

January 23, 2021

Mr. Kevin Sneader
Global Managing Partner
McKinsey & Company
ICBC Tower, 40th Floor
3 Garden Road
Hong Kong SAR

Dear Mr. Sneader:

I write in dismay and disbelief that McKinsey & Company's Moscow office sent its employees an email forbidding them from participating in "unauthorized" peaceful protests or rallies set up in response to Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny's recent arrest, or for supporting those peaceful protests in any way on social media in their private capacity. The email, which appears to direct the employees to "stay neutral," stated, "[i]n line with policy, McKinsey employees must not support any political activity either publicly or privately. This ban does include posts in social media featuring your political views or your attitude to any action with a political flavour. This line of conduct is mandatory."

While McKinsey now clarifies that its employees have the right to participate "legally" in civic and political activities, it strains credulity to believe the managing partner of Russia and CIS incorrectly characterized how McKinsey policy sought to interact with the Putin regime in his original email. Despite efforts to correct public perception now, this episode raises serious questions about McKinsey's core values and corporate culture. It is no secret that McKinsey maintains close business ties to Russian government agencies and Kremlin-linked companies. As the initial guidance emailed to Moscow-based employees suggests, the company is little more than a tool for authoritarian repression. The initial guidance is also radically different from what Ms. Liz Hilton Segel, the managing partner for McKinsey's North America operations, outlined to my office just a few months ago.

In August 2020, Ms. Hilton Segel responded to an inquiry over another concerning issue with McKinsey and its ties to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Specifically, I asked McKinsey to clarify press reports in which McKinsey employees have claimed to lead party branches within the company's very own offices in China. Though I still await an adequate response to my inquiry, Ms. Hilton Segel has claimed: "McKinsey supports the protection of our employees' rights of free association... McKinsey has a policy governing the personal political activities of the firm's employees. This policy prohibits firm members from running for political office or accepting an official role in a political campaign or in the office of a public official, whether paid or unpaid. With respect to political activities, McKinsey's policy prohibits the use of firm resources or the firm name for political activities."

How is it possible that Vitaly Klintsov, the managing partner for McKinsey's Russia operation, articulated guidance so radically different as to the company's "employees' rights of free association"? To help my office's understanding of the situation, please describe how the initial "no participation" guidance was determined, and whether any McKinsey employee consulted with anyone in Vladimir Putin's regime before or after the guidance was sent. Similarly, did any McKinsey employee consult with anyone in the Putin establishment before or after the revised guidance was sent?

The Russian people deserve better. Russians are taking to the streets to protest a corrupt regime run by the thuggish despot Vladimir Putin who does everything in his power to silence dissent, including by poisoning and killing those who oppose him. By siding with, and enabling, brutal authoritarian regimes that suppress the most basic rights of its people, McKinsey continues to fall far short of its stated purpose "to help create positive, enduring change in the world."

With every new report of McKinsey & Company's work with authoritarian regimes, I grow increasingly concerned about its work on behalf of the U.S. Government. It is unclear why the U.S. Government, or any democratic government with whom your firm works, should accept that McKinsey's work maintains the high standards that you claim, or believe that your recommendations have not been tainted by your stated willingness to assist authoritarian regimes in Beijing, Moscow, and elsewhere.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Rubio", written in a cursive style.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator