



For immediate release

New UN Methodology for Monitoring Social Media to Address and Counter Online Hate Speech Launched

New York, 4 October 2024 - The Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide has today launched a new methodology for monitoring social media to address and counter online hate speech, with the support of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations.

Building upon this Office's long-term engagement with tech and social media companies, "[A Comprehensive Methodology for Monitoring Social Media to Address and Counter Online Hate Speech](#)" aims to set up a systematic and common approach for monitoring online hate speech in full respect of international human rights law and standards and based on the [UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech](#). It is envisaged to help UN entities, and all relevant stakeholders engaged in tackling hate speech to better monitor online hate speech, including by providing examples on how to do this practically. Complementing the [Countering and addressing online hate speech: A guide for policy makers and practitioners](#) launched by the Office of the Special Adviser in July 2023, it also provides an opportunity to reflect on what areas would benefit from further research and action to advance the fight against online hate speech globally.

"It is my firm hope that this methodology will energize and strengthen our collective action to address and counter online hate speech, while upholding our fundamental rights, including freedom of opinion and expression, as well as non-discrimination and equality. We have seen historically how hate speech can fuel incitement to violence and enable hate crimes and serious international crimes, including genocide. Through social media, hate speech is now spreading at an unprecedented rate and we need to redouble efforts to address it to protect human dignity. Better monitoring is undoubtedly the starting point", said Special Adviser Alice Wairimu Nderitu.

The methodology launched today provides a tool to monitor online hate speech in a systematic and standardized manner. It is based on an extensive review of existing methodologies across academia, technology companies, governments, the United Nations, and NGOs, and synthesizes those approaches into a standard set of practices that best fit the use cases relevant to the UN and its partners.

"The UK is pleased to have provided funding for the development of this methodology and to have hosted the launch event for it. This methodology will help ensure that threats posed by hate speech are effectively countered in line with international human rights", Mr. Archie Young, United Kingdom Ambassador to the UN General Assembly Affairs.

Thematic panel discussion included reflections from Jonathan Zigrand, Regional Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Specialist at UNDP, Eliska Pirkova, Senior Policy Analyst and Global Freedom of Expression Lead at Access Now, Gabrielle Guillemin, Human Rights Manager, Expression and Standards Lead at Meta, and Liz Woolery, Global Public Policy at TikTok who shared perspectives on various approaches to monitoring online hate speech; and identified challenges and opportunities in this regard. It was also highlighted that monitoring and responding to hate speech need to be

context-specific, involve partners at grassroots and international level and being focused on the ultimate goal of protecting groups at risk from violence.

The methodology outlines that monitoring online hate speech starts with three main steps: collecting and parsing real-time data, classifying content, and analyzing patterns and trends. UN entities and partners alike can use it both in the context of low-tech and manual monitoring and in more complex AI-driven projects.

“I highly recommend all relevant stakeholders to use it, as it can help support early warning, the prevention of violence including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and ultimately save lives”, the Special Adviser added.

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