Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen and welcome to Chatham House.

I’m Adam and I’m from ICT4Peace and the Tech Against Terrorism Project which is a joint initiative by UN CTED and ICT4Peace in partnership with the leading technology companies.

ICT4Peace is a Swiss-based NGO. We promote cybersecurity and a peaceful cyberspace through international negotiations with governments, companies and non-state actors. We also explore and champion the use of internet technologies for crisis management, humanitarian aid and peace building.

Our project is directly mandated by the UN Security Council to help promote the benefits of improved collaboration between the private sector, civil society, and government regarding countering the terrorist use of the internet whilst respecting human rights.

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We’re here today to discuss terrorist exploitation of the internet and practical ways of to improve capability in the tech industry – specifically focussed on small tech.

Why small technology companies? Well, in reality, terrorists use an overlapping ecosystem of services, not just the big platforms but the small ones as well. And often the small technology companies do not have the expertise or resources to handle this challenge on their own.

The large companies have already developed what we’ve termed the “emerging normative framework” which is designed to tackle terrorist exploitation of internet technologies. This framework is based on self-regulation, Terms of Service violations, investing in human expertise around content take-down, and developing transparent reporting to improve oversight and redress.

Our role as a project is to facilitate global “needs assessment workshops” with startups and small tech and then develop practical tools, day-to-day advice, and content for knowledge-sharing. This will involve advising on appropriate Terms of Service and advising on how to improve everyday operational processes in small tech companies.

Specifically, we are collaborating with the industry-led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism as announced several weeks ago and will be helping them organise conferences and workshops to explain more about their approaches and how smaller tech companies can tap into this.

Underpinning this work is the principle of proportionality and the importance of respect for human rights and freedom of expression. With internet technologies, we’re also not just talking about one country – but the need for a global response that also emphasises the overwhelmingly positive influence of computers and the internet on society.

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In this debate there are some fundamental questions here that are hotly contested. For example:

What is the role of violent content vs. more subtle influence e.g. through the so-called ISIS NHS videos that have no violent content whatsoever?

And fundamentally how can we meaningfully define harmful, terrorist content?

What is the overlap here with discussions around hate speech and fake news?

Is content takedown the only solution? What about counter violent extremism through online influence campaigns?

Just how significant is online vs. OFFLINE radicalisation?

And finally, what about the often-damaging influence of inflammatory depictions in traditional media and newspapers? How can we foster a media landscape that promotes community cohesion rather than divides it?

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Today we will hear from three big tech companies, one startup, and the UN. Speaking to everyone just now, I believe the conversation will focus on three areas:

1. **The benefits of algorithmic and systematic mechanisms to help identify harmful content**
2. **The need for human involvement in making complex decisions in the context of Terms of Service violations**
3. **The role of smaller tech companies and the need for knowledge-sharing** and how we can support them with legal, policy, and technical advice

Before we begin I would like to thank our supporters including Facebook, Microsoft, Google, Twitter, Kaspersky, and Telefonica. Additionally, we have received generous support from a number of governments including Switzerland, the Republic of Korea, and Spain. I would also like to thank Daniel Stauffacher, the President of ICT4Peace.

Also we have a range of very interesting people and organisations in the audience including some small technology companies and representatives some civil society.

After the event, we have tea, coffee, biscuits, sandwiches. Please feel free to join us.

Before I hand over to today’s speakers I would like to introduce Daniel Stauffacher who would like to make a few remarks. And also Alastair King-Smith from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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