



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS  
 Directorate D: Security

## **LAUNCH OF EU INTERNET FORUM**

### **SUMMARY OF MEETING**

Commissioner Avramopoulos opened the event, welcoming the internet companies, ministers, the CTC and Europol to the launch of the EU Internet Forum. He set out concerns over terrorists' increasing use of the internet, particularly in relation to recent attacks. Whilst the internet could not be held responsible for radicalising individuals online, it certainly appeared to be intensifying and accelerating the radicalisation process.

A two-pronged approach was required. Firstly to empower civil society partners to challenge the extremist narrative online and secondly to reduce the amount of terrorist material online. With regards to the latter, all participants were urged to support the EU Internet Referral Unit in reaching its full potential. The Commissioner also stressed the importance of enabling the public to report material of concern.

Just as ministers must protect the public, so the industry must protect their users. The Commissioner thereby called upon participants to use the Forum to strengthen the relationship. He also wanted consideration to be given as to how the Forum could be used to address other areas of online concern.

Commissioner Jourova spoke about the surge in hate speech inciting violence online. The Commissioner highlighted the vital role civil society partners play in challenging hate speech and urged the internet companies to provide support to civil society in challenging such online hatred. The Commissioner explained how the EU Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia had introduced an obligation on MSs to criminalise hate speech, including online. The Commissioner urged companies to commit to removing hate speech which is hosted on their platforms and called for closer alignment with counter terrorism efforts under the EU Internet Forum.

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