



The Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP  
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
100 Parliament Street  
London  
SW1A 2BQ

1 July 2019

**Re: Online Harms White Paper**

Dear Secretary of State,

We write as a group of organisations keenly interested in the government’s proposals for Internet regulation. We recently convened a day-long multi-stakeholder workshop to discuss the implications of the 2019 Online Harms White Paper and write to share the conclusions and findings from that event.

Organisations represented at the workshop included human rights NGOs, social media platforms, telecoms and media companies, news media, industry associations, parenting and child rights organisations, academia, think tanks, government departments and independent regulators. The aim was to bring together representatives from all relevant sectors, discuss differences of opinion and find areas of consensus.

One unanimous finding from the day was that “there is a need for a systematic approach to dealing with problematic content online, but the group did not support the adoption of a ‘duty of care’ approach”. Many participants noted that the concept of duty of care does not translate well from the offline to the online context, and as such it provides little clarity as to what duties can and should be expected of companies within scope of the OHWP.

Another key finding of the workshop was that all parties involved felt that whilst Government Departments had conducted outreach through this process, no exercise conducted by Government had brought together all of the key groups in this process

(including civil society organisations, childrens' charities, media companies, global tech giants, British startups, and UK media/press) in a coherent way.

We believe that this risks resulting in a process dominated by some stakeholders and where policy is developed without a full overview of where stakeholders' concerns and consensus really lie. **We urge that after the formal consultation period closes, you consider acting to convene a comprehensive meeting with all relevant stakeholders formally to discuss key elements of the proposals and map a way forward for the proposals.**

We welcome this opportunity to continue to engage with the government and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Oxford Internet Institute  
Open Rights Group  
Global Partners Digital  
Index on Censorship  
The Coalition for a Digital Economy

Cc Secretary of State for the Home Department, The Right Hon. Sajid Javid MP