

Spotify CEO says won't silence Rogan over racial slur

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Spotify has faced controversy over Joe Rogan's past use of the N word and accusations of broadcast misinformation about Covid-19.

The head of music streaming giant Spotify Daniel Ek has condemned podcaster Joe Rogan's use of a racial slur but insisted that silencing him

was not the answer.

Ek's comments, made in a letter to staff obtained by AFP on Monday, mark the latest development in an ongoing row over the [streaming service](#) and its flagship star, who has recently faced a torrent of criticism over Covid-19 misinformation on his podcast.

On Saturday, Rogan apologised for his past use of racist language, including the "N word", and addressed what he called "the most regretful and shameful thing that I've ever had to talk about publicly," after a compilation video of him using the term surfaced.

"While I strongly condemn what Joe has said... I want to make one point very clear -- I do not believe that silencing Joe is the answer," Ek wrote in the letter.

"We should have clear lines around content and take action when they are crossed, but cancelling voices is a slippery slope."

Ek added that he agreed with Rogan's decision to remove past episodes of his show from the platform, while stressing that even though Spotify has an exclusive licensing agreement with him the company was not his publisher.

In addition, Ek added that Spotify was committing "an incremental investment of \$100 million" for "music (artists and songwriters) and audio content from historically marginalised groups."

Rogan himself said his use of the "N word" over a 12-year period—highlighted in the compilation video—looked "horrible, even to me."

He said he believed at the time that as long as he was using the word in

context that people would understand his actions.

"I never used it to be racist, because I'm not racist," he said.

Spotify's stock fell sharply Thursday amid controversy over Rogan's show, which garners up to 11 million listeners per episode.

The row follows on the heels of music legends Neil Young and Joni Mitchell as well as other artists asking that their songs be removed from the platform in protest against Rogan, who has been accused of spouting misinformation about Covid-19 and vaccinations, either directly or through the guests he interviews on his show.

In response Spotify announced in late January that it would add advisories to any podcast episode discussing Covid-19 which would direct listeners to a "dedicated Covid-19 Hub" with facts and up-to-date information from scientists and public health authorities.

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