

Task Force 6: Social Media and Hate Speech

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In light of the growing issue of hate speech on social media platforms today, this report seeks to examine the impact of hate speech and suggest solutions to this issue.

Our TaskForce team looks into the ways in which five diverse countries with varying social, political and cultural backgrounds tackle online hate speech. These country case studies inform our proposed solutions, which have the goal of reducing online hate speech in Singapore.

Our proposed solutions involve actors such as the government and the community, educational institutions as well as social media companies, and advocate for cooperation amongst these actors. Our solutions take a soft approach in tackling online hate speech, by following our two main philosophies: 'Cultural Awareness' and 'Cultivate Empathy', that serve as guiding principles to inform our solutions. Therefore, we present five proposed solutions - Digital Citizenship Education, Community Outreach and Awareness Programme, Cross-Collaboration between Government and Community, The Hate Speech Warrior, as well as a Global Social Media Etiquette Summit.

In our proposed solutions, we do not seek to change existing legislative policies in Singapore regarding hate speech. We find such laws implemented to be necessary in ensuring peace among the different ethno-religious groups in Singapore. However, we posit that these hard policies should only be enacted as the last resort. Therefore, our proposed solutions are intended to supplement the present hard policies to reduce the occurrence of online hate speech. We encourage proactive and preventative solutions, instead of reactive and remedial action.

In all, our proposed solutions, as a soft approach, aim to raise cultural awareness and empathy within the community to reduce the incidence of online hate speech. This soft approach will complement the hard legislative approach of the Singapore government to effectively reduce online hate speech in Singapore.