

Global regulators sign joint statement on future regulation of the online sector

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On the final day of the UNESCO “Internet for Trust” Global Conference held from 21 to 23 February 2023, the chairpersons of the African Communication Regulation Authorities Network (ACRAN), the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA), the Global Online Safety Regulators Network (GOSRN), the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities (MNRA), the Platform of Ibero-American Audiovisual Regulators (PRAI) and the Francophone Network of Media Regulators (REFRAM) presented a joint statement outlining key elements of the future regulation of the online sector.

Referring to UNESCO’s global mandate to promote the free flow of ideas by words and images, as well as Articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, they acknowledged the preponderance of digital platforms in societies, and the resulting issues and challenges to the protection of fundamental rights. This applied particularly to freedom of expression, the right to reliable and quality information, and the right to be protected from hateful content and discrimination. They subscribed to the objectives pursued by UNESCO in the digital environment, aiming to support freedom of expression and to secure information as a public good, while dealing with content that damages or potentially damages human rights and democracy, particularly content that conveys hatred, incitement to violence, harassment and discrimination against women, minorities and other vulnerable groups, and mis- or disinformation.

The networks of media regulators shared the will to develop coherent regulation systems across regions in order to better meet these objectives while minimising Internet fragmentation. They welcomed the commitment to promote independent online content regulatory systems, acting within the framework of the law and subject to the supervision of the judiciary and respecting fundamental rights, including the rights to privacy and freedom of expression. They supported the ambition of imposing obligations of due diligence and transparency on digital platforms, especially in terms of online content management for user safety. The statement’s signatories agreed on the importance of a risk assessment process and other measures applying to digital platforms, aiming *inter alia* to protect election integrity as well as to respond to major crises such as conflicts, wars, natural disasters, health emergencies or sudden world events. They strongly supported the will to develop media and online information literacy through digital

platforms, and to open access to the data necessary to undertake research or regulation, while fully guaranteeing the protection of personal data. They shared the will, which meets the fundamental objective of linguistic diversity, to make digital platforms more accessible to all users, particularly through an extension of the languages that can be used to contact them.

The chairpersons of the regulators' networks affirmed the availability of their respective networks to contribute to the creation of and investment in a global, common and multi-stakeholder space for debate and sharing of best practices regarding the regulation of digital platforms. Finally, they solemnly reiterated their own commitments to protect and promote fundamental rights, particularly freedom of expression, in their work.

Erklärung der Netzwerke der Regulierungsbehörden für Medien und Online-Sicherheit Aus Anlass der globalen UNESCO Konferenz "Internet für Vertrauen"

Statement of the networks of media and online safety regulators on the occasion of the UNESCO Internet for Trust Global Conference

<https://www.haca.ma/sites/default/files/upload/Statement%20UNESCO%20Global%20Conference%20%28en%29.pdf>

