

G7 Interior and Security Ministers' Communiqué

December 10, 2023 in Mito, Ibaraki



Annex I

G7 Call on Technology Companies to Take Actions to Fight against Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

1. Protecting children around the world from all forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse, both online and offline, is everyone's responsibility. With greater access than ever to Internet-enabled technology, we call on technology companies, particularly social media and other forms of online communication companies which provide services that are easily accessible to children, to step up efforts in playing their part in keeping children safe on their platforms. We strongly support and acknowledge the positive role that these companies can play in society, including promoting human interaction, social discussion, free expression, and economic activity. However, we also recognize that the threat to children online is rapidly evolving and growing, and these services are being utilized and exploited by perpetrators to commit serious crimes against children.
2. Online child sexual exploitation and abuse can have significant impacts on victims and survivors, traumatizing them whose images continue to circulate online, sometimes long after they have reached adulthood, and creating the real risk and fear of being recognized in their daily lives. Children also risk becoming the targets of grooming and financial sexual coercion and extortion ("sextortion") schemes, which can result in the production of additional child sexual abuse material as they are coerced and exploited by perpetrators. Some youth have also experienced the extreme outcomes of sextortion, such as self-harm or suicide. The growing risk of AI-generated child sexual abuse material also poses significant safety challenges for children, potentially overburdening and delaying law enforcement agencies from identifying victims and perpetrators of child sexual exploitation and abuse itself, and bringing the perpetrators to justice.
3. We welcome the innovation of new and effective child safety tools from these companies. However, new design choices, including end-to-end encryption, should be implemented in a way that places child-safety at the heart of their approach to ensure that their platforms continue to be safe for children and that child sexual exploitation and abuse content does not go unreported, putting more children in further danger.
4. In this context, we are jointly calling on technology companies to strive toward and endorse the Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, accepting the need to take proactive voluntary action to act faster and go further in efforts to prevent, identify, report, and remove child sexual exploitation and abuse content from their platforms. There are a range of actions these



companies can take, including deploying available technologies, to help them play their part in combatting these crimes. These actions should be immediately considered and taken in line with relevant jurisdictional legislative frameworks across the G7 countries and more widely. Robust action needs to be taken by these companies, and such steps could include:

- Adopting tools to protect child users, such as the default blocking of specific platform features;
 - Improving reporting features for users, identification and removal processes;
 - Limiting perpetrators' abilities to create new profiles after being flagged as producing, sharing or facilitating child sexual exploitation and abuse on social media platforms;
 - Working alongside law enforcement agencies to strengthen reporting capabilities and sharing of critical evidence essential for apprehending and prosecuting perpetrators; and
 - Guiding children and their care givers to appropriate resources and support.
5. We, the G7 governments working together to tackle these crimes, ask for increased transparency and greater engagement from these companies with government, civil society and victims and survivors' groups, to work together to protect children. We also ask that these companies deepen engagement with law enforcement agencies to ensure that access to crucial evidence regarding online identity and activity of perpetrators, as well as their networks is provided and maintained, regardless of the platform-specific technology environment. Where possible, these companies should work together to share best practices, tools and indicators for identifying perpetrators.
6. Protecting children, both offline and online, is a shared responsibility – all sectors of society need to take on this challenge, especially these companies, which are key to a whole-of-society response. Today, we urge immediate and stronger action from these companies as critical corporate citizens in keeping children safe from online sexual exploitation and abuse all around the world.

