

Minority Rights Group International

Madame Chair,

Evidence gathered by the Minority Rights Group International suggest that that ineffective regulation of online content, cultivates an environment in which hate speech against minorities thrives and multiplies. In Iraq, the Internet is among the least regulated cyberspaces in the world. The lack of cyber hate legislation has allowed religious and ethnic tensions to manifest the hate speech online with impunity. This has contributed to use offline discrimination and violence attacks against minorities and women, and poses a serious threat to the country's fragile social fabric. MRGI equally concerns that in many states, including Nigeria and Pakistan, attempts haven't made to pass hate speech rules which have seriously compromised the freedom of expression. Meanwhile, social media platforms use algorithms that filter contents to match and reinforce opinions that users already hold, thereby providing hate speech uses a sense of validation and community in my message. This then results in entrenched polarization which amplifies marginalization of minorities. When social media and Internet company moderation fails to protect vulnerable groups, as in India, Myanmar and Pakistan, this can also aspire at violence offline. Many social media companies are aware of these dangers, but have yet uphold international due diligence standards, as defined by the UN guiding principles on human rights.

MRGI recommends the following:

- Governments should adopt and implement anti-hate speech legislation that encourages and requires human rights due diligence by social media companies without stifling freedom of expression;
- Social media platforms should invest in far more resources of content moderation. This includes regulating human rights impact assessment and sufficient recruitment of qualified content moderators;
- Appropriate training to address hate speech targeting vulnerable groups;
- Transparent [?] should be joined off in consultation of effective minority communities and other vulnerable groups.

I thank you!