Private Sector Engagement in Responding to the Use of the Internet and ICT for Terrorist Purposes

Strengthening Dialogue and Building Trust

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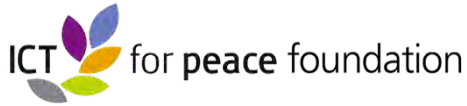
Objectives of the joint ICT4Peace and UN CTED project (Phase 1)

- **Phase 1: April – December 2016**
  - The purpose of Phase 1 was to deepen the knowledge base:
    1. *Identify and analyse existing and emerging threats*
    2. *Understand industry approaches and the principles and norms*
    3. *Understand trends in multi-stakeholder and public-private engagement*
    4. *Scope appropriate mechanisms / platforms for knowledge sharing*

    How? Consultations via three workshops in Zurich, Kuala Lumpur, and Silicon Valley with major stakeholders from the ICT industry, civil society, and inter-governmental agencies + interviews + desk research.

  - We reported our initial findings to a Special Meeting of the UN CTC in Dec 2016 and there will be further follow-up with the CTC in Feb. 2017

Our advisory group: Leading technology companies and a range of academic, civil society groups, and inter-governmental organisations



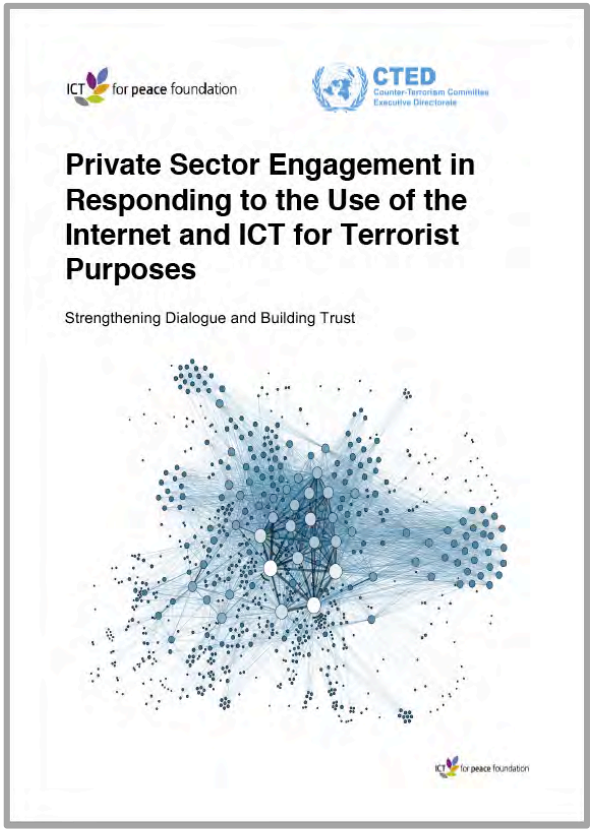
ICT4Peace Global workshops held in 2016: Industry representatives from technology, media, telecommunications, finance, and advisory

ICT4Peace Global workshops held in 2016: Governments and inter-governmental organisations were key stakeholders in the consultation

ICT4Peace Global workshops held in 2016: Leading civil society organisations and human rights groups were prominent

ICT4Peace Global workshops held in 2016: Academic institutions and think tanks contributed papers for each of the global meetings

We presented our summary report for Phase 1 at the UN in December



http://bit.ly/2kMBDZJ

Google: UN private sector engagement ICT For Peace

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Findings of our consultations: The nature of the threat

Current threat assessment

- Current threat remains anchored in **communications and propaganda**, **radicalisation** and **recruitment of potential fighters** and followers, **transferring and raising funds** and transferring or **sharing knowledge** - helpful to distinguish between *content* and *operations*
- Internet is dual-use technology as is encryption and related technologies
- Use of internet by terrorists will remain until OFFLINE drivers resolved

Emerging or potential threats

- Need to stay on top of the threat – shifting as we speak.
- Limited evidence that terrorist groups have the capabilities to conduct cyber-enable attacks against critical infrastructures – however potential to develop or procure the capabilities and cause significant harm.

Responses

- "Urgent action" increasingly called for by governments (e.g. regarding content restrictions (blocking, filtering, removal requests)
- Increased focus on tech "intermediaries" (ISPs) by governments
- Volume of data leads to over-reliance on technological solutionism to solve complex problems (ref: algorithmic responses, Napalm case)
- Emerging tension between approaches w. imp. human rights implications

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Industry responses: The industry is already developing an emerging voluntary policy framework e.g. around Terms of Service

Defining terrorism using sanctions lists

- Challenges in defining **terrorism** apply equally online; no. of companies use international, regional or national **sanctions lists**
- Microsoft has announced it is using the **consolidated UN sanctions list** to inform its decisions; Facebook, Google use US lists.

Terms of Service and emerging policy

- Some companies are adapting terms of service (TOS) and using community guidelines to **prohibit certain content and activity** and **shape norms of behaviour**
- Companies generally have a **zero- tolerance policy** for terrorist content and activity on their platforms and have committed to ensuring user safety

Global Network Initiative (GNI) and other industry initiatives

- Many companies participate in the **Global Network Initiative** or other industry initiatives which set guiding principles for industry action on a number of issues
- These initiatives are generally linked to the UN Business and Human Rights principles

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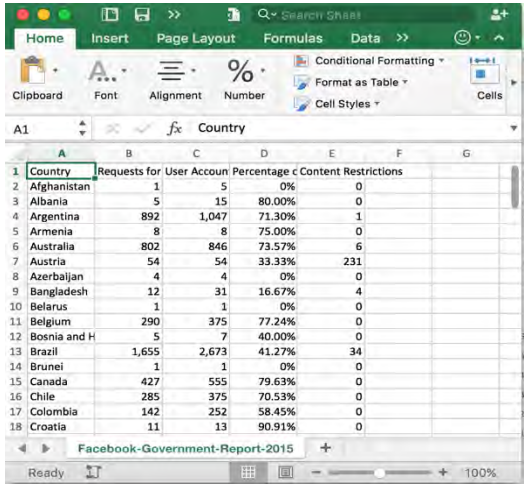
Based on the principle of openness and NGO advocacy, major technology companies now regularly produce Transparency Reports; some limitations/ challenges.

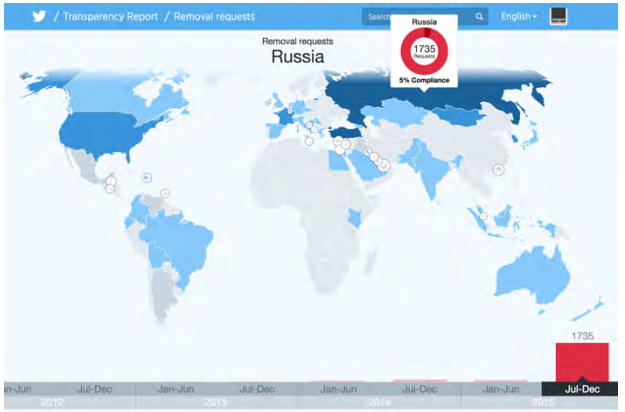
facebook



Country	Requests for	User Accoun	Percentage c	Content Restrictions
Afghanistan	1	5	0%	0
Albania	5	15	80.00%	0
Argentina	892	1,047	71.30%	1
Armenia	8	8	75.00%	0
Australia	802	846	73.57%	6
Austria	54	54	33.33%	231
Azerbaijan	4	4	0%	0
Bangladesh	12	31	16.67%	4
Belarus	1	1	0%	0
Belgium	290	375	77.24%	0
Bosnia and H	5	7	40.00%	0
Brazil	1,655	2,673	41.27%	34
Brunei	1	1	0%	0
Canada	427	555	79.63%	0
Chile	285	375	70.53%	0
Colombia	142	252	58.45%	0
Croatia	11	13	90.91%	0

Google

twitter



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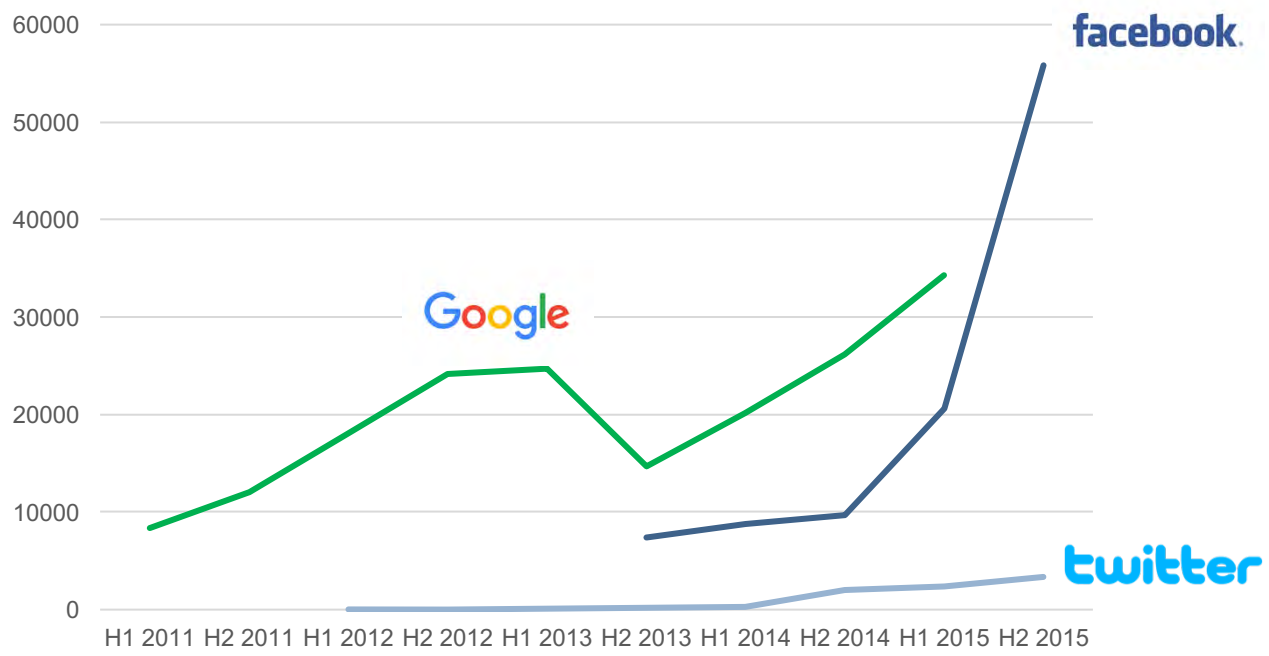
In 2015 the top three tech companies took down over 160,000 items of concern for governments and this is increasing annually

Content takedowns requested by governments (2011-2015)



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Industry responses: Other than developing policy, industry is taking proactive steps to counter the terrorist use of their platforms

Developing guidance systems

- Developing **guidance and systems** (human and automated) for content flagging, referral and content/ account removal and for remedial action

Building policy and legal teams

- **Training** programmes for employees and users
- Employ **specialist legal teams**
- **Content policy teams** now play critical roles

Co-operation with Internet Referral Units (IRUs)

- Cooperating with **government** or **regional internet referral units** (IRUs), e.g. UK CTIRU, Netherlands, EU IRU based in the Hague (number of challenges)

Investment in counter-narrative

- Developing tools and mechanisms to **counter the narratives of terrorist** and **violent extremist groups** and their followers
- Carried out **in conjunction with government agencies** and/ **or civil society** and **community organizations** (number of challenges)

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Industry responses: In summary, industry actors are already developing a voluntary framework but there are some persisting tensions

Emergence of voluntary framework respecting human rights

- The gradual **emergence of a voluntary policy framework guiding corporate action** in this area.
- Recognizes the importance of **enhancing public safety and ensuring that a**ctions remain anchored in the rule of law,
- While also protecting and **respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and u**pholding core principles such as **transparency, accountability, predictability and remedy**

Persistent challenges

- Notably evident in some of the measures govs. are taking in response to public security concerns, such as:
  - **Content restrictions** (removal, blocking or filtering)
  - **Lawful/ unlawful orders** compelling companies to provide access to user data
  - Steps to increase **greater state involvement** in **internet governance**.

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Industry responses: Other concerns raised in our consultations

Legitimacy of the private sector in terms of shaping norms of behaviour

Small companies have **limited capacity**, resources, knowledge of the issues

Limited evidential basis for responses / what does or does not work

Disconnect between ONLINE and OFFLINE PVE efforts

Limited investment in long-term **education** and critical thinking

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International Framework for Action:

United Nations

- **UN** Security Council Resolutions – significant activity
- **UN** Security Council Presidential Statement **-** plan for "comprehensive international framework" for counter-narratives (S/PRST/2016/6 of 11 May 2016)
- **UN** Secretary-General Action Plan for Preventing Violent Extremism
- **UN** General Assembly Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Others

- EU
- Council of Europe
- OSCE, OAS, AU, SCO
- G7, G20

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International Framework for Action: Norms & principles alongside growing body of expert reports and consultations guiding action in this area

Examples of Norms / Principles

- UNDHR; UN ICCPR; UN Human Rights Council Resolutions; UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- **European Commission's** ICT Sector Guide on Implementing the UN Business and HR Principles
- **Global Network Initiative's** "Principles on Freedom of Expression and Privacy

Reports from international organisations

- **UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression**
  - The Use of Encryption and Anonymity in Digital Communications
  - The Role of the Private Sector in the Digital Age
- Reports of the **Council of Europe** on:
  - The Rule of Law on the Internet and in the Wider Digital World
  - Filtering, Blocking and Take-Down of Illegal Content on the Internet
- **GNI** report 'Extremist Content and the ICT Sector: A Global Network Initiative Policy Brief'.
- **UNCTED-ICT4Peace** report 'Private Sector Engagement'

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What is the cyber dimension?

The nature of the threat

- Cyber / protecting CI and essential services is a different issue from terrorist use of the internet.
- Threat comes and goes in policy circles - no indication that capacity of groups has moved beyond social media/ propaganda / financing
- Actions underway in different fora to protect CI and essential services from ICT/cyber-enabled attacks - apply equally to potential terrorist attacks

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- Considered through lens of this project with our industry partners
- ICT4Peace other work relating to international security and cyber/ICT, esp. vis international law, norms of state behaviour, and confidence and capacity building measures

Cyber security and PVE efforts

- What analogies can be drawn between PVE efforts and securing cyberspace in general?
  - Capacity building; critical thinking; dialogue between actors and engagement of private sector, civil social and academia - these require more than just technological solutions

Recommendations from our report:

1. Build on existing policy initiatives and avoid duplication of effort
2. **Strengthen dialogue on the emerging normative framework through multi-stakeholder engagement**
3. Promote coordination between inter-governmental initiatives
4. **Establish a Global Knowledge Sharing/ Capacity Building Platform focused on Policy & Practice**
5. Build capacity and raise awareness (companies, gov. agencies, civil society etc.)
6. Strengthen the Links Between Offline Prevention Efforts and Online Content Management and Counter-Narrative Efforts
7. Support data-driven research on effectiveness
8. Promote Critical Thinking and Media/ Digital Literacy

Implementing the recommendations: Initiatives the joint UNCTED/ICT4Peace will focus on in 2017-2018

1 UN CTED / ICT4P Multi-Stakeholder Series

- **Strengthening Dialogue and Building Trust**

- **Objectives:**

1. Support continued dialogue around emerging policy, principles and norms
2. Share experiences, lessons, policy and practice on private and public sector responses to the use of the internet for terrorist/ extremist purposes.
3. Promote coordination of effort across organisations

2 Global Knowledge Sharing Platform

- Target audiences (industry actors; government agencies; civil society groups)

- What will be shared on the “one stop shop” platform:
  - norms, standards, principles
  - sample ToS, sample gov. legislation
  - examples of public-private/ multi-stakeholder initiatives
  - policy-relevant research on changing nature of the threat
  - tool-kits for capacity building

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