

News story: UK and France announce joint campaign to tackle online radicalisation

The UK and France have joined forces to tackle online radicalisation with plans that could lead to much stronger action against tech companies who fail to remove unacceptable content.

Ahead of the Prime Minister's visit to Paris today, where she will hold talks on counter-terrorism with French President Emmanuel Macron, the UK and France have announced a new joint campaign to ensure that the internet cannot be used as a safe space for terrorists and criminals.

Crucially, plans include exploring the possibility of creating a new legal liability for tech companies if they fail to remove content. This could, for example, include penalties such as fines for companies that fail to take action. The two countries will lead joint work with the tech companies on this vital agenda, including working with them to develop tools to identify and remove harmful material automatically.

In particular, the Prime Minister and President Macron will press relevant firms to urgently establish the industry-led forum agreed at the G7 summit last month, to develop shared technical and policy solutions to tackle terrorist content on the internet.

The Home Secretary and the French Interior Minister will meet in the coming days to drive forward this important work.

Speaking ahead of her visit to Paris, the Prime Minister said:

The counter-terrorism cooperation between British and French intelligence agencies is already strong, but President Macron and I agree that more should be done to tackle the terrorist threat online.

In the UK we are already working with social media companies to halt the spread of extremist material and poisonous propaganda that is warping young minds.

And today I can announce that the UK and France will work together to encourage corporations to do more and abide by their social responsibility to step up their efforts to remove harmful content from their networks, including exploring the possibility of creating a new legal liability for tech companies if they fail to remove unacceptable content.

We are united in our total condemnation of terrorism and our commitment to stamp out this evil.