



**IGF 2023 High Level Session II: Evolving Trends in Mis- & Dis-Information
8 October 2023 | 11:15-12:45 JST | Kyoto, Japan
Summary Document**

Speakers

Ms. Věra Jourová, European Commission Vice President for Values and Transparency; Ms. Maria Ressa, 2021 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Ms. Randi Michel, Director of Technology and Democracy, White House National Security Council; Mr. Nic Suzor, Member, Meta Oversight Board; Mr. Tatsuhiko Yamamoto, Professor, Keio University Law School; *with contributions from* Mr. Nezar Patria, Vice Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Indonesia; Mr. Paul Ash, Prime Minister's Special Representative on Cyber and Digital, New Zealand; and Ms. Deborah Steele, Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (moderator).

Summary

Defining Mis and Disinformation & Synthetic Information

Misinformation has been defined as the unintentional spread of inaccurate or false information, while disinformation is deliberately falsified content specifically designed to deceive. The definitions which distinguish over the intent of falsehood can be challenged, however, in an environment where information is amplified by an intentionally motivated “attention economy” built on profitable algorithms.

Synthetic information or content is media manipulated from its original meaning or appearance for whatever purpose. And while the spread of falsehoods is fundamentally a social problem that will require more than the intervention of tech companies to address, synthetic content, once produced, can be identified and labeled as such.

Generative AI

Generative AI makes the production of synthetic information faster and easier than ever. Just as the algorithms in social media platforms create echo chambers, stoking anger and hate, generative AI has the potential to intensify the so-called “epidemic of loneliness” with models that falsify person-to-person interaction. The consequences are dire for political processes, elections specifically, where swiftly produced and highly persuasive disinformation by bad actors can mislead and subvert democratic outcomes.

Compounding the challenge is that AI itself – powerful AI tools – will be needed to oppose AI-manipulated media, to exponential effect.

Urgent Transparency & Accountability

The COVID pandemic revealed that tech companies not only have a role to play in combatting misinformation but have the ability to do so. Misinformation on the COVID virus and vaccines was effectively countered by platforms when the social pressure was high.

Pledges on responsible and ethical AI development from both established and new players in the AI space, as well as voluntary approaches from platforms to transparently disclose when content is false, have been made and will be one part of the way forward. It was agreed that these are insufficient, and much more is needed.



Measures like the European Union’s AI Act that will require that users are clearly warned when reading AI-generated content, and an executive order on AI development that minimises risks to society in the United States, are first measures.

Whole-of-society Solutions

Multi-pronged and simultaneous courses of action are needed against the spread of mis and disinformation and in managing the rapid rise of synthetic information. Governments must act quickly while technologies like AI turbocharge information production. They have to work together with tech companies and civic actors around a shared set of values with an imperative to operationalize those values. Communities need to be empowered with the digital literacy tools and training to identify false content, while awareness is raised of “information consumption”, much in the same way that there is growing mindfulness on modes of food consumption. And civil society must activate, moving from use to engagement.