AGENDA

Moderator: **Annelies Beck** (VRT)

10:00 - 10:05 Opening remarks by **Tawfik Jelassi**, Assistant Director General, Communication and Information, UNESCO

10:05 - 11:00

High level opening session - Social media content governance and impact on peace and conflict dynamics

- **Věra Jourová,** Vice-President, European Commission
- **Alice Wairimu Nderitu**, Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide
- **Hilde Hardeman**, Director - Head of Service, Foreign Policy Instrument, European Commission
- **Guy Berger**, Director, UNESCO Communication and Information Sector
- **Matt Brittin**, President, Google Europe, Middle East and Africa
- **Markus Reinisch**, Vice-President Public Policy, Facebook Europe, Middle East and Africa

This session gathers high level representatives from the European Union, the United Nations and Internet platforms to discuss the critical role that social media platforms play in fostering peace and access to information. It examines pressing global issues of content governance to address online hate speech and disinformation and the need to develop common principles for a global online space. The session allows to discuss the potential global impact of the new regulatory and coregulatory framework suggested by the European Union and how these are in line with the principles to enhance the transparency of internet platform companies launched by UNESCO at the 2021 World Press Freedom Day and the United Nations Plan of Action and Strategy on Hate Speech.

11:00 - 12:30

Panel Session 1 - Social Media 4 Peace: Challenges and Opportunities

- **Prof. Hubert Gijzen**, Director, UNESCO's regional Office in Nairobi
- **Simon Bojsen-Moller**, Deputy Head of Unit, Foreign Policy Instrument, European Commission
- **Iverna McGowan**, Director of Europe Office, Center for Democracy and Technology
- **Gerald Sowah**, Public Policy Manager, Content Policy team, Facebook
- **Anita A. Wahid**, Presidium of Indonesian Anti Hoax Movement MAFINDO
- **Maida Bahto Kestendzic**, Project Coordinator, Press Council in Bosnia & Herzegovina

The first session is dedicated to the project entitled "Social Media 4 Peace". The project launched in early 2021 is meant to strengthen the resilience of civil society to potentially harmful content spread online, in particular hate speech inciting violence, while enhancing the promotion of peace through digital technologies, notably social media in three pilot countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, and Kenya. Speakers include project stakeholders and representatives of social media platforms to discuss why and how the project intends to increase knowledge on the impact of online messages on offline behaviours and conflict dynamics, and how it could pilot new tools at local level to curb harmful content. Speakers also address how to maximize digital technologies' potential to become a critical element of peace-building.

12:30 - 13:30 **Lunch break**

13:30 - 15:00

Panel session 2 - Lessons learnt of the project "#CoronavirusFacts, Addressing the 'Disinfodemic' on COVID-19 in conflict-prone environments"

- **Khaled Salah**, Director, UNESCO Regional Office for Central Africa in Yaoundé, Cameroun
- **Jurgis Vilčinskas**, Deputy Head of division, Strategic Communication and Information Analysis, EEAS
- **Cecília Napido Gonçalves**, Director, Department of Research, Planning and Cooperation, Information Office, Mozambique
- **Janet M. Kincaid**, Training Operations Officer & Project Manager, Department of Communications, WHO
- **Olivia Sohr**, Director of Impact and New Initiatives, Chequeado, Argentina
- **Sana Hassan**, Editor in chief of Iraqi Youth News Agency
- **Kenneth Okwaroh**, Executive Director, Africa Centre for People Institution and Society

The second session takes stock of achievements and lessons learnt from the #CoronavirusFacts project implemented by UNESCO, coming to an end mid-October 2021. Project stakeholders and partners from across the world share insights on how the project's actions contributed to enhance access to information and mitigate the spread of online disinformation and hateful narratives at a critical time during the pandemic. The panel reflects on how resilience against conflict and tensions exacerbated by crisis has been strengthened as a result of the project during the COVID-19 pandemic but also on what legacy impact project actions will have for stakeholders, target countries and regions to face future crisis and what areas of challenges that have emerged during the past year and a half that will require further engagement and action.

15:00 - 15:15   **Break**

15:15 - 16:15

Panel Session 3 - Contextualization of online harmful content to foster peace

- **Anna Herold,** Head of Unit, Media Pluralism, DG Connect European Commission
- **Julie Owono**, Board member of Facebook oversight board, Director-General of Internet without Borders
- **Pierre François Docquir**, Head of the Media Freedom Programme, Article 19
- **Jonathan Bright**, Associate Professor, University of Oxford & Senior Research Fellow, Oxford Internet Institute
- **Andrew Puddephatt**, Internet Policy Expert and Author

The moderation and curation rules of online, potentially harmful content are mostly discussed at the global level in a "one size fits all" fashion. Yet, the complexity of addressing online, potentially harmful content lies in the impossibility to define precisely the boundaries of the type of content covered irrespective of the context. This is why, in addition to using human rights principles as a universal baseline, take into account social, cultural, and linguistic nuances it seems necessary to develop and review content moderation and curation rules and tools in a localized manner. Speakers of this last session will address the contextualization of online harmful content by sharing local experiences and exploring how to best curb online harmful content while protecting freedom of expression and enhancing the promotion of peace.

16:15 - 16:30   Closing remarks by **Louise Haxthausen**, Director, UNESCO Liaison Office in Brussels

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