



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Ursula von der Leyen  
The President

Brussels, 12/05/2021  
Ares (2020) 7644494

*Dear Honourable Member,*

*I would like to thank you and your co-signatories for your letter highlighting the need for zero tolerance on hate speech targeting women and girls.*

*Protecting women from the various forms of gender-based violence is a key priority for the European Commission. As part of these efforts, we work to prevent and combat gender-based violence online, including gender-based hate speech.*

*I am happy to confirm that, following my announcement in my State of the Union speech in September 2020, the Commission will propose later this year to extend the list of EU crimes in article 83 of the TFEU to all forms of hate crime and hate speech – whether because of race, religion, gender or sexuality. Also in 2021, the Commission will issue a legislative proposal to prevent and combat gender-based violence, both offline and online.*

*As you are aware, on 15 December 2020, we presented a proposal for a Digital Services Act (DSA) to create a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected. The Digital Services Act will update the horizontal EU framework on internet regulation. It aims to bring about clearer responsibilities, transparency and accountability in the online space. The DSA applies to all online content that is illegal under EU law or the national laws of the Member States, including illegal forms of gender-based online violence or hate speech.*

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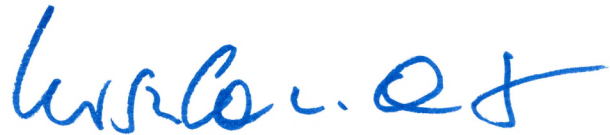
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*In addition to increasing the protection afforded by EU law, I agree with the honourable Members on the importance of addressing this challenging topic in cooperation with IT platforms. In both the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and the Victims' Rights Strategy 2020-2025, we stated our intention to establish a voluntary cooperation framework for internet platforms to better protect women online, aiming at stepping up actions against both illegal and harmful online content.*

*I believe that these actions, together with measures to support and empower victims of crime, will allow us to progress in combatting gender-based violence against women and domestic violence, where the European Parliament and the Commission are strong allies.*

*Yours faithfully,*



*Ursula von der Leyen*