« 26. The Internet has altered our societies as profoundly as the printing press did, requiring a deep reimagining of the ethics and mindsets with which we approach knowledge, communication and cohesion. Along with the potential for more accessible information and rapid communication and consultation, the digital age, particularly social media, has also heightened fragmentation and “echo chambers”. Objectivity, or even the idea that people can aspire to ascertain the best available truth, has come increasingly into question. The goal of giving equal balance to competing points of view can come at the expense of impartiality and evidence, distorting the public debate. The ability to cause large-scale disinformation and undermine scientifically established facts is an existential risk to humanity. While vigorously defending the right to freedom of expression everywhere, we must equally encourage societies to develop a common, empirically backed consensus on the public good of facts, science and knowledge. We must make lying wrong again. Institutions can be a “reality check” for societies, curbing disinformation and countering hate speech and online harassment, including of women and girls. I urge acceleration of our efforts to produce and disseminate reliable and verified information. The United Nations plays a key role in this regard, which it can continue to strengthen, building on models such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the World Meteorological Organization Scientific Advisory Panel or the Verified initiative for COVID-19. Other steps include support for public interest and independent media, regulation of social media, strengthening freedom of information or right to information laws and ensuring a prominent voice for science and expertise, for example through representation of science commissions in decision-making. A global code of conduct that promotes integrity in public information could be explored together with States, media outlets and regulatory bodies, facilitated by the United Nations. With recent concerns about trust and mistrust linked to technology and the digital space, it is also time to understand, better regulate and manage our digital commons as a global public good. »

« 35. In 2023, we will commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 30 years since the adoption of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights. As this milestone nears, the time has come to take stock, rejuvenate our shared values and update our thinking on human rights. Consideration should, for instance, be given to updating or clarifying our application of human rights frameworks and standards to address frontier issues and prevent harms in the digital or technology spaces, including in relation to freedom of speech, hate speech and harassment, privacy, the “right to be forgotten” and neuro-technology. The right to a healthy environment also warrants deeper discussion. It may be time to reinforce universal access to the Internet as a human right, with accelerated steps to connect the remaining 3.8 billion people offline to the Internet by 2030, notably those most often left behind, including women, along with indigenous and older people. The United Nations stands ready to work with Governments, businesses and civil society to find alternatives to disruptive blanket Internet shutdowns and generic blocking and filtering of services to address the spread of disinformation and harmful life-threatening content, in line with international human rights law." »
Our Common Agenda: Policy Brief 8: Information Integrity on Digital Platforms

“Summary: … The present policy brief is focused on how threats to information integrity are having an impact on progress on global, national and local issues. In Our Common Agenda, I called for empirically backed consensus around facts, science and knowledge. To that end, the present brief outlines potential principles for a code of conduct that will help to guide Member States, the digital platforms and other stakeholders in their efforts to make the digital space more inclusive and safe for all, while vigorously defending the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to access information. The code of conduct for information integrity on digital platforms is being developed in the context of preparations for the Summit of the Future. My hope is that it will provide a gold standard for guiding action to strengthen information integrity. …”

Misinformation

- UNESCO - How to combat misinformation? Misinformation and hate speech are proliferating rapidly due to digital tools. UNESCO has developed an unparalleled worldwide strategy to eradicate this problem while safeguarding freedom of expression. This strategy will be revealed on Monday, November 6: https://www.unesco.org/en/freedom-expression-online
- UNDP - Rise Above: Countering misinformation and disinformation in the crisis setting: https://www.undp.org/eurasia/dis/misinformation
- UNICRI - Summer School on Misinformation, Disinformation and Hate Speech, 3-7 July 2023: https://unicri.it/News//Summer-School-Misinformation-Disinformation-Hate-Speech-2023
- New UN course helps cut through the noise to bolster online safety (UN News, 3 November 2022): https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/11/1130167
- Collaboration is key to countering online misinformation about noncommunicable diseases – new WHO/Europe toolkit shows how (20 October 2022): https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/20-10-2022-collaboration-is-key-to-countering-online-misinformation-about-noncommunicable-diseases--new-who-europe-toolkit-shows-how


• UNESCO publications on “Misinformation”: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/search/a3ad7a0d-f489-4504-a852-48e516da6609

COVID-19 MISINFORMATION


• Verified: UN initiative to combat the growing scourge of COVID-19 misinformation https://shareverified.com/
  o #PledgeToPause: Misinformation is prolonging the pandemic. But by pausing to think before you share information online you can save lives https://shareverified.com/pledge-to-pause/

• World Health Organization (WHO)
  o Infodemic Management New Flashes: https://www.who.int/teams/risk-communication/infodemic-management/news-flashes
  o How to report misinformation online: https://www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/how-to-report-misinformation-online
  o Understanding the infodemic and misinformation in the fight against COVID-19: https://www.who.int/health-topics/infodemic/understanding-the-infodemic-and-misinformation-in-the-fight-against-covid-19

New online course to fight the infodemic (2 February 2022): [https://www.who.int/news/item/02-02-2022-new-online-course-to-fight-the-infodemic](https://www.who.int/news/item/02-02-2022-new-online-course-to-fight-the-infodemic)

What is Go Viral? The GO VIRAL! game helps protect you against COVID-19 misinformation (23 September 2021): [https://www.who.int/news/item/23-09-2021-what-is-go-viral](https://www.who.int/news/item/23-09-2021-what-is-go-viral)


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### Mis- and Disinformation on Climate Change


Disinformation

- UNESCO - University students combat online disinformation and hate speech in Summer #YOUth Camp: Youth joined efforts in advocating for positive narratives, giving a voice to the voiceless, and promoting diversity and equality across the region (19 October 2023): [https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/university-students-combat-online-disinformation-and-hate-speech-summer-youth-camp](https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/university-students-combat-online-disinformation-and-hate-speech-summer-youth-camp)
- A/78/288 (7 August 2023): Promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression: note / by the Secretary-General: [https://undocs.org/A/78/288](https://undocs.org/A/78/288)
- Explores the negative impact of gendered disinformation, especially on women and gender nonconforming persons, and its implications for the right to freedom of expression
- UNICRI - “Stop the virus of disinformation” training successfully conducted in Kyiv (19 July 2023): [https://unicri.it/News/Countering-preventing-disinformation-training-Kyiv-Ukraine](https://unicri.it/News/Countering-preventing-disinformation-training-Kyiv-Ukraine)
- UNICRI releases the Handbook to combat CBRN disinformation (13 January 2023): [https://unicri.it/News/Hanbook-to-combat-disinformation](https://unicri.it/News/Hanbook-to-combat-disinformation)
- True or false? Here are five ways to manage false information about risk (16 December 2022): [https://www.undrr.org/news/true-or-false-here-are-five-ways-manage-false-information-about-risk](https://www.undrr.org/news/true-or-false-here-are-five-ways-manage-false-information-about-risk)
- As the world grapples with the impacts of the climate crisis, effective risk communication is critical to reduce disaster risk. But the rise in fake news and disinformation can hamper efforts to raise awareness of risks and prepare communities.
- On 25 January 2023 on the occasion of the International Day of Women in Multilateralism, UNESCO is generating a global dialogue to advance effective responses to online gendered disinformation
- Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms: Report of the Secretary-General (A/77/287, 12 August 2022): [https://undocs.org/A/77/287](https://undocs.org/A/77/287)
• High-level panel discussion on countering the negative impact of disinformation on the enjoyment and realization of human rights / delivered by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at 50th session of the Human Rights Council (28 June 2022): https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2022/06/high-level-panel-discussion-countering-negative-impact

• UN’s rights council adopts ‘fake news’ resolution, States urged to take tackle hate speech (UN News, 1 April 2022): https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115412


• UNESCO publications on “Disinformation”: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/search/051e03ad-4fd1-481a-9ccb-443e46a80c99

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**Hate Speech**

• **UN Digital Portal against Hate Speech - #NoToHate**

• **UNESCO - Countering hate speech: It starts with words**
  https://www.unesco.org/en/countering-hate-speech

Hate speech in the form of xenophobia, racism, antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, anti-LGBTQI+ hatred, misogyny and other types of intolerance is on the rise worldwide, spreading faster and further than ever before through social media. Both online and offline, hate speech targets and dehumanizes people and peoples based on who they are – often by actors seeking political gain. UNESCO counters hate speech through education and media and information literacy, promotes international standards on freedom of expression to address root causes of hate speech, and supports countries to build effective responses, including by fostering the capacity building of regulators and judicial operators and advocating for enhanced transparency of internet companies.

• **United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech**

The Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech sets out strategic guidance for the United Nations system to address hate speech at the national and global level. It also includes ways the United Nations Secretariat can support the work of the United Nations Resident Coordinators in addressing and countering hate speech. Its objectives are twofold: first, to enhance United Nations efforts to address root causes and drivers of hate speech; and second, to enable effective United Nations responses to the impact of hate speech on societies.

• **Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect**
  o Countering Hate Speech Through Sports:
Countering Hate Speech Through Education: 

[https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3889286](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3889286)

- Guidance Note on Addressing and Countering COVID-19 related Hate Speech, 11 May 2020 (prepared by the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect in collaboration with the UN working group on hate speech) 
[https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3863213](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3863213)

- 18 June - International Day for Countering Hate Speech (A/RES/75/309) 


- Video Message by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Dennis Francis, "Hate has no place in our world" (3 November 2023): [https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1z/k1z9b10p6r](https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1z/k1z9b10p6r)


- UN Video - How a Champion Boxer Knocks Out Hate (19 July 2023): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIJGsSbQFM0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIJGsSbQFM0)

  


- UN Video: Hate Speech | When Words Kill (19 June 2023): [https://youtu.be/YxGBuBA5qfc](https://youtu.be/YxGBuBA5qfc)


• Combating hate speech and mis/disinformation online (UNESCO, 15 February 2023): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oSy4F9abek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oSy4F9abek) Guilherme Canela, Chief of the Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists at UNESCO, highlights the increasing threats to journalists and the rise of online disinformation.


• General Assembly holds Informal High-Level Event to Commemorate First International Day for Countering Hate Speech on 20 June (PI/2303, 20 June 2022):
  - Webcast: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1y/k1ywfx7kau

• Recommit to preventing hate speech, promoting respect for diversity, says Secretary-General, marking International Day (SG/SM/21328, 17 June 2022):

• UN Video - Alice Nderitu, the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide: Hate Speech | What are the Consequences? | What You Can Do to Prevent the Next Atrocity (17 June 2022):
  https://youtu.be/2Xvx_ZTWNd8

• Women journalists threatened with sexual violence, hate speech (UNFPA, 17 June 2022):

• From Pilots toward Policies: Utilizing Online Data for Preventing Violent Extremism and Addressing Hate Speech (UNDP, 13 May 2022)

• Signal Boost: Hate Speech and Social Media (In: DPPA Politically Speaking, 11 April 2022):

• The wildfire of hate speech / Op-ed by António Guterres (18 June 2019):

• Freedom of expression vs incitement to hatred: OHCHR and the Rabat Plan of Action:

• Hate speech and incitement to hatred or violence (OHCHR):

• Promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression: Note by the Secretary-General (A/74/486, 9 October 2019):

  The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, David Kaye, submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 34/18. In the present report, the Special Rapporteur evaluates the human rights law that applies to the regulation of online “hate speech”.

• General recommendation No. 35: Combating racist hate speech / Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
  CERD/C/GC/35 (26 September 2013): https://undocs.org/CERD/C/GC/35

• Social Media 4 Peace: https://en.unesco.org/social-media-4-peace
  The overall objective of this UNESCO project is to strengthen the resilience of societies to potentially harmful content spread online, in particular hate speech inciting violence while protecting freedom of expression and enhancing the promotion of peace through digital technologies, notably social media.
  - Social Media 4 Peace project marks first International Day against Hate Speech (29 June 2022):
    https://en.unesco.org/news/social-media-4-peace-project-marks-first-international-day-against-hate-speech

• Addressing hate speech through education: Multi-stakeholder Forum, 30 September and 1 October 2021 (UNESCO):
  https://events.unesco.org/event?id=4150969287&lang=1033

• Addressing hate speech through education: Global Education Ministers Conference, 26 October 2021 (UNESCO):

• UNESCO Publications on “Hate Speech”:
  https://unesdoc.unesco.org/search/66e2dd84-b6fe-4bb5-a01b-0baf9c6196c

• Refworld (UNHCR) search for information on “Hate Speech”:
  https://bit.ly/3tUAihZ
Related information sources

