

Presenter: Andre Oboler, Online Hate Prevention Institute

Title: **“Solving antisemitic hate speech in social media through a global approach to local action”**

Panel: Internet and Anti-Semitism

In 2008 the term “Antisemitism 2.0” was coined to describe the normalisation of antisemitism in society through the use of social media.¹ In the past decade the impact of social media in daily life has grown dramatically as has its use as a medium for hate speech.² Antisemitism remains one of the most common forms of hate speech in social media along with the rise in anti-Muslim hate speech following the rise of Daesh (ISIS) and the resulting refugee crisis and rise in global terrorism. Other groups in society are also targeted with misogyny, homophobia and racism against Indigenous peoples making headlines around the world. The Jews have again been the canary in the coal mine with efforts to tackle Antisemitism 2.0 leading the way in the broader response to what has become known as Hate 2.0.³

The first problem in tackling antisemitism 2.0 is being able to identify antisemitic content in social media in an efficient and effective manner so it can be empirically measured. This problem was identified as a key challenge at the 2009 Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism and a solution involving crowd sourcing of reports and automated verification was presented to a meeting of the Online Antisemitism Working Group of the Global Forum in 2011, the software was presented at the 2013 meeting and formally endorsed after a draft report based on the first 2,024 reported items was circulated at the 2015 meeting.⁴ The final report was released on Holocaust Memorial Day in 2016.⁵

The new technical solution allows the problem to be redefined as a quality of service challenge where the level of hate must be constantly measured and kept below a threshold of unacceptability.⁶ As was foreshadowed in 2010, if platforms failed to keep

¹ A. Oboler, Online Antisemitism 2.0. “Social Antisemitism on the Social Web”, Post-Holocaust and Antisemitism Series, JCPA, (April 2008, No. 67)

² M. Wendling, “2015: The year that angry won the internet”, BBC News, 30 December 2015 online at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-35111707>

³ A. Oboler, Aboriginal Memes and Online Hate (Online Hate Prevention Institute, October 2012)

⁴ A. Oboler, “Measuring the Hate: The State of Antisemitism in Social Media” (Online Hate Prevention Institute, 2016)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ A. Oboler and K. Connelly, Hate Speech: a Quality of Service Challenge, Proceedings of the IEEE Conference on e-Learning, e-Services and e-Management, Melbourne, 10-12 December 2014. Pages 117 – 121.

the level of hate low enough, governments would step in with regulation.⁷ This occurred in 2016 in Germany and the European Union with agreements between companies and governments,⁸ then in 2017 Germany passed regulatory laws targeting non-compliance.⁹ The solution to antisemitism in social media has two parts. The first is a global effort to create transparency and accountability through a sharing of real-time data about hate speech in social media. The second part is local action in response to this data which is in keeping with the values and norms of each society. For example: criminal sanctions for posters of hate speech; penalties for social media platforms; counter speech exposing hate speech; counter speak promoting alternative positive narratives; education; campaigns targeting: hate promoters, social media platforms or advertisers.

⁷ A. Oboler, "Time to Regulate Internet Hate with a New Approach?" (2010) 13(6) Internet Law Bulletin; A. Oboler, A legal model for government intervention to combat online hate, Internet Law Bulletin 14(2), May 2011.

⁸ "European Union agreement with Social Media Platforms on tackling Hate Speech", Online Hate Prevention Institute, 31 May 2016. <http://ohpi.org.au/european-union-agreement-with-social-media-platforms-on-hate-speech/>

⁹ M. Connellan, "Germany holds social media companies to account for hate speech", SBS News, 6 April 2017.