

## **Assyrian Support Committee**

Thank you Madame Chair,

My name is [?]. I'm from Beirut, Lebanon and a former minority fellow at OHCHR, belonging to the Assyrian community. Digital media and technology is my profession, defending human rights is my passion. I want to extend my sincere gratitude for choosing hate speech on social media as the major topic of this year.

Hate speech has been one of the biggest threats to peacemaking everywhere, especially with the rise and exposure of social media in every field. There is no doubt that social media has a positive impact in our lives: communication is much easier, freedom of speech has wider circles, transparency reaches higher levels and victims are empowered to raise their voices. However, with freedom comes responsibility. Freedom also makes huge requirements of every human being. Especially that today any statement or content can be shared with a click, in affection of second, without consideration of consequences.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We must accept that we are living in a complex world. We must also admit that states, political leaders and policy makers are not the only stakeholders of the problem solution. Accordingly, we have to think differently so that we can face today's challenges.

This leads me to the recommendations:

1. Media networks are great for sharing information, we can use it to raise awareness. Let us educate and push our boundaries further to the media away from hate speech promoters towards human rights advocates.
2. Social media channels own and have control on the world's information. They have the power to define our perspectives and consequently influence our decisions. We can use these things as strategy to lead people to peace.
3. Reporting content such as hate speech, fake news and the targeting of certain communities is not punitive and superficial. Organizations and activists must be heading in the right direction to change the way how the reporting systems deal with this dangerous content.
4. My recommendation to the Human Rights Council is to go deeper to discuss social media impact on social and solutions on a regional level, since each region has a different situation.

Wishing you all the best of luck, strength and success in making the world a better place.