

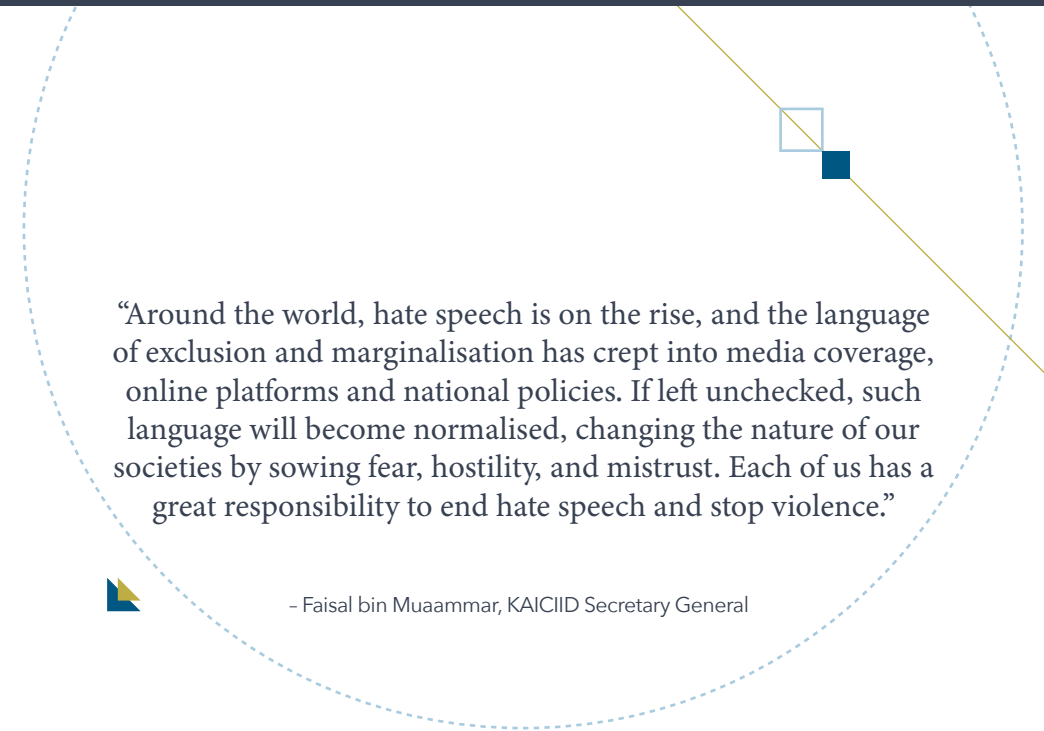


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QUICK GUIDE TO

Hate Speech Prevention





“Around the world, hate speech is on the rise, and the language of exclusion and marginalisation has crept into media coverage, online platforms and national policies. If left unchecked, such language will become normalised, changing the nature of our societies by sowing fear, hostility, and mistrust. Each of us has a great responsibility to end hate speech and stop violence.”



- Faisal bin Muaammar, KAICIID Secretary General



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What is Hate Speech?



While there is no exact legal definition of “hate speech”, it is generally defined as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor.

When left unaddressed, it can lead to acts of violence and hate crimes against marginalised groups.

Source: UN Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that could lead to Atrocity Crimes:

https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/Plan_of_Action_Religious_Prevent_Incited.pdf



2

What is **Incitement** to Violence?



For acts of incitement to result in violence, the following elements need to be present: a context conducive to violence, an influential speaker, a speech act that is widely disseminated, a receptive audience and a target (typically marginalised groups). An act constitutes incitement to violence when there is intent on the part of the speaker to advocate or cause violence. There also needs to be likelihood that the act may result in violence. Therefore, while all incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence is hate speech, not all hate speech constitutes incitement.



Source: UN Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that could lead to Atrocity Crimes:

https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/Plan_of_Action_Religious_Prevent_Incite.pdf



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Hate Speech vs. Freedom of Expression

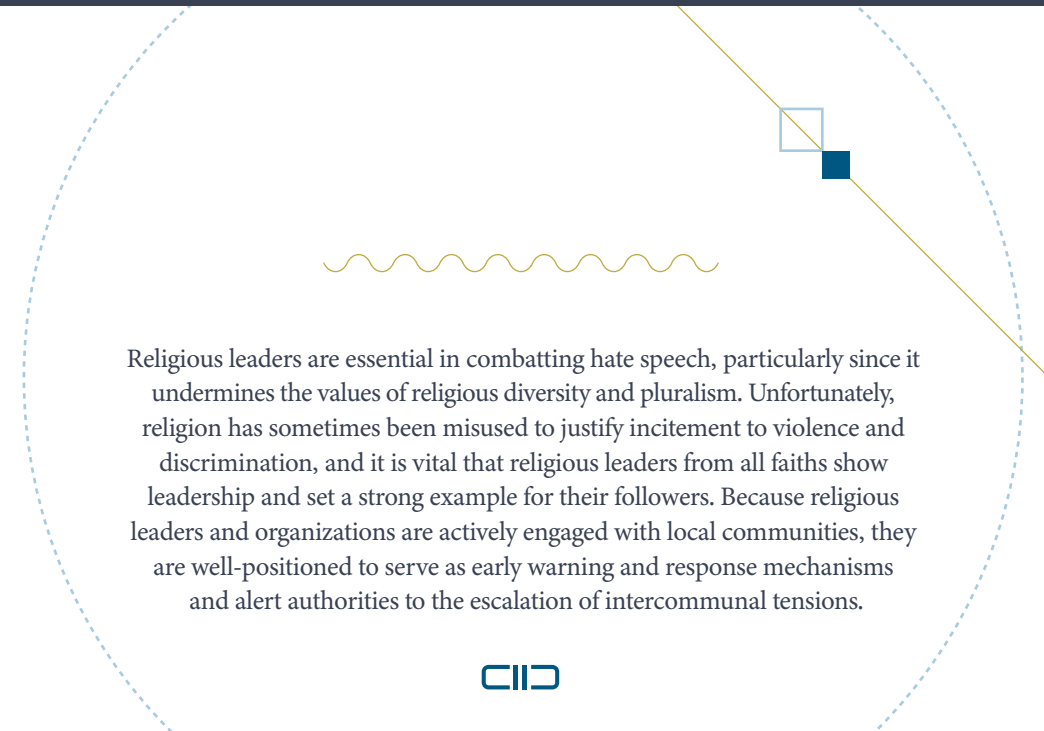


According to Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UNDHR), everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom to hold opinions without interference. However, Article 20(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the UN General Assembly, also places certain limitations on freedom of expression and requires States to “prohibit” certain forms of speech which advocate “national, racial or religious hatred” and constitute “incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence”.

Source: UNDHR Article 19: <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
ICCPR Article 20(2): <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>



Hate Speech and Religious Leaders



Religious leaders are essential in combatting hate speech, particularly since it undermines the values of religious diversity and pluralism. Unfortunately, religion has sometimes been misused to justify incitement to violence and discrimination, and it is vital that religious leaders from all faiths show leadership and set a strong example for their followers. Because religious leaders and organizations are actively engaged with local communities, they are well-positioned to serve as early warning and response mechanisms and alert authorities to the escalation of intercommunal tensions.



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Hate Speech and Policymakers



Governments, public authorities and public institutions at all levels have a responsibility to refrain from statements, in particular to the media, which could be understood as hate speech, or as speech which legitimises, spreads or promotes forms of discrimination or hatred based on intolerance. It is extremely important for governments to establish sound legal frameworks on hate speech which hold perpetrators accountable, uphold human dignity, protect marginalised groups and balance freedom of expression.

Source: United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech:


<https://bit.ly/2Xi1Hzp>





“We need to treat hate speech as we treat every malicious act: by condemning it, refusing to amplify it, countering it with the truth, and encouraging the perpetrators to change their behaviour.”

- UN Secretary General António Guterres



“Today we call for each of us to take individual and collective responsibility to reject discrimination and hatred. The religious communities gathered here today send a powerful signal to the rest of the world, and to those who misinterpret religion for violence. Violence has no place, no connection to religion. The values of peace, mutual respect and unity within difference are at the heart of every religion.”

- Faisal bin Muaammar, KAICIID Secretary General

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Hate Speech and Traditional Media

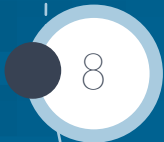


Media and information platforms play a vital role in the interactions of communities – particularly in regard to hate speech and incitement to violence. Whenever media is used to defend political interests or propagate harmful stereotypes, it can further exacerbate conflict and lead to tragic consequences. Even the best journalists can sometimes, inadvertently, do damage when they report controversial stories out of context. Further media training and resources are greatly needed in countries around the world, in order to help journalists develop the ethical capacities to identify sources of conflict, and to report news fairly and accurately.



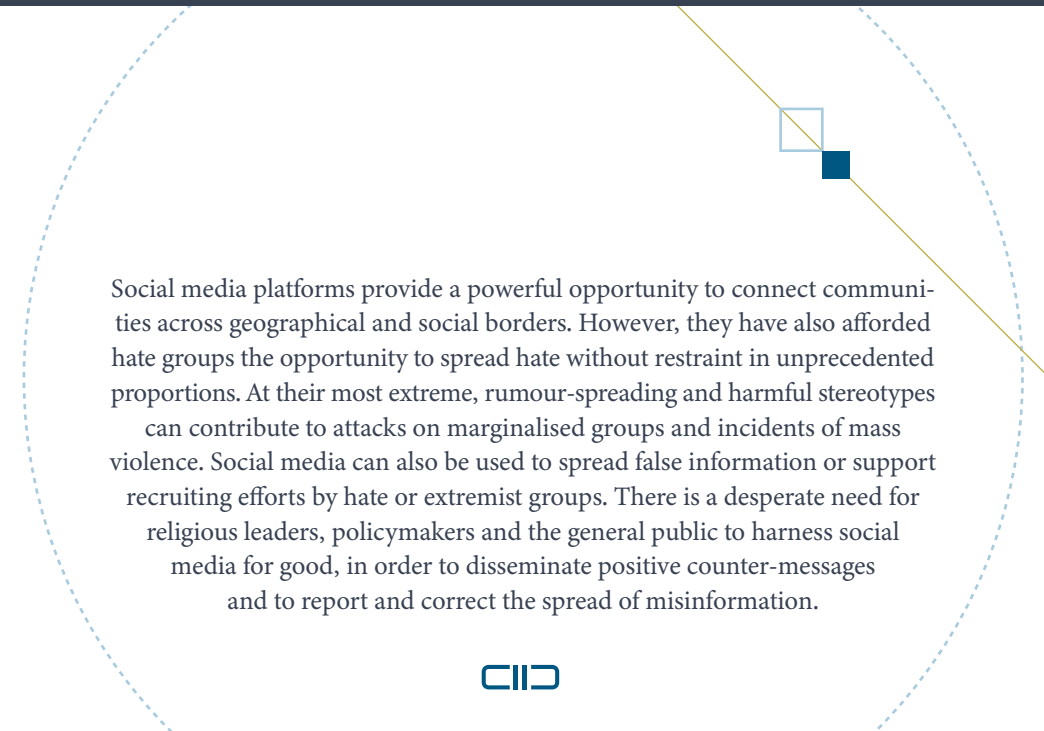
Source: The Ethical Journalism Network:

<https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/resources/publications/hate-speech/introduction>



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Hate Speech and Social Media

A decorative graphic consisting of a large dashed blue circle and a solid gold line that passes through the center of the circle. At the intersection point, there is a small white square with a blue outline, and a solid dark blue square is positioned slightly below and to the right of the white square.

Social media platforms provide a powerful opportunity to connect communities across geographical and social borders. However, they have also afforded hate groups the opportunity to spread hate without restraint in unprecedented proportions. At their most extreme, rumour-spreading and harmful stereotypes can contribute to attacks on marginalised groups and incidents of mass violence. Social media can also be used to spread false information or support recruiting efforts by hate or extremist groups. There is a desperate need for religious leaders, policymakers and the general public to harness social media for good, in order to disseminate positive counter-messages and to report and correct the spread of misinformation.



Defusing Hate Speech with **Interreligious** and Intercultural Dialogue



Interreligious or intercultural dialogue is an important tool to prevent hate speech and incitement to violence, helping communities to engage with and understand “the Other”. Dialogue takes place when people of different religious and cultural identities seek mutual understanding and respect, allowing us to coexist peacefully in spite of our differences. Interreligious and intercultural dialogue contribute to a paradigm shift away from winning arguments and controlling outcomes, towards collective and inclusive decision-making for a sustainable common good.



GET INVOLVED

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- **Raise awareness:** hold trainings in your local community and educate your friends and family on the dangers of discrimination and intolerance
- **Boost** positive messages of peace and tolerance on social media and online platforms
- **Support** individuals or groups who are targeted by hate speech. Advocate for policymakers to take action against discriminatory language or policies
- **Form** early warning and early response committees at the national and local levels to monitor hate speech and other forms of incitement to violence
- **Visit** www.kaiciid.org/stophatespeech for more information



About the Interreligious Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)

KAICIID is the only intergovernmental organization governed by religious representatives and dedicated to the facilitation of dialogue between different cultures and faiths. Our vision is a world in which there is respect, understanding and cooperation among people; justice, peace and reconciliation; and an end to the abuse of religion to justify repression, violence and conflict.



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