Call for input: The role of new technologies in the prevention of genocide

This is a joint submission from the UK Atrocity Prevention Working Group (Working Group). The Working Group was established in 2017 and is coordinated by Protection Approaches. It comprises over 25 UK-based NGOs, research institutions, and individual experts working in different ways to build a world where mass atrocity crimes and other forms of identity-based violence are less likely. Our members work in varied ways towards a world without mass atrocities, some undertaking work more discreetly or choosing not to publicly engage with policy-facing activities. This submission is publicly co-signed by the following members of the Working Group: Burma Campaign UK, Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights, European Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, eyeWitness to Atrocities, Korea Future, the Jo Cox Foundation, Minority Rights Group International, People for Eqaulity and Relief in Lanka, Protection Approaches, Rights for Peace, Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice, United Against Inhumanity, United Nations Association UK, Videre est Credere.

1) **Introduction: The role of technologies in an increasingly polarised and distrustful world:**

   a) New and emerging technologies shape the way mass atrocity crimes (genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity) are understood, perpetrated, and prevented. Today's technological advances hold the promise of revolutionising prevention efforts. Their decreasing costs and widespread availability have democratised evidence-gathering and archiving initiatives, information-sharing and mobilising of communities for both on- and offline prevention activities, providing the tools necessary for real-time monitoring, verification and effective early warning.

   b) However, tech-based tools and communications strategies provide tactics and means for perpetrators of violence that are new in scope, reach, frequency and impact. Emerging technologies are used by a state and non-state actors in ways that threaten international stability, increase polarisation, distrust, and the risk and incitement of systematic and widespread human rights violations.

   c) Malign actors create and disseminate mis- and disinformation, hate speech and propaganda campaigns, including via social media platforms. Risks of mass atrocity crimes are likely to be compounded by nefarious usages of emerging technologies such as surveillance, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and increasingly automated weapons systems. The wide spectrum of technological developments must be comprehensively considered in order to successfully mitigate the risks emerging technologies pose.

   d) The international community has committed to protect populations from mass atrocity crimes but human protection efforts have not yet adapted to the rapid development of technology. Moreover, while the Responsibility to Protect is "first and foremost a responsibility to prevent"[1], those collective opportunities for prevention that can be unlocked through new technologies remain even less explored.

   e) Mass atrocity crimes occur separate from, parallel to, as part of and after conflict. Atrocity prevention holds a wider remit than conflict prevention in confronting the dynamics of mass violence, breaking through silos and extending collective, transnational obligations to prevent and protect. The Business and Human Rights agenda has established that all business enterprises are expected to respect human rights and should address adverse human rights impacts with which they are involved.[2] Similar to how collective responsibilities to protect populations from mass atrocity crimes must extend across actors from the United Nations all the way to the village,[3] technology and cyber policy issues also require solutions that cut across borders and are truly inclusive and participatory of all stakeholders.

2) **New technologies and increasing risks of the perpetration of mass atrocity crimes**

   a) The UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes lists common risk factors and indicators that underpin the perpetration of mass atrocity crimes. Existing and emerging technologies have the potential to significantly impact factors and indicators around perpetrator motives, incentives, capacity, preparatory actions, and enabling circumstances that might lead to the commission of mass atrocity crimes. Malignant actors have expanded access to technological tools that widen pre-existing social cleavages and political inequalities that drive identity-based violence; create powerful new capabilities and

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[1] Adama Dieng, Foreword, in Europe's Prevention Crisis How can civil society respond? *Protection Approaches*, 23 October 2019
[2] Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, OHCHR and business and human rights, accessed on 10 March 2023
[3] Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Bringing prevention to the village: Key challenges and opportunities, *European Centre for the Responsibility to Protect*, 2022; On the devolution of R2P see Kate Ferguson, Fred Carver, Being the difference: A primer for states wishing to prevent atrocity crimes in the mid-twenty-first century, *Protection Approaches*, 24 November 2021

systems to track, target and physically attack groups; and censor information and churn out propaganda and misinformation to polarise societies and incite violence.[4]

b) Increasingly sophisticated surveillance tools are enabling the tracking of specific individuals and entire communities, dangerously enhancing states' security apparatus and perpetrators' ability to find and attack targeted populations. In China, state surveillance technology tracks over 13 million Turkic Muslims.[5] This has facilitated the mass detention of Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in detention camps. Emerging AI technologies, including facial recognition, are being tested on detained Uyghurs, which operate with biased algorithms to further persecute Uyghurs and other minorities.[6] In India, police forces in multiple provinces have used facial recognition technology, digital electoral rolls and other biometric databases to identify and falsely prosecute peaceful protesters.[7] Police-linked hackers in India were also reported to have used the same technology to plant false evidence on the digital devices of several HRDs, many of whom remain imprisoned on anti-terror charges.[8] Governments worldwide use invasive military-grade Pegasus spyware to bypass encryption and other security measures to unlawfully survey and collect unauthorized data on human rights activists, political leaders, journalists and lawyers.[9]

c) Surveillance and mal-use of social media and digital platforms, including dating applications, have facilitated an enabling environment of extortion, blackmail, hate speech, mis- and disinformation campaigns and incitement to violence. This has facilitated attacks targeted at communities not traditionally included by more narrow genocide prevention frameworks. In Egypt, the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights has documented the regular and systematic utilization by authorities of dating applications to entrap LGBTQI+ individuals between 2014-2018, with Human Rights Watch documenting an escalation of such practices across the region.[10] The systematic and continuous targeting of LGBTQI+ populations facilitated by new technologies in Egypt constitutes a systematic or widespread attack directed at a civilian population that may arguably meet the threshold for crimes against humanity. The targeting of LGBTQI+ communities must be understood as a warning sign of increased risk of identity-based violence and atrocity crimes with far-reaching consequences that extend to other marginalised groups.[11] While tech companies, such as Grindr, instituted welcome policies making users of their applications safer, these new forms of technology facilitate and obscure state-sanctioned persecution.[12]

d) New technologies and internet infrastructure have been weaponised by State and non-State actors to provide cover for violence and undermine rights to freedom of speech, assembly and privacy, hampering the activities and effectiveness of civil society. A full or partial shutdown of the internet or communications networks obscures evidence of state violence including enforced disappearances, attacks on rights defenders, prevents people from accessing accurate information or verified shelter, and limits access to local and international news. In Myanmar, the junta attempted to fully shut down the internet and continues with localised black-outs, shutdowns and bans, including mobile data, wireless broadband, and services like VPN.[13] In Kashmir, Indian authorities imposed a blanket ban on mobile and internet services that lasted four months, with high-speed services being restored only 18 months later.[14] In Sri Lanka, access to most social media platforms was blocked following non-violent protests, and increasing surveillance activities of journalists and activists – in particular those who are

[4] Federica D'Alessandra, Ross James Gildea, Technological Change and the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, *Stimson Center*, 25 July 2022

[5] Human Rights Watch, "How mass surveillance works in Xinjiang, China," 2 May 2019

[6] Jane Wakefield, "AI emotion-detection software tested on Uyghurs," *BBC*, 26 May 2021

[7] Inc42, 'Police In India Used Facial Recognition To Identify Anti-CAA Protestors (inc42.com)', 13 February 2020

[8] Wired, 'Police Linked to Hacking Campaign to Frame Indian Activists | WIRED', 16 June 2022

[9] Divya Trivedi, Surveillance state: The Pegasus saga unravels in India, *Frontline*, 8 August 2021

[10] Mia Jankowicz, Jailed for Using Grindr: Homosexuality in Egypt, *The Guardian*, 3 April 2017; Mike Miksche, "Egypt's LGBTQ Crackdown," *Vice*, 25 October 2017; Human Rights Watch, "All This Terror Because of a Photo" Digital Targeting and Its Offline Consequences for LGBT People in the Middle East and North Africa, 21 February 2023

[11] Jess Gifkins, Kate Ferguson, Dean Cooper-Cunningham, Detmer Kremer, Farida Mostafa, Queering atrocity prevention, *Protection Approaches*, 31 March 2022;

[12] Grindr, Assessing and Mitigating Risk for the Global Grindr Community, October 2021

[13] BBC News, "Myanmar coup: internet shutdown as crowds protest against military," 6 February 2021; Rebecca Ratcliffe, "Myanmar coup: military expands internet shutdown," 2 April 2021; AccessNow, Interneshutdowns shroud and facilitate brutality of Myanmar junta's airstrike in Hpakant township, 27 October 2022; Thompson Chao, Dominic Oo, Myanmar renews plans to curb internet usage with VPN ban, *Nikkei Asia*, 22 January 2022

[14] TechCrunch, 'India is restoring 4G internet in Jammu and Kashmir after 18 months | TechCrunch', 5 February 2021

Tamil and families of the disappeared – further erode civic space.[15] In Sudan, reductions and shutdowns of the energy grid by the military junta impede access to electricity including cooling facilities vital during extreme heat and the provision of medical treatment, including in response to teargas, which punishes populations and suppresses popular dissent.[16] As the impacts of climate change are and will continue to be felt, more extreme and frequent weather events including prolonged, hotter heatwaves, will make such tactics more common and dangerous.

e) Communication black-outs have been used in conjunction with surveillance and military drone technology to gain military advantage and perpetrate mass atrocity crimes in Ethiopia. Reports of the Ethiopian military have emerged of strikes killing more than 300 civilians.[17] Working Group Member United Nations Association UK warns with others of the rush by states and companies to create smaller, more stealthy weapons that can be equipped with facial recognition cameras and programmed through artificial intelligence to select and kill autonomously or in swarms.[18] These innovations have already started to become reality, and will increase the lethality, pace and reach of any actor pursuing violence.[19]

f) Technological tools without safeguards can deepen existing identity-based discrimination, significantly strengthening the capacity of perpetrators to stir up hatred and recruit, mobilise and coordinate supporters.[20] Social media plays a significant role in the creation and dissemination of mis- and disinformation; facilitating and entrenching hate speech and incitement of violence; and providing a platform for and often encouraging popular mobilisation. These dynamics, often magnified by biased algorithms, contribute to the likelihood of offline violence. In Myanmar, the combination of dehumanising hate speech and disinformation about the history of and crime statistics relating to the Rohingya contributed to an environment enabling State perpetration of genocide with little opposition.[21] Whistle-blower Frances Haugen highlighted that while Facebook had tools to prevent the speed of such information, they lacked the necessary investment to make them compatible with local languages leading to unchecked speed of disinformation and hate speech.[22] In India, key platforms including Facebook (incl. WhatsApp), Twitter, and YouTube all have hundreds of millions of users and host high levels of misinformation, hate, and incitement to violence against minorities – particularly Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits – and fuel vigilante and mob violence.[23] In 2020, Hindu extremists in Delhi were reported to have used a WhatsApp group to mobilise weapons and organise targeted killings of Muslims.[24]

g) The widespread prevalence and spread of conspiracy theories, mis-information and deep-fakes[25] across transnational online communities and the establishment of far-right, alt-right, nationalist, extremist and sectarian virtual ecosystems has further polarised societies, eroded trust in state institutions and has resulted in significant offline harms and human rights violations. These developments indicate rising risks of all stages of mass atrocity crimes, including early stages in states traditionally considered to be free from such risks and not warrant preventative action. Examples include the January 6 riots in the United States, the rising frequency of attacks on asylum seeker accommodations in United Kingdom,

[15] NetBlocks, Social media restricted in Sri Lanka as emergency declared amid protests, 2 April 2022; activity on social media platforms has led to the arrest of activists and journalists: Daily Mirror, Social Media activist Darshana Handungoda arrested at BIA, 6 February 2023; Tamil Guardian, Another arrest over a Facebook post – Sri Lankan police detain man for 'hate speech' against army, 27 July 2022; Human Rights Watch, Sri Lanka: Heightened Crackdown on Dissent, 2 August 2022

[16] Liela M. Medani, Switching the electricity off: weaponising extreme heat in Sudan, Prevention Perspectives, 29 September 2022

[17] Max Bearak, Meg Kelly, Joyce Sohyun Lee, How Ethiopia used a Turkish drone in a strike that killed nearly 60 civilians, The Washington Post, 7 February 2022

[18] The Stop Killer Robots Campaign, accessed on 10 March 2023

[19] Henry Bodkin, Aisling O'Leary, Microdrones: the AI assassins set to become weapons of mass destruction, The Telegraph, 14 November 2022

[20] Jan H. Pierskalla, Florian M. Hollenbach, "Technology and Collective Action: The Effect of Cell Phone Coverage on Political Violence in Africa," American Political Science Review 107, no. 2 (May 2013)

[21] The Myanmar government established and funded hate speech social media campaigns and accounts that further fuelled anti-Rohingya campaigns: Evelyn Douek, "Facebook's role in the genocide in Myanmar: new reporting complicates the narrative," Lawfare, 22 October 2018; Minority Rights Group International, Online hate speech in Myanmar: an evolving threat, 20 December 2020

[22] The Guardian, Facebook's role in Myanmar and Ethiopia under new scrutiny, 7 October 2021

[23] Shakuntala Banaji, Ram Bhat, "WhatsApp vigilantes: an exploration of citizen reception and circulation of WhatsApp misinformation linked to mob violence in India," London School of Economics, 2019

[24] The Wire, ''Tear Them Apart': How Hindutva WhatsApp Group Demanded Murder, Rape of Muslims in Delhi Riots (thewire.in)', 6 July 2020

[25] Bobby Chesney and Danielle Citron, "Deep Fakes: A Looming Challenge for Privacy, Democracy, and National Security," California Law Review 107 (2019)

and the widespread farmer protests in the Netherlands.[26] Left unchecked, the speed and reach of propaganda that dehumanises already marginalised groups and rationalises violence can metastasize in more widespread and systematic forms of violence.[27]

h) Evolving capabilities enable state and non-state actors to develop specific, targeted and highly effective misinformation campaigns which can undermine civilian protection efforts on the ground, popularise "alternative facts" regarding responsibilities for and actual violence, and challenge the ultimate goal of preventing further mass atrocity crimes. In Syria, the ongoing campaign against the Syria Civil Defence, known as the White Helmets, has undermined and impeded direct and life-saving responses to violence, including the provision of humanitarian services.[28]

i) The production of new and emerging technologies is driving increased demand for critical minerals and the mining and refining of critical minerals can drive risks of violence, including mass atrocity crimes. For example, over half of the global cobalt reserves are found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with the country supplying over 70% of the global cobalt consumption.[29] The intersection of these critical minerals, new technologies and the commission of mass atrocity crimes in the DRC and elsewhere is evidently a complex one: Revenue from mining has been documented to fund the activities of armed groups implicated in the commission of mass atrocities[30] while the minerals themselves are frequently necessary for the production of technologies of perpetration and prevention. Because of the central role cobalt, and other minerals of largely Congolese origin including coltan and lithium, play in many new technologies (and also efforts towards green transition), the DRC is guaranteed to remain a crucial source country in technology supply chains.

3) Impact of technological advances on mass atrocity prevention efforts

a) Simultaneously, technological advances provide the potential to expand the provisions in the current Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes to better monitor signs of intent, state policies or plans to commit atrocity crimes. The incorporation of powerful game-changing technological tools and frameworks would improve monitoring efforts, early warning systems and forecasting, and help shape more effective, sustainable and timely efforts to prevent mass atrocity crimes.

b) Dramatically increased availability and access to internet connectivity, as well as to devices such as smartphones and cameras, have democratised information gathering, monitoring and verification of genocide and other mass atrocity crimes, strengthening accountability and justice.[31] Videre est Credere works directly with oppressed communities in stressed environments, equipping networks of local activists and community leaders with technology and training to safely capture compelling visual evidence of political violence, human rights violations and systemic abuses. eyeWitness to Atrocities designed a technology to enhance the admissibility of visual evidence of mass atrocity crimes before most courts worldwide. The technology comprises an app for Android smartphones that enables users around the world to capture footage and uses the device sensors to record metadata that helps to authenticate the date, time, location and integrity of the images and sound. It is complemented by transmission protocols and a secure server that create a chain of custody with embedded information for the footage from the point of capture to its receipt by the server.[32] The footage and its metadata are then submitted to international and domestic accountability mechanisms. In Ukraine alone, users of the app have captured and uploaded to the eyeWitness server more than 30,000 pieces of evidence of possible war crimes since the full-scale invasion in February 2022.

c) The ability to crowd-source data and monitor developments in real-time, for example using social media platforms, enables States, civil society and other relevant actors to develop rapid, inclusive and effective responses to address and prevent rises in violence and hate. For example, Ushahidi's crowdsourcing technology has been used more in over 160 countries, crowdsourcing more than 50 million reports from

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[26] United States: Dean Jackson, Meghan Conroy, Alex Newhouse, _Insiders' View of the January 6th Committee's Social Media Investigation_, _Just Security_, 5 January 2023; United Kingdom: HOPE not hate, _State of hate 2022: on the march again_, 9 March 2022; The Netherlands: Anya van Wagtendonk, _Why Tucker Carlson and the global right wing have taken up the cause of Dutch farmers_, _Grid_, 13 July 2022

[27] Sarah Kreps, _The Role of Technology in Online Misinformation_, _Brookings Institution_, June 2020

[28] Chloe Hadjimatheou, _"Mayday: How the White Helmets and James Le Mesurier got pulled into a deadly battle for truth,"_ _BBC_, 27 February 2021, The Syria Campaign, _"Killing the truth: how Russia is fuelling a disinformation campaign to cover up war crimes in Syria,"_ 2017

[29] World Economic Forum, _Making Mining Safe and Fair_, September 2020, p. 3

[30] United Nations Group of Experts on the DRC, _Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo_

[31] Federica D'Alessandra, Kirsty Sutherland, The Promise and Challenges of New Actors and New Technologies in International Justice, _Journal of International Criminal Justice_, No. 19:1, March 2021

[32] For more information about the App and resources, see eyeWitness to Atrocities – accessed on 10 March 2023

citizens across the world, tracking human rights violations, incidents of violence, and triaging humanitarian needs.[33] In the United Kingdom, Protection Approaches convenes a consortium of 14 national and community-led organisations to develop an online hate crime reporting service accessible via social media and phonelines for British East and Southeast Asian communities following the sharp rise in hate crime during the COVID-19 pandemic.[34] Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights maintains online secure reporting platforms to enable civilians across the Middle East and North Africa to document violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in both Arabic and English.

d) Technological capabilities to access satellite imagery, analyse user-generated content and map social media networks, among others, strengthen investigative journalism and citizen activism. These practices, often grouped under the term Open Source Intelligence, provide monitoring of risks, documentation of incidents and aid in mapping out the networks of actors, services and supply chains that drive violence. These capabilities also increase verification efforts, providing accessible tools to geolocate and chronolocate footage, analyse metadata, and confirm identity. This enables actors including the United Nations, states, civil society, private business and other stakeholders to effectively identify levers, actors and pressure points for action.

e) The variety of ways and means to gather information enables triangulation and increases the ability to verify and trust received information. It also enables deeper analysis and helps make the information more accessible through visualization tools. Innovative technologies can collect evidence with the potential of underpinning accountability mechanisms and upholding international law. Working Group Member Korea Future interviewed survivors, perpetrators, and witnesses who either experienced, were involved with, or observed violations of international human rights law in the DPRK penal system. This informed the open-source web-based database application and 3D modelling to preserve evidence and visualise survivor testimonies. This database has informed analysis to corroborate and verify cases and to establish the admissibility of evidence in various international and national accountability settings.[35]

f) New technologies can help preserve evidence, oral and written histories and other forms of archival evidence of mass atrocity crimes, and create new and accessible forms of community engagement and education, underpinning rights to truth, non-recurrence and memorialisation. Working Group Member Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and partners created an accessible and free online portal documenting stories from the Holocaust via the objects people had, including 3D scans and interactive maps.[36] Working Group Member Minority Rights Group International launched an app called 'Feel Like Me' with Nahrein Network and Cultural Heritage Organisation on Yezidi experiences of hate speech. It uses augmented reality technology and first-person narration of real life experiences of Yezidis to counter hate through building empathy, support, awareness raising, and breaking stereotypes through digital storytelling.

4) **Barriers to effective prevention and protection**

a) Technology companies lack safeguards and accountability measures. These gaps contribute to increased likelihood of mass atrocity crimes, including the direct facilitation of and failure to prevent active harm. The accountability measures that do exist often do not take the experience of marginalised and at-risk communities into account, considering their valid concerns as "edge cases". This means opportunities for prevention by a wide range of actors, including the companies themselves but also states, civil society, religious communities and others, are missed. For example, Meta has faced claims that its Facebook algorithms "proactively amplified" anti-Rohingya content and that it ignored civilians' and activists' pleas to curb hate-mongering on the social media platform while profiting from increased engagement.[37]

b) New technologies used to collect, analyse and disseminate evidence of atrocities often rely on proprietary programs and platforms, making prevention efforts vulnerable to shutdowns and changes in platforms' policies or services, as illustrated by human rights concerns following the recent change of leadership at Twitter.[38] In addition, platforms' policies aimed at removing "terrorist and violent extremist content" can sometimes lead to the deletion of potentially incriminating evidence or early

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[33] Ushahidi, 10 years of global impact: An impact report celebrating 10 years of Ushahidi

[34] On Your Side (https://www.onyoursideuk.org/) – accessed on 2 March 2023

[35] North Korean Prison Database (https://nkpd.io/en/) – accessed on 2 March 2023

[36] Ordinary Objects, Extraordinary Journeys (https://ooej.org/) – accessed on 2 March 2023

[37] Amnesty International, The social atrocity: Meta and the right to remedy for the Rohingya, 29 September 2022; Tom Miles, "U.N. investigators cite Facebook role in Myanmar crisis," Reuters, 12 March 2018

[38] Human Rights Watch, Musk Chaos Raises Serious Rights Concerns Over Twitter, 12 November 2022

warnings of violations. In 2020, for example, YouTube claimed that approximately 93 percent of the content that the platform identified as in violation of their community standards and deleted between January and March 2020 had been flagged by its automated systems, and that almost 50 percent of this content was deleted before any users saw it. Reasons for deletion included "violent or graphic", as well as "hateful and abusive" content.[39] The creation of legislation and international frameworks on the use of new technologies is a slow process. Legislation often lacks adaptation capabilities and remains limited in scope in the face of rapidly changing technologies, in a context where parliamentary hearings have demonstrated knowledge gaps regarding technology among policy makers.[40]

c) Legislation and platform policies too often fail to take in to account civil society expertise or respond to the distinct needs of minoritized and marginalised communities, including those primarily targeted by new technologies, and oftentimes lack mechanisms for receiving vital information or early warnings from local communities.[41] In addition, there is a lack of local ownership of documentation processes, which tend to favour state, military and intelligence sources over local insights and civil society. Where protections do appear to be present, there are examples of when hate speech laws were abused to restrict freedom of expression and stifle political dissent, as well as expressions of minority religion or culture. In Jordan and Saudi Arabia, hate speech laws are being used in conjunction with anti-terror legislation to further persecute disenfranchised communities, and to prosecute online activism. The responsibility of states and social media platforms to take measures to prohibit hate speech must be developed with due regard to freedom of expression.

d) Online harms are inextricably linked to offline dynamics of inequality, marginalisation and exclusion, and vice versa. This submission demonstrates how online hate is linked to the risks and occurrences of mass atrocity crimes. However, preventative online action cannot be pursued separately from confronting political societal and economic inequities and authoritarian, discriminatory, divisive or harmful rhetoric in offline spaces, including political campaigning, places of worship, and classrooms. Similarly, strategies of prevention that only consider strategic communications, counter narratives and other narrow, online hate speech oriented tactics are likely to be unsuccessful in halting malign actors and reversing rising risks of mass atrocity crimes.[42]

5) Recommendations

a) To the United Nations Secretary General

i) To build upon and strengthen the calls made in the 2021 report *Advancing Atrocity Prevention: Report of the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect*[43] in his report addressing new technologies and the prevention of mass atrocity crimes to be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-third session and to the General Assembly. In particular the calls that:

(1) Re-emphasised to states that their primary responsibility is to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including at the national level

(2) Re-emphasised the responsibilities of both member states and the private sector in preventing and addressing atrocity crimes, including technology and social media companies

ii) To ensure his convening, before the fifty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council, of the one-day intersessional meeting to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide considers emerging technologies, including social media platforms, can facilitate the risks of mass atrocity crimes;

iii) To apply an inclusive, intersectional and participatory approach to his activities that considers how different populations are targeted because of identity factors including national or ethnic origin,

[39] Human Rights Watch, "Video Unavailable" Social Media Platforms Remove Evidence of War Crimes, 10 September 2020; YouTube Community Guidelines enforcement (https://transparencyreport.google.com/youtube-policy/removals) – accessed on 10 March 2023

[40] Cecilia Kang, Thomas Kaplan, Nicholas Fandos, Knowledge Gap Hinders Ability of Congress to Regulate Silicon Valley, *New York Times*, 12 April 2018

[41] Global Witness, 'Now is the time to kill': Facebook continues to approve hate speech inciting violence and genocide during civil war in Ethiopia, 9 June 2022; Isabel Debre, Fares Akrem, Facebook's language gaps let through hate-filled posts while blocking inoffensive content, *Los Angeles Times*, 25 October 2021

[42] Kate Ferguson, 'Countering violent extremism through media and communication strategies: A review of the evidence,' Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research, 2016

[43] United Nations Secretary General, *Advancing Atrocity Prevention Report of the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect*, A/75/863–S/2021/424

religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, Indigeneity, age and ability. Without such a lens and participatory approach, the risks of mass atrocity crimes and the opportunities to prevent them in relation to new technologies will be misunderstood and missed;

b) To the United Nations Joint Office on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect

    i) To convene dialogues with civil society, in particular those working on atrocity prevention and/or technology, to facilitate exchanges of knowledge, skills and best practices on the prevention of genocide and the collective responsibility across UN actors, states, companies and civil society to help prevent atrocity crimes and protect populations;

    ii) To apply an inclusive and intersectional lens to the current review of the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes that emphasises its utility as a cross-cutting tool of prevention. This preventative lens should consider different identity factors, including national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, Indigeneity, age and ability, and relevant thematic areas, including new technologies, climate change, gender;

c) To the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

    i) To support States in their primary responsibility to help protect populations from mass atrocity crimes by leading development of global norms bringing together obligations on atrocity prevention, human rights implementation and the regulation of new technologies and activities of private businesses;

    ii) Drawing upon the obligations outlined in the UN's guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to support public-private partnership to help develop industry standards on new technologies and the prevention of mass atrocity crimes including the ethical development, procurement, sale, and use of technological tools, digital infrastructure and weapons systems that if misused, could increase the risk of atrocity crimes;

d) To Member States

    i) To resource and support domestic and international efforts on incorporating technological capabilities to strengthen the monitoring, analysis, documentation and investigation as part of the prevention of mass atrocity crimes, including ensuring robust civil society and business participation;

    ii) To draw from the Secretary General's reports and activities to shape inclusive and intersectional atrocity national prevention policies and fulfil collective responsibilities to protect populations from mass atrocity crimes;

e) To Companies

    i) To work with civil society and states to respond to the UN Secretary General's call for companies to uphold responsibilities to prevent atrocity crimes and help protect populations. This should include conducting comprehensive reviews of their role in the prevention of atrocity crimes;

    ii) To incorporate robust safeguarding systems to uphold international due diligence standards, as defined by the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This should involve constant, ongoing, and proactive human rights due diligence throughout the lifecycle of technological tools, digital infrastructure and weapon systems.