



bringing the online in line with human rights

Mr. Elon Musk

Twitter inc.,
1 355, Market st., suite 900,
San Francisco, CA 94 103, USA.

Paris, December 12th, 2022

Dear Mr. Musk,

On behalf of the International Network against Cyber Hate, which currently includes 32 organizations from 27 countries and has 20 years of expertise in the field of online hate speech (inach.net) we are writing this open letter to express our concerns about your recent acquisition of Twitter.

As activists for a cyberhate free internet, we are fundamentally attached to the respect of freedom of expression and information, which are the pillars of our democracies. These fundamental rights, as established in democratic societies, allow citizens to freely express their opinions, but only on the condition that they can be expressed with respect for the rights and dignity of others in accordance with national and international laws. INACH is dedicated to fight online hate speech, defined as such by the Minister's Committee of the Council of Europe: "all forms of expressions that spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance". Hence, racism, antisemitism, but also anti-LGBT hatred and sexism, as well as everything that is detrimental to human dignity, are not matters of opinion, of debate, but of offense which needs to be moderated.

Our international network is also concerned about the phenomenon of disinformation, defined by the European Commission as: "false or misleading content that is spread with an intention to deceive or secure economic or political gain, and which may cause public harm". For several years now, we have been witnessing the increase and escalation of this type of content, as well as the multiplication of conspiratorial speeches. Aspiring terrorists, conspiracy theorists and disinformers are proliferating in spaces that have become genuine weapons of war in the hands of those who, by means of influence operations or military offensives, attack our democracies. We are concerned about comments attributed to you regarding your intent to reverse Twitter's bans on various social and political figures and the future of the Trust & Safety efforts, which many organizations have contributed to in an honest and earnest effort to improve user safety. Bans were not put in place lightly or capriciously. In almost all cases, they were the result of years of dialogue with Twitter and volumes of evidence that the banned individuals

were exploiting the platform to further stereotypes, promote demonstrated untruths and incite hatred, which often turned violent.

The internet community has had great hope that Twitter would be an engine for growth, exchange, and betterment. This has never been easy or taken lightly by the company, or the internet communities it serves. One good example is Twitter's participation in the EU Code of Conduct, a EU framework inciting social media to counter illegal online hate speech, to implement rules and community guidelines clarifying their prohibition of the promotion and incitement to violence and hateful conduct.

Regarding the above, we ask that you hold off reversing any bans until you have heard from all the stakeholders, not just those who claim they have been unfairly banned, but principally those who have been targeted, marginalized, abused, bullied and stalked by groups and individuals using Twitter as their megaphone and organizing point. Their voices must be taken into account.

Lastly, the recent enactment of the Digital Services Act is giving you even more responsibilities in combating online hate speech, which is why we want to raise up our concerns following the closing of Twitter's Brussel office, that was focusing on your European digital policy.

You well know the adage – with immense power comes immense responsibility.

Twitter is an immensely powerful tool. Many people, in many places, are counting on you to use that power responsibly.

We call on you to demonstrate support for the concept of online safety by helping to support those organizations who have been honest and credible participants in these initiatives.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a vertical line on the left and several sweeping, curved strokes on the right, forming a stylized 'P' and 'S'.

Philippe A. Schmidt
Chairman of the Board

Signatory Organisations

Africa Sans Haine (Congo)



Afroleadership (Cameroon)



Active Watch (Romania)



CESIE (Italy)



Czech Helsinki Committee



DigiQ (Slovakia)



Estonian Human Rights Center



Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (the United States of America)



Greek Helsinki Monitor



Human Rights House Zagreb (Croatia)



Latvian Center for Human Rights



LGL National LGBT Rights Organization (Lithuania)



Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA) (France)



LOVE-Storm (Germany)



Magenta (the Netherlands)



Metamorphosis Foundation (north Macedonia)



Meldpunt Internet Discriminatie (MiND) (the Netherlands)



Multi Kulti Collective (Bulgaria)



Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia (MCI) (Spain)



NetzCourage (Switzerland)



'Never Again' Association (Poland)



ObservatorioWeb (Argentina)



Romea.cz (Czech Republic)



SOVA Center for Information and Analysis (Russia)



Subjective Values Foundation (Hungary)



Tell MAMA (the United Kingdom)



ZARA - Civil Courage & Anti-Racism work (Austria)

