

---

**UN Human Rights Council**  
**46th Session, March 2021**

**Item 9: General Debate**

---

Thank you, Madam President.

We have recently witnessed the nefarious consequences of hate speech, including when it is disseminated through online platforms.

This has been a decisive element in impelling the execution of horrific anti-Semitic attacks, such as the 2019 shooting in Halle, Germany, and the 2018 murder of Mireille Knoll in Paris. In both cases, among many others, perpetrators were exposed to anti-Semitic incitement in social media and influenced by extremist discourse. The serious outcomes included the loss of life.

Hate speech cannot be protected under the right of freedom of opinion and expression, and distinguishing between them is crucial.

For this purpose, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance has proposed working definitions on antisemitism, Holocaust denial and distortion, as well as antigypsyism and anti-Roma discrimination. We strongly encourage states and other stakeholders to adopt these definitions as useful tools to identify hate speech and regulate online content.

However, state action alone is not enough. Social media platforms must take robust action by adopting speech policies and moderating content. There have been initial steps in that direction, such as Facebook's policy on the removal of Holocaust denial posts, but the challenge remains great.

Finally, beyond suppressing incitement and hate, equal and encompassing societies can only be achieved through embracing diversity, and affirming the contribution of minorities to the social fabric – positive messages that should be publicly dispersed, in educational systems, in culture and beyond.

I thank you, Madam President.