



MISINFORMATION AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

JOINT STATEMENT

PREAMBLE

The Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO) is a global Intergovernmental Organization founded in November 2020, with the mission to enable digital prosperity for all by accelerating inclusive and sustainable growth of digital economies around the world.

Through enhanced cooperation and dialogue, the DCO seeks to create an environment that enables individuals, businesses, and societies to innovate and thrive. In pursuit of its Member States' common interests, the DCO fosters multilateral collaboration across sectors including the private sector, international organizations, and civil society.

This Joint Statement has been developed by the General Secretariat collecting the inputs and feedback of DCO Member States¹.

CONTEXT

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Social media platforms have brought about a significant shift in how people globally interact, breaking down geographical barriers and enabling instant connections. The undeniable array of opportunities offered by social media platforms spans the globe, providing unprecedented possibilities.

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Yet, amidst these promising prospects, ethical challenges have emerged, including issues of transparency, accountability, and authenticity. The unregulated spread of misinformation on social media has generated concerns regarding potential harm to individuals and society, including its impact on the economy which fosters unsafe online environments.

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While we acknowledge the commendable efforts made by these platforms to combat online misinformation and offensive content, it is imperative to highlight their responsibility, especially concerning their young and impressionable users. Recognizing their significant roles in shaping the social and cultural fabric of lives, we emphasize the importance of operating with heightened awareness. We assert that it is crucial to prioritize the implementation of robust measures to protect users from harmful content and foster responsible digital engagement. Furthermore, we encourage the promotion of positive values and support the creation of content that ensures the safety and integrity of users, particularly the youth, without infringing upon legitimate and internationally guaranteed freedom of expression.

1. The following Member States have endorsed the Joint Statement: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Djibouti, The Gambia, Ghana, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Rwanda and Saudi Arabia

THEREFORE,

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We call for collective efforts to uphold national values, legislation, and codes of ethics within the realm of social media platforms.

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We reaffirm the DCO's commitment to improve trust online by addressing ethical and privacy challenges associated with emerging technologies. In that regard, we recognize the paramount importance of active dialogue and cooperation between social media platforms and the countries they operate in. This collaboration, rooted in mutual trust, is the key to ensure that the digital landscape respects the rights and values of all stakeholders.

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We announce the launch by DCO of a multi-stakeholder strategic initiative to promote Online Content Integrity. The goal of this initiative, presented during the 3rd DCO General Assembly, and Championed by the State of Kuwait, is to advocate for the respect of social and cultural diversity, while combating online misinformation by mediating between companies, governments, and other relevant stakeholders such as international organizations and civil society.

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We announce the establishment of a DCO high-level committee (Ministerial level) which will oversee the implementation of the DCO Online Content Integrity Initiative.

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We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to advocating the establishment of an inclusive, transparent, and secure digital economy that empowers individuals to thrive.

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We envision the private sector, particularly social media platforms as partners in this endeavor, championing positive social impact rather than serving a vector for negative influence or cultural insensitivity.

Together, we can forge a path towards a digital landscape that not only fosters innovation and prosperity but also upholds the highest standards of ethical conduct and societal well-being.

End.



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