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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Maarij Foundation for Peace and Development, non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[17 February 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Media impact on human rights: Measures for its control*

The role of social media nowadays cannot be overestimated. The power of this phenomenon is based on several facts:

1. Social media is popular and widely used all over the world.
2. It is used by all possible actors: international institutions – both governmental and nongovernmental; single states; private companies; organizations; groups of people; and individuals.
3. Social media can be used with positive intentions by any actor: organizational or personal development, facilitation of operations, entertainment, etc.
4. Social media can be used with negative intentions by any actor: misrepresentation, disclosure of personal information, blocking, online surveillance, etc.

Moreover, these four facts exist and can be used simultaneously, which makes social media a complex phenomenon that does not have analogues. Thus, the mechanism of control over the social media and its influence on human rights shall be well-thought out and represent a system of interconnection of all actors with consideration of the factors listed above.

Another factor to be taken into account while establishing the controlling mechanism is that the influence of social media on the society is also unique: it removed borders, distances, lack of communication, lack of entertainment; it forms new society and changes the attitude to a number of human rights, for example right for private life, right for intellectual property, right to protection of honor and reputation; creates constant “unintended” human rights’ violations (e.g. any person can be accidentally kept by a gadget’s camera with direct posting of kept photos to social media page of its owner and tagging of location – thus, the right for private life and even the right for security can be regarded as violated).

The stated above makes it obvious that the control over social media influence on human rights is a complex issue and requires special actions from all types of its users (actors) or even their cooperation, together with a proper calculation of benefits and challenges of social media in both cases. Thus we:

1. Call upon international organizations to seek for possible strategies of the joint social security strategy and mechanism for its members.
2. Encourage international organizations and single countries to contribute to other social media users’ knowledge on social media, its possible ways of usage and impact on human rights.
3. Call upon the countries, members of the UN, to establish a platform for their constant dialog on social media, exchange of experience and/or discussion on a possible cooperation in regard of social security.
4. Call upon single countries to implement measures for the education of its population on social security.
5. Call upon single countries to establish proper legislation in regard of the social media usage by the government, private sector and individuals.
6. Call upon private sector (companies) to raise the awareness of their employees on the usage of social media for organizational and private purposes.
7. Encourage private sector to issue and implement social security strategies and follow the tendency of the social media development and its impact on human rights.
8. Call upon NGOs to draw more attention to the way of the social media usage and its role in the society, including:

- 8.1. Hold trainings for own members and employees on the usage and power of social media.
 - 8.2. Organize events and trainings on the social media and its impact on human rights for different audiences and on different levels.
 - 8.3. Organize public campaigns on the impact of social media on human rights and social security.
 - 8.4. Establish a platform for NGOs' cooperation on the social media usage and impact.
9. Call upon individuals to invest in their own development and knowledge in social media, its power and impact on human rights.
 10. Call upon creators and owners of social media to cooperate with users of the social media to contribute to the social security development.
 11. Call upon academics to conduct researches on social media and predictions for its development; to cooperate with users, owners and creators of social media so to serve as "early warning" or contribute to the establishment of social security.

The proposed list of measures will contribute to the establishment of the controlling mechanism over the social media impact on human rights, but will not form the complete system. To form the whole mechanism the actors shall establish the ways of cooperation or communication between themselves; the elements of the mechanism shall be singled out and named; the control over the mechanism shall be established; and the momentum shall be given to the process of the mechanism establishment from the formal or legal side.

Thus, we call upon all users, researches, creators and owners of the social media to cooperate with each other on a constant basis and follow the tendency of the social media development so to predict in advance possible new effects and impact on human rights from new unique and powerful phenomenon – social media.

*Global Network for Rights and Development (GNRD), an NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.