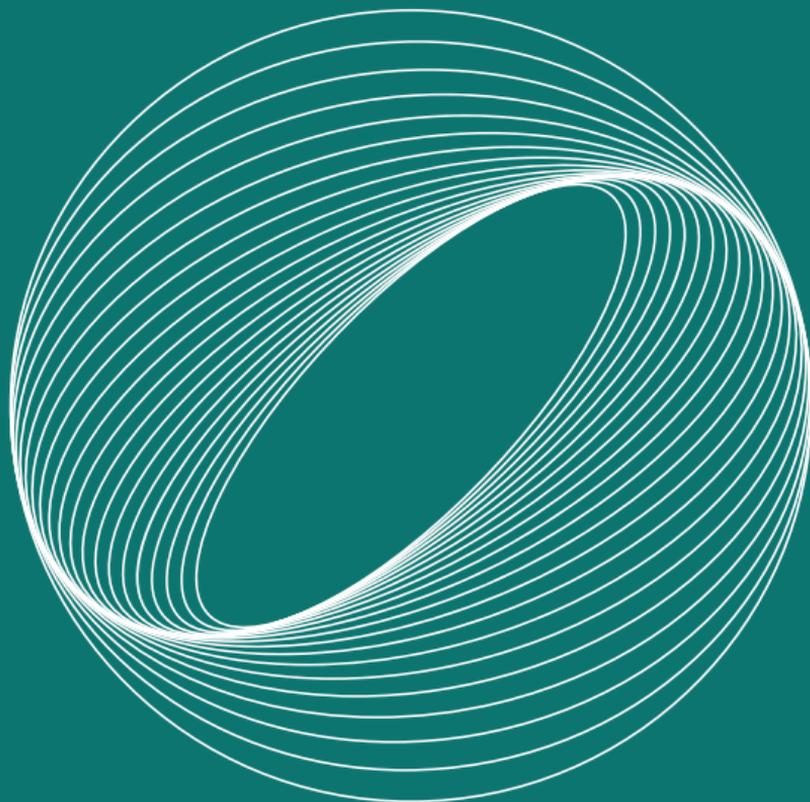




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2024 OLYMPIC DISINFORMATION: CHALLENGES FOR AND FROM AZERBAIJAN

Misleading narratives can spread through major sporting events like the Olympics, with the 2024 Games in Paris posing a particular concern for amplifying disinformation from developing regions. Disinformation within international relations involves intentionally disseminating inaccurate or biased information by external governments or non-state entities to create confusion and deception (Gerrits, 2018).

On November 9, 2023, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) released a statement addressing a rise in disinformation efforts targeting the organization. The statement noted that fake news posts proliferated across Telegram accounts and various social media platforms in multiple languages (IOC, 2023). At the same month, the cyber defense unit of France discovered a disinformation campaign originating from Azerbaijan with the goal of weakening Paris's ability to host the upcoming Olympic Games (Reuters, 2023). Le Monde's reporting on disinformation campaigns linked to Azerbaijan for the 2024 Olympics has escalated tensions, with Azerbaijan accusing France of supporting Armenia and increasing militarization in the South Caucasus region amid strained diplomatic relations (Le Monde, 2023).

Disinformation coming from Azerbaijan about the Paris Olympics could lead to political and economic tensions between the two countries. In the lead up to the 2024 Olympics, tensions had been escalating between France and Azerbaijan. In February 2024, the French Ministry of Defense had visited Armenia, exacerbating tensions with Azerbaijan. By mid-April 2024, the tensions had risen significantly, prompting France to recall its ambassador to Azerbaijan for consultations. The French government described Azerbaijan's recent unilateral actions as damaging to the bilateral relationship between the two countries (France Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024). The absence of a French ambassador in Baku hinders Azerbaijan's diplomatic goals in France and the EU. The recall signals France's discontent and could harm future cooperation on vital economic and security issues. (Karunya Saka Listianto, HI UPN Veteran Yogyakarta).

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RIPPLE AND RESOLVE: RECTIFYING GLOBAL WATER CONUNDRUMS AT THE 10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

The 10th World Water Forum in Bali, held in May 2024, addressed critical water challenges under the theme "Water for Shared Prosperity," emphasizing collaborative solutions (World Water Forum, 2024). Many major cities in Africa, Southeast Asia, and South America struggle with providing clean water, hindered by outdated infrastructure and population growth. Recent research questions the accuracy of UNICEF and WHO's 2015 report on global water access, revealing significant gaps in urban areas of the Global South (Mitlin et al., 2019). Without universal sewer access, on-site fecal sludge management poses health risks and contributes to water pollution (CALS Cornell, 2021). Climate change exacerbates water-related risks like floods and droughts, with sea-level rise intensifying groundwater salinization (WMO, 2021; IPCC, 2008). The forum's outcomes shed light on significant global developments impacting vulnerable communities in the Global South.

The forum's inaugural High-Level Meeting of Heads of State, attended by representatives from 48 countries, stressed global cooperation in water management through solidarity and political leadership (Paramitha, 2024). The Ministerial Declaration proposed initiatives like the Asia-Pacific Center of Excellence on Water and Climate Resilience, integrated water resources management for small islands, and World Lakes Day (IISD, 2024). With 113 water projects totaling \$9.4 billion, the forum showcased its commitment to addressing water scarcity, pollution, and climate change through sustainable practices like lake management and seawater desalination. UNESCO spearheaded discussions on data collection, transboundary cooperation, and gender equality, while the forum advocated for a Global Water Fund to address funding challenges sustainably (CNN Indonesia, 2024). These efforts are vital for bolstering resilience and ensuring the sustainability of water resources, particularly in the Global South, where communities heavily rely on natural resources for their livelihoods, and ecosystem preservation is crucial for sustainable development (Christopher Paller Gerale, Universitas Negeri Malang).

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