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From: Kate Jones <KJones@chathamhouse.org>
Sent: 27 May 2021 12:56
To: Freedom of religion OHCHR
Subject: [External] Input for GA76 Freedom of Thought Report
Attachments: PUBLISHED ARTICLE Protecting political discourse from online manipulation the international human rights law framework.pdf

Dear Special Rapporteur and colleagues

At a Chatham House multi-stakeholder workshop that I convened in December 2020, bringing together a fledgling “freedom of thought community” in the UK, a key conclusion was that freedom of thought is under grave threat from technology; and that guidance from Special Rapporteurs and other leading elements of the UN and regional human rights systems is needed in order for civil society to be able to advocate for its protection.

Meanwhile, in my own work on freedoms of thought and opinion, I have repeatedly met with scepticism from those who say that these are not “real” rights deserving of protection, either because there is little jurisprudence or writing on them, or because their parameters are too difficult to define.

It follows that I am thrilled that you are considering the scope and protection of freedom of thought, and the challenges that it is facing from modern technologies. Placing guardrails around our mental autonomy in the face of emerging technology is vital to our future as humans.

We need a line between permissible persuasion and assistance on the one hand, and impermissible manipulation and control on the other.

My principal writings on this topic:

K Jones, [Online Disinformation and Political Discourse: Applying a Human Rights Framework](#) (Chatham House, November 2019)

K Jones, [Mental Autonomy Must be Preserved as Tech Advances](#) (Chatham House, December 2020)

K Jones, [Protecting Political Discourse from Online Manipulation: the International Human Rights Law Framework](#) (2021) *European Human Rights Law Review* 68 (pdf attached)

K Jones, [Protecting our Mental Autonomy from New Technologies](#) (WPR, May 2021)

If I can be of any assistance in your research, eg suggesting sources or attending informal discussions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

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