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“Safer Web = Safer America”

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION UNVEILS NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COUNTERING DOMESTIC TERRORISM

*COALITION FOR A SAFER WEB COMMENDS THE PRESIDENT
FOR SETTING NEW NATIONAL BENCHMARKS
TO COMBAT SOCIAL MEDIA-BASED INCITEMENT & EXTREMISM.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, DC, June 15, 2021. The Coalition for a Safer Web (CSW) (www.coalitionsw.org) congratulated the Biden Administration for issuing the first-ever [National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism](#).

As CSW has well-documented since its inception in 2019, the threat of domestic terrorism has eclipsed the threat posed by foreign-directed radical Islamic terrorism – repeatedly reiterated in recent months by FBI Director Christopher Wray in recent Congressional testimony:

“The greatest terrorism threat to our homeland is posed by lone actors or small cells who typically radicalize online and look to attack soft targets with easily accessible weapons. We see these threats manifested within both domestic violent extremists (DVEs) and homegrown violent extremists (HVEs), two distinct threats, both of which are located primarily in the United States and typically radicalize and mobilize to violence on their own.”

Unlike efforts by the Trump Administration to cut available funding to prevent domestic extremist incitement, the Biden strategy represents a “whole of government” initiative to marshal federal, state, and local community resources to combat the threat. But one thing is clear: the Strategy constitutes a roadmap and not a solution -- the challenge is immense, and the threat is growing by the day.

To achieve its critical objectives, local partners on the front lines fighting domestic terrorism require training, funding, a continuing flow of useful information, and the cooperation of the

private sector and civil society. Only then, will the threat of anti-Semitic and other forms of racial and religious violence be reduced. CSW strongly supports the new funding provided in the Strategy to achieve these goals.

CSW specifically commends the following new initiatives set forth in the Strategy:

*** Improving the Coordinated Dissemination of Information to Local Partners**

Following the January 6 Capitol Insurrection, CSW proposed creating a new Social Media Early Warning Center to provide critical information intercepted by social media watchdog groups to federal, state, and local authorities. The Strategy incorporates a vast new arsenal of initiatives and funding to aid front line first responders to thwart domestic terrorism. CSW hopes that the Center can supplement these new approaches.

*** Addressing the International Dimension of Social Media-Based Incitement**

The Biden Administration's decision to join its allies to combat foreign sources of domestic extremism via the Christchurch Call – an initiative rejected by the Trump Administration – will surely require painstaking, forensic coordination with our allies to root out foreign-based extremist groups utilizing foreign-based social media platforms -- including the mobile application TELEGRAM -- to incite, plot, and fund domesticated violence. Both Russia and Iran, and their franchise troll divisions in Europe and the Muslim world, continue to contaminate U.S. social media platforms with extremist incitement. Earlier this year CSW launched a national strategy to prevent fringe extremist platforms, including TELEGRAM, from serving as primary vectors contaminating mainstream social media platforms with extremist incitement.

*** Addressing Readily Available Domestic Recruitment Material**

The urgent need to cleanse mainstream and fringe social media platforms of material enabling terrorists how to construct weapons, bombs, poisons, and fund their operations is critical. Unfortunately, the Strategy does not specifically hold to account companies such as YouTube, which remains a one-stop-shopping network for domestic terrorist instructional videos which serve NO free speech or public interest policy. The technology is available to facilitate robust efforts, but new policies and initiatives are necessary.

This is why CSW called for creating a new public/private sector Social Media Standards Board to formulate an independent oversight structure to assess social media platform compliance with their pledges to deplatform extremist incitement and its funding mechanisms.

Amb. Marc Ginsberg, President of CSW stated:

"The Biden Strategy represents an unprecedented opportunity for the government and the

private sector to join forces to hold social media platforms to account for their pernicious roles as gateways facilitating domestic incitement and terrorism. In its execution to reduce the threat of domestic terror the Strategy must require complete transparency and accountability by BigTech platforms, not more unfulfilled promises and broken pledges to reduce the threat of online extremism."

"CSW looks forward to partnering with the White House and other federal agencies to ensure the Strategy urgently achieves its critical goals with all deliberate speed."

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