



Online Hate
Prevention Institute
ABN 65 155 287 657

HATE AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM FROM AN ONLINE SUBCULTURE

The Yom Kippur Terrorist
Attack in Halle, Germany



Statements on the Report by Stakeholders and Experts

Chin Tan, Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission:

"The recent report of the Online Hate Prevention Institute, *Hate and Violent Extremism from an Online Sub-Culture*, is sobering and troubling reading. The report makes an important contribution to on-going work to identify, address and combat the role of online hate in terrorist acts. This research carefully outlines the connection between online hate and acts of terrorism in places of worship. Protecting the right of all people to safely and freely practice their religion remains an enduring challenge. The impact of online hate on this right is an area of major focus for me as Race Discrimination Commissioner. I commend OHPI's focus on practical measures to meet the challenge of online hate and encourage positive action to progress their implementation."

Julie Nathan, Research Director, Executive Council of Australian Jewry:

"The OHPI report on Halle is much more than an account of the attack on a synagogue in Germany and the murder of bystanders. The report is composed of information that has been thoroughly researched and is comprehensive in its coverage and details of murderous attacks that have occurred in 2019 in the USA, NZ and Germany. The report also highlights the online origin of the attackers, and how sections of the online world are conveyor belts which encouraged the murderous attacks that occurred in 2019. Importantly, the report includes many recommendations to tackle online hate propaganda and methods to minimise the influence and scope of the attackers and their online manifestos and videos. "

Associate Professor Greg Adamson, University of Melbourne & former president of the IEEE Society on the Social Implications of Technology:

"Hate speech in the online world teaches us once again that humans must take responsibility for the way we use technology. Drawing a line between freedom of speech and incitement to violence is one of the greatest challenges of the Internet. For some years now the Online Hate Prevention Institute has been a leading voice in examining and addressing this balance. I commend the authors for this effort, and encourage you to read it and consider its recommendations."

Maria Sirbu, VP of Business Development, Voxility:

"The Online Hate Prevention Institute's report is comprehensive and very well documented. The important points are analyzed and discussed. We congratulate the Institute on this work and hope to see more initiatives like this one from civil society as well as real measures by Internet authorities to address the identified threats"

David Matas, Honorary Senior Counsel to B'nai Brith Canada

"A sequence of armed attacks in the United States, New Zealand, and Germany has highlighted the rise of a new form of internet spread terrorism. The report by the Online Hate Prevention Institute is a cutting edge look at this threat, which tells us not only the danger it poses but also how to counter it. The report is a wake-up call, an insightful analysis, and a thorough presentation of available remedies. Understanding and combating the threat of online hate and terrorism requires an understanding of both the internet and incitement to hatred and terrorism. The Online Hate Prevention Institute has the welcome and unusual ability to address both together in a meaningful and convincing way."

Prof. Gail Mason, Sydney Law School, The University of Sydney

"This report by the Online Hate Prevention Institute is an outstanding achievement. Despite the burgeoning and ongoing expression of inter-group hatred on the internet and other digital media, we still do not know anywhere near as much as we need to about the links between online hate and acts of violent extremism. This report makes an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of online subcultures and how best to tackle the hatred they promote."

Prof. Megan Squire, Dept. of Computer Science, Elon University:

"I commend the Online Hate Prevention Institute for its recent report on the Halle shooting in October 2019. Anti-Semitism is unfortunately flourishing online, as are other types of hate and bias. Real-world violent incidents such as the Halle shooting are the natural outgrowth of a social media landscape that is completely overrun with hateful, violent rhetoric. This report smartly connects the dots between the recent rise in authoritarian, nativist views worldwide and the concurrent intensification of a toxic online culture that thrives on and perpetuates disinformation, hate, and violence. The recommendations in the report are clear and concise. Governments, social media companies, and civil society groups would do well to take the recommendations to heart and redouble their efforts to implement as many as possible."

Nikki Marczak, Atrocity Prevention Coordinator, Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect:

"This report tackles a new and especially egregious form of extremism that combines online hate speech with real world violence, targeted against particular groups. As a scholar of atrocity crimes, it is clear that the internet forums discussed in the report are allowing for the spread of hatred against groups of people because of who they are, and inciting violence and murder. While the report explores individuals who committed violence linked to online hate speech, this is also occurring at a macro level, with internet incitement fuelling the flames of genocide. The report effectively highlights the problem and offers achievable recommendations."

Prof. Louis de Koker, La Trobe LawTech, La Trobe Law School:

“The linkages between online extremism and terrorism narrowed in 2019, resulting in four terrorist attacks that authorities were unable to prevent. The 2019 attacks were designed to inspire like-minded people to plan further incidents. Many more people will be exposed to violence if our governments and the service providers fail to collaborate. Governments also need to enlist the assistance of netizens to combat online extremism more effectively. The Online Hate Prevention Institute is commended for its report on hate and violent extremism from an online sub-culture. This report is a good example of the contribution that civil society can make to inform government policy regarding the detection of and response to online extremism. This report does however more: It arms readers with information and insights about online extremism that they can use to monitor their own online fora for indications of concern. The report contains a number of recommendations that requires serious consideration by governments, regulators, service providers and civil society.”

Thilo Troschke, Chair, Council of Christians and Jews (Victoria):

“It seems that there is absolutely no end to online hate as new major incidents of killings worldwide, sparked by deranged, deluded and twisted minds expressing themselves through online hate speech, appear in the news virtually on a weekly basis. All the more is it important to single out these incidents and educate as many people as possible about the reasons and consequences of such online hate. To this end the report on “Hate and Violent Extremism from an Online Sub-Culture: The Yom Kippur Terrorist Attack in Halle, Germany” by the Online Hate Prevention Institute must be commended for its extremely thorough research and comprehensive coverage of this subject matter. The numerous and very detailed recommendations contained in the report provide a road map to dealing with the insidious epidemic of online hate. Bit by bit these recommendations must be taken up by government as well as by private organisations to make significant inroads towards the elimination of hate in our communities. The Council of Christians and Jews of Victoria has proudly partnered with the Online Hate Prevention Institute to roll out a Tackling Hate Speech Program in 2020 to Christian and Jewish congregations to enable them to call out, and actively tackle, online hate. The above report demonstrates the great capability of the Online Hate Prevention Institute to deal with these issues.”

Dr Hiruy Gebreegziabher and Maya Borom, Leads for the Global Research Network Think Tank Programme in Crime & Terrorism, UK:

“This comprehensive report provides an excellent description of an online subculture which is facilitating hate crimes and violent extremism. Instead of generalised labelling of social media sites, which are obviously manifestations of individual freedom and privacy, the report focuses on clearly identified “online subcultures” which is facilitating terrorist crimes inspired by hate and extremism beyond the capacity of legitimate counter-terrorism surveillance. The technical recommendations regarding the various digital platforms that can facilitate hate and violent extremism are sufficient to work towards identification, reporting and appropriate management of content. The report also identifies positive obligations on relevant governmental, NGOs and other interested parties working in this space to provide clear mechanisms that can be utilised to stop the spread of hate speech and violent extremism. Great work.”