OSCE MEETING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACIST, XENOPHOBIC AND ANTI-SEMITIC PROPAGANDA ON THE INTERNET AND HATE CRIMES

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Session 4

How to Deal with Online Hate Speech?

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In the earlier ages the control over mass media was not in question. A newspaper has a publishing house, a TV station has owners. We know who they are, they are responsible, it is possible even to stop a traditional content service.

That's not the case with the internet. Nobody is in full control over this medium. The situation has changed, so the methods of influencing this medium have to be rethink. We can say, that we would like to prohibit a page, or remove a service from the internet, but there are a lot of ways, by which these services can survive. The result is countereffective: the number of the viewers will grow, because we created a good propaganda for the side.

So what to do if prohibition, filtering does not work? First of all, smart debate can help. Let's see the arguments, and let's try to defend our views. As an editor-in-chief of the most popular Hungarian internet magazine, once I met regularly with those people, who were the most active in our forums. We had a lot of debates, sometimes they had so obscure views, that it would be intolerable in the traditional media, but this face to face slowed them down, they understood, that they have to respect the other party. An other method is to help those, who are struggling against the obscure views. Let"s give them some useful links, or other resources, books and so on. They will help us to stop or slow down hatespeech.

We have to understand how these smart methods are working, because after the internet, here are the even less controlable devices: the mobile phones. Had ever enybody tried to control an SMS chat? Or to stop a hate SMS, which spread like a virus? Here we have to use countercampaigns, and other smart solutions.

In the digital world the methodes of the antisemitic propaganda are brave new, so we have to understand, how they are working, and we have to provide effective answers.