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## Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

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### Draft report

*Rapporteur:* Erasmo **Lara Cabrera** (Mexico)

#### Addendum

### Thematic discussion on protecting children in a digital age: the misuse of technology in the abuse and exploitation of children

1. At its 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, on 12 and 13 April 2011, the Commission considered agenda item 4, which read as follows:

“Thematic discussion on protecting children in a digital age: the misuse of technology in the abuse and exploitation of children:

“(a) Nature and scope of the problem of misuse of new technologies in the abuse and exploitation of children;

“(b) Responses to the problem of misuse of new technologies in the abuse and exploitation of children.”

2. For its consideration of agenda item 4, the Commission had before it the following:

(a) Note by the Secretariat containing a discussion guide for the thematic discussion on protecting children in a digital age: the misuse of technology in the abuse and exploitation of children (E/CN.15/2011/2);

(b) Note by the Secretariat on world crime trends and emerging issues and responses in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice (E/CN.15/2011/10).

3. With the Chair presiding, the thematic discussion on item 4 was led by the following panellists: Dorcas Oduor (Kenya); Elly Risman (Indonesia);



Gyorgy Virag (Hungary); and Sergio Staro (Italy), who spoke on sub-item (a); and Mohamed Moheb (Egypt); Naras Savestanam (Thailand); Juan Carlos Guel López (Mexico); Sylvia Poll Ahrens (Costa Rica); Paula Silva (Portugal); and Gabrielle Shaw (United Kingdom), who spoke on sub-item (b).

4. The Chair made an introductory statement. An introductory statement was also made by the Secretariat. Statements were made by the representatives of India, Saudi Arabia, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Mexico, Algeria, Chile, the Philippines, Austria, Romania, Argentina, Cuba, Japan, Canada, China and the United States. Statements were also made by the observers for Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Croatia, France, Estonia, Morocco, Colombia, Switzerland, Israel and Norway. The observer for Palestine delivered a statement. Statements were also made by the observers for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Council of Europe, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Korean Institute of Criminology, the League of Arab States, the International Sociological Association and the World Society of Victimology.

### **Summary by the Chair**

5. At the end of the thematic discussion, the Chair summarized the salient points as follows.

6. The use of the Internet and other related information and communications technologies has increased exponentially at the global level in the past two decades. Children who have access to those technologies benefit from them, while at the same time they are exposed to serious risks. States should consider it a matter of priority to develop safeguards to protect them.

7. The importance of existing international legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the legal instruments developed by the Council of Europe, was highlighted.

8. States should devise effective national measures for the prevention, investigation and prosecution of cybercrime offences, in particular in the area of child abuse and exploitation, and for the improvement of international cooperation. Furthermore, States should also take measures to protect victims of such abuse and exploitation.

9. There was a need for data collection and analysis and for the sharing of such data among States.

10. National initiatives, including preventive measures, educational programmes, awareness-raising campaigns, the establishment of hotlines, the adoption of legislation, law enforcement efforts and capacity-building activities for law enforcement and criminal justice officials, as well as the provision of psychological counselling and rehabilitation services to victims, were discussed.

11. The need to address technical challenges posed by the misuse of technology in the abuse and exploitation of children was also noted, as was the need to devote more resources to the development of technical solutions in order to prevent access by children to harmful online content, to alert parents or authorities to suspicious activities and to facilitate investigative efforts by law enforcement authorities.

12. Cooperation and partnerships between national authorities and the private sector, including Internet service providers, were essential in the identification of technical and investigative solutions to the misuse of information and communications technologies.

13. The need for technical and capacity-building assistance programmes was raised.

14. The role of the Commission in further developing standards, norms and guidelines was stressed.

### **Workshop on law enforcement cooperation in combating child pornography cases**

15. A workshop on the theme “Concrete examples of law enforcement cooperation in combating child pornography cases” was organized by the institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network. The workshop was chaired by the First Vice-Chair of the Commission and moderated by the Scientific Coordinator of the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme.

16. Presentations were made by panellists from the Helsinki Police Department (Finland), Public Safety Canada (Canada), the University of Cologne (Germany) and the Queensland Police Service (Australia). During the open discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, India, Thailand, Algeria and the United Kingdom and the observers for France and Ecuador. Statements were also made by the observers for the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations, and the Religious Society of Friends. Representatives of the Secretariat and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute made closing statements.