

## Call for an Internet code of good practice to combat cyberbullying

**On the occasion of the International Conference on School Bullying, marking the first International Day against Violence and Bullying at School including Cyberbullying on 5 November 2020, we, ministers supporting the appeal\*, call for an ethical Internet that is more mindful of its responsibilities towards children and young people, education and civic life.**

**The abject attack that took place in France on 16 October once again demonstrated the role that social networks can play in escalating violence. This call has particular resonance in view of these dramatic circumstances.**

One third of young people polled by the United Nations in 30 countries have reported being victims of online bullying.

In order to counter this phenomenon, many States are strengthening their legislation. However, laws can be difficult to apply because of the many channels used, the globalized nature of information networks today and the complexity of identifying perpetrators with certainty. It is also difficult to establish a rigorous, legally binding and usable definition of cyberbullying.

Numerous initiatives involving governments, non-governmental organizations and companies are being developed. They include, for instance, the Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online, launched in 2017 with the support of the European Commission.

However, we need to do more. For these reasons, we:

1. Recall the recommendations made by international experts at the Conference organized by UNESCO and France on the first International Day against Violence and Bullying at School, including Cyberbullying, which followed up on the 2019 G7 Education Ministers' declaration;
2. Emphasize the need to establish, respect and strengthen common legal principles to protect Internet users, especially minors, as well as good practices for the use of personal data (rigorous application of the minimum age of use, clear and accessible drafting of conditions of use, simplified access to data collected, and facilitation of the right to be forgotten, etc.), while paying particular attention to the specific risks faced by women and girls, and complying with international norms on freedom of expression;
3. Encourage the adoption by social media networks of key ethical standards, such as the ethical design of applications, the anonymity of minors, collaboration between platforms and cyberbullying prevention structures, while being transparent in terms of identified threats and actions undertaken.
4. Underline the importance of education, including media and information and/or digital literacy, for building tolerant, respectful societies and teaching responsible online behaviour.

This call is not intended to be legally binding and aims to foster a sustainable, long-term, international dynamic. It is hoped that the countries that support this call will organize annual ministerial-level meetings with the participation of key actors in the social media industry in order to assess progress, highlight results, and update objectives and priorities.

\* **Argentina**, Mr. Nicolás Alfredo Trotta, Minister of Education;  
**Canada**, M. JF Roberge, Minister of Education (Quebec) and representing the Council of Ministers of Education (Canada) (CMEC);  
**Costa-Rica**, Mrs. Giselle Cruz Maduro, Minister of Public Education and President of the Higher Education Council;  
**Croatia**, Mr. Rodovan Fuchs, Minister of Science and Education;  
**Estonia**, Mrs. Mailis Reps, Minister of Education and Research;  
**France**, Mr. Jean-Michel Blanquer, Minister of National Education, Youth and Sports;  
**Germany**,  
Dr. Stefanie Hubig, President of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK);  
Dr. Joachim Stamp, Vice-Minister-President of North Rhine-Westphalia, (Minister for Children, Families, Refugees and Integration and responsible for combating harassment);  
**Greece**, Mrs. Níki Keraméos, Minister of Education and Religion;  
**India**, Mr. Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Minister of Education;  
**Luxembourg**, Mr. Claude Meisch, Minister of National Education, Children and Youth, Minister of Higher Education and Research;  
**Mexico**, Mr. Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, Minister of Public Education;  
**Morocco**, Mr. Saaïd Amzazi, Minister of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research;  
**Portugal**, Mr. Brandão Rodrigues, Minister of Education;  
**Singapore**, Mr. Lawrence Wong, Minister for Education;  
**Slovakia**, Mr. Branislav Gröhling, Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport;  
**Slovenia**, Mrs. Simona Kustec, Minister of Education, Science and Sport;  
**South Africa**, Mrs. Angelina Matsie Motshekga, Minister of Basic education;  
**Spain**, Mrs. Maria Isabel Celaa Diéguez, Minister for Education and Vocational Training;  
**Tunisia**, Mr. Fethi Sellaouti, Minister of Education;  
**United Kingdom**, Mrs. Ford, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families at the Department for Education.

**This appeal is welcomed and supported by UNESCO.**