



Contribution by Ronald Eissens, representing the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH) and ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit, at the INTERNET FREEDOM CONFERENCE - THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNET INTERMEDIARIES, organised by the Austrian Chairmanship of the OSCE and the Czech Chairmanship of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on 13 October 2017 at the Hofburg, Vienna.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates,

Hosted by our Austrian member ZARA, Yesterday on October 12, the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH) held its 15th annual conference here in Vienna on the subject of ‘Hate speech - the online threat to democracy’. This year also marks 15 years of advocacy on cyberhate at, among others, the OSCE, having successfully inserted the subject onto the agenda of the participating states in 2002.

Measures to curb online hate have been put in place in several countries. However, with the digitalization of almost all parts of our society, the success of the social media and the enormous influence internet has, the level and impact of cyber hate has risen to such heights that it now has become a threat to our liberal democracies. Online hate comes in the shape of hate speech, fake news, incitement to hatred, violence, and terrorism and even gets weaponized by those who want to influence democratic processes like elections.

To contribute in mitigating this, INACH, a network of 22-member organizations in Europe and the Americas, produced recommendations at its conference for the OSCE participating states, the Media, the Internet Industry and Civil Society. We are thankful and appreciative for being allowed to do this.



bringing the online in line with human rights

### **Recommendations to the OSCE Participating States**

- 1. Governments should develop a clear definition of hate speech and hate crime, comparable to the IHRA working definition on anti-semitism, transferable to the national legal situation.**
- 2. Develop and implement legal options which offer an effective, prompt and impartial law enforcement response towards hate crime and illegal online content.**
- 3. Governments should support capacity building in order to create a national and international infrastructure to combat online hate speech. This includes guaranteeing that victims of discrimination are aware of and have access to effective legal remedies before a national authority, and that measures to combat hate speech include (where appropriate) sanctions for infringements and the provision of adequate reparation to victims of hate speech.**
- 4. Initiate and maintain networks between civil society organizations, politicians and academics in order to foster information exchange and knowledge transfer.**
- 5. Foster media literacy in order for various generations to recognize hate speech, fake news and how to deal with it.**
- 6. States should lead by example.**
- 7. States should improve cross-border collaboration.**
- 8. We call upon state authorities to provide NGOs with a mandate and funds to take cases to court.**

### **Recommendations to the Media**

- 1. Journalists should join forces with hate speech experts, researchers and NGOs in order to tackle hate speech effectively.**
- 2. In order to minimize the spread of hate speech on their own platforms, we urge the media to develop and implement ethical standards, a code of conduct and procedures.**
- 3. We call upon the media to create a more diverse journalistic community in order to represent more perspectives and to make all voices heard.**



### **Recommendations to Civil Society**

- 1. We call on civil society organizations to improve knowledge transfer and cooperation.**
- 2. Civil society organizations should provide and implement educational measures and improve media literacy in order to empower individuals and promote capacity building.**
- 3. Strengthen the role of civil society organizations in decision-making processes.**

### **Recommendations to the Internet Industry**

- 1. Improve and diversify counter-speech tools that are offered by social media platforms.**
- 2. Take measures to bridge the existing gap and improve feedback procedures on reports made by trusted flaggers and regular users.**
- 3. Provide sufficient information on how take-down procedures are executed and on what basis.**