EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate D: Security
Unit D.1: Terrorism and Crisis Management

Meeting Report of 7th May 2015

Preparatory meeting of the EU Internet Forum

DG HOME met with representatives of industry as well as the office of the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator on 7th May 2015 for a first exchange of views regarding the establishment of the EU Internet Forum with Internet Service Providers.

The European Agenda on Security announced the launch of "*an EU-level Forum with IT companies to bring them together with law enforcement authorities and civil society. Building upon the preparatory meetings organised in 2014, the Forum will focus on deploying the best tools to counter terrorist propaganda on the internet and in social media. In cooperation with IT companies, the Forum will also explore the concerns of law enforcement authorities on new encryption technologies*."

In this first exploratory meeting, participants shared their positions on these issues, discussed the various challenges that stakeholders are facing and planned for next steps for formalising future forum meetings. Operating framework and scope of the forum were also discussed.

In line with the policy objectives set out in the *European Agenda on Security* but also the Commission's *Communication on Prevention* and the *Revised EU Strategy on Radicalisation and Recruitment*, participants agreed that priority areas comprise in particular the exchange of best practices and expertise in the field of counter narratives as well as detection and removal of content infringing the terms and conditions of the internet and social media companies in question. The scope of topics to be discussed within the forum should also comprise where appropriate other aspects related to the use of the internet and social media by terrorist organisations or for purposes deemed conducive to radicalisation or violent extremism.

The envisaged dialogue with industry and efforts to address violent extremism and terrorism related activities on the internet and social media is one important aspect of tackling radicalisation and recruitment. Yet, this endeavour needs to be seen as part of a holistic approach.

Participants shared information about their companies' policies, procedures and engagement and highlighted challenges, needs and expectations as regards the above topics. Ongoing activities address content that violates their terms and conditions, as well as providing support to counter narratives and credible voices amongst civil society and conducting research in this field. Companies highlighted the need for greater coordination amongst various government agencies and authorities across Europe in terms of proactive engagement and reactive requests for removals, particularly given the limited capacity and resource constraints (especially for smaller companies).

Participants exchanged views on possible future activities and events of mutual interest. This could include high-level meetings to be hosted by Commissioner Avramopoulos bringing together EU Ministers of Interiors and representatives of the internet industry and possibly other stakeholders. The first high-level meeting could be convened before the end of 2015. The activities planned by the forum could also include a series of training and awareness raising events for a variety of target groups. Such events could take the form of trainings on effective counter messaging for practitioners and NGOs drawing on the experience of the Radicalisation Awareness Network, in particular the RAN@ working group; or awareness raising workshops with MS representatives, including policy makers and law enforcement exchanging experiences and best practices in how to deal with the challenges when dealing with radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorist related content online. Such events could be organised in the coming months.