

Südost Europa Kultur e.V. BERLIN

Thank you, madame Chair.

The protection against incitement of hatred should be firmly ensured on new social media platforms through the same legal instruments as in the analogue world. Hate speech does not only affect the trust in democratic state order, but also denies the general right to protection of personality of each individual, with particular concern to those belonging to minorities and socially vulnerable groups. The case, in fact, of the Roma minority is again an example of disturbing targeted incitement of hatred and violence, which with the COVID-19 crisis has reached a new level of social and institutionalized exclusion.

Taking action against online hate speech and fostering societal cohesion represent, therefore, urgent issues. For instance, the German Federal Government adopted a two-step approach 2017-2020 to provide adequate legislation to ban online hate speech with an extension into criminal law. Based on this example and the legal complements of anti-discrimination inequality, the following recommendations to member states are made:

- To initiate a thematic dialogue with academia, NGOs, media, human rights defenders, lawmakers, police, and judiciary, in order to adopt legislation on eradicating digital hate speech and that which relates to anti-Gypsyism.
- To ensure the collection of and provide reports based on disaggregated data on hate speech and embedding online platform operators who should report such data.
- To ensure the proper administrative and institutional capacity in order to facilitate the implementation of such legislation.
- To foster a climate of respect towards human rights and restore responsibility towards the history and culture of different minorities, based on recognition and reconciliation.
- And, finally, to consider the possibility of adoption of an international treaty on protection of minority rights.

I thank you, madame Chair.