



Online Hate Prevention Institute

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Major report into Racism on Facebook

On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, March 21st, the Online Hate Prevention Institute (OHPI) will release a major new report into Racism on Facebook. The report documents systemic shortcomings and significant blind spots.

The new report focuses on antisemitic content and follows a major report last year into racism on Facebook and other platforms against Indigenous Australians. This report shows Facebook having difficulty identifying racism directly based on Nazi propaganda; consistently refusing to recognize as hate speech pages promoting the famous antisemitic forgery used to inspire mass killings, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion; and failing to take action on new antisemitism which uses Holocaust inversion to paint Israel and Jews as Nazis. These blind spots can be added to the known difficulty Facebook has in recognizing Holocaust denial as Hate Speech.

The report provides documentation of 47 items, most of them Facebook pages, and gives visual examples of the hate encountered. Of the 47 items, some of which date back to October, 15 of these items are still available on Facebook.

OHPI's CEO, Dr Andre Oboler, explains: "The items that remain online are there as a result of a deliberate decision by Facebook to dismiss the concerns that have been expressed to them over these items. Having shared an early draft of our new report with Facebook at the start of February, none of the items discussed in this report should take Facebook by surprise. The decision not to take action on certain types of content, like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, is clearly a matter of Facebook policy, and not an isolated mistake by junior staff."

Dr Oboler added that, "Facebook will have seen almost all the images in this report before, the major exception is a picture of Mark Zuckerberg with the comment, from another user: 'someone should cut his head off!' This content is still online, it is on a page OHPI previously recommended Facebook close. As I think of the Journalist Daniel Pearl, killed in exactly this way, simply for being a Jew, I must ask Mark Zuckerberg to do a little more; if not for his own sake, for that of others."

On this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, OHPI is please to share this important work with the public, disappointed such hate still exists, and hopeful that our recommendation can help make a difference if Facebook chooses to adopt them. The report will be released by 10am, Melbourne time, at: <http://ohpi.org.au/recognizing-hate-speech-antisemitism-on-facebook/>

ENDS



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Notes

The Online Hate Prevention Institute was established in January 2012 as a dedicated organisation to combat online hate and to reduce the emotional and physical harm that such hate can cause. OHPI is incorporated as an Australian Public Company limited by guarantee and had been admitted to the Register of Harm Prevention Charities maintained by the Australian Government.

Dr Oboler is an internationally recognised expert in online hate and social media. He is CEO of the Online Hate Prevention Institute and co-chair of the Online Antisemitism working group of the Global Forum to Combat Antisemitism. He holds a PhD in Computer Science from Lancaster University (UK) and is currently completing a law degree at Monash University (Australia).

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