

## **SPEAKING POINTS – CLOSING SPEECH**

**Ladies and gentlemen, let me now draw discussions to a close.**

**Thank you for a frank and fruitful debate.**

**It is clear from discussions that there is a huge amount of work that now needs to be**

**undertaken to ensure that we deliver the effect we are all striving to achieve. It is reassuring that there is such good-will, enthusiasm and commitment on the part of all participants in collaboratively rising to the challenge that lies before us. For that I am most grateful.**

***[If necessary: The draft conclusions were used as the basis for discussions. In light of the debate we have just had, my officials will now revise and finalise them ]***



**These conclusions will provide the strategic steer to enable the necessary follow-up action to be implemented.**

**I firmly believe that the objectives we have agreed on referring harmful material to the companies will greatly improve the referrals process,**



**helping reduce the amount of terrorist and hate speech material online, and better protecting our citizens from the harm it can inflict. And whilst frustrating terrorists' and violent extremists' efforts in the process is not an unwelcome side-effect, we need to remain vigilant to the**

**fact that terrorists and extremists will switch to smaller, less experienced companies whose sites are easier to exploit. This is why we must continue to reach out to these more vulnerable companies, and I need your help and support in doing just that. The progress that has**



**been made in relation to referrals in 2015 is indeed commendable, but we must move swiftly to deliver the effect we all so desire. And we must share our best practices and our expertise to ensure that similar efforts are applied in relation to other areas of concern that have**



**just been mentioned such as migrant smuggling and drugs trafficking.**

**It is clear that addressing hate speech and extremist propaganda online is not without its challenges. We must take advantage of the expertise we have at our**

**hands – the excellent work of the SSCAT and the additional resource that has been dedicated to the new RAN Centre of Excellence. We must expand and support those civil society partners who have the credibility and the authority to provide alternative, positive**

**narratives which challenge critical thinking. But we also need industry's help to provide the technical expertise and know-how that is so often lacking in order to promote and amplify their voices online. In that respect, the commitment from**



**industry to provide more training is most welcome.**

**With our collective strategic guidance, we must now allow the necessary action to take place at an operational and practitioner level. The Commission is already supporting initiatives**

**conducted by SSCAT and the RAN. However, where there are obstacles, the Commission stands ready to support or facilitate through the provision of further workshops, if that would be helpful. I suggest we reconvene in the latter part of 2016 to take stock of**

**progress, discuss evolving challenges, and revisit our strategic objectives.**

***[ As discussions continue in relation to the Digital Single Market Strategy, we will ensure that the output of this Forum is fed into this wider debate – particularly in relation to the duty of care***



***and notice and take-down  
procedures.]***

**Thank you once again for your invaluable contributions and for making this launch event so constructive. I wish you all safe journeys home, but before you depart, please join me in a cocktail reception in the foyer just outside this meeting room.**

**Thank you.**