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# Joint statement on AI-generated or altered child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material by the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) and the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Lanzarote Committee)

Adopted during the joint session of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) and the Lanzarote Committee on 2 June 2026

Recognising that child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are some of the worst forms of violence against children, and that international co-operation is crucial, especially where production and distribution of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material is facilitated by the use of technologies.

Recalling the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (ETS No. 185) and its Second Additional Protocol on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence (CETS No. 224), as well as the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention, CETS No. 201), which together establish criminal offences related to child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material and complementary legal frameworks for prevention, investigation, prosecution and international co-operation in relation to offences related to child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, including where this might involve material being AI-generated or altered with the use of digital technologies;

Recalling also that many Parties to these conventions are also Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, which contains provisions requiring the criminalisation of producing, distributing, disseminating, importing, exporting, offering, selling or possessing “child pornography”;

Noting that the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime, adopted in 2024, also requires States Parties to criminalise offences related to “online child sexual abuse or child sexual exploitation material”, and “solicitation or grooming for the purpose of committing a sexual offence against a child”;

Recalling, among the Parties to the Lanzarote Convention, the work of the Lanzarote Committee, including its opinions on “the applicability of the Lanzarote Convention to sexual offences against children facilitated through the use of information and communication technologies”, “solicitation of children through information and communication technologies (Grooming)” and “child sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos generated shared and received by children”, and declarations on “web addresses advertising child sexual abuse material or images or any other offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention”, and on “protecting children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by emerging technologies”, as well as the recommendations adopted by the Lanzarote Committee in its 2022 monitoring report on protecting children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies;

Recalling the work of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) on cyberviolence, including the Mapping Study on Cyberviolence prepared by its Working Group on cyberbullying and other forms of online violence, especially against women and children, and its recommendations adopted by the T-CY in 2018, as well as subsequent initiatives, such as the ongoing work of the T-CY working group on artificial intelligence;

Taking into account the increasing role of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, in the creation, alteration, dissemination and consumption of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, including through technologies capable of generating or altering images depicting children, as well as its use by offenders to groom and extort child victims, “normalise” offending and make detection harder for law enforcement;

Recalling in this context the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (CETS No. 225), which requires Parties to ensure that activities within the lifecycle of artificial intelligence systems are consistent with obligations to protect human rights and to take due account of the specific needs, rights and vulnerabilities of children;

Recognising the serious and lasting harm caused to victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse through the creation, alteration and continued dissemination of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, including through the generation or alteration of material depicting child victims through computer systems, particularly in light of the ease and speed of dissemination of such materials through messaging and other file sharing technologies;

Recognising also the importance of continued cooperation among Parties, international organisations, civil society and private sector actors in addressing technological developments used to create, alter and disseminate AI-generated or altered child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material.

Against this background, the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) and the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee) met in a joint session on 2 June 2026 to discuss the prevalence and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on offences involving child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, and made the following joint statement:

The T-CY and the Lanzarote Committee note that the criminalisation provisions of Article 9 of the Convention on Cybercrime and Article 20 of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse include material consisting of simulated or realistic representations of children, which include AI-generated or altered child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material.<sup>1</sup>

These provisions are technology-neutral and therefore apply irrespective of the technologies used to produce, alter or distribute such material, including through the use of computer systems and AI. This includes child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material generated or altered through the use of computer systems, including artificial intelligence (AI), both where such material includes the likeness of a real child (for example altered images of a real child) and where such material

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<sup>1</sup> The T-CY and the Lanzarote Committee acknowledge that the term “child pornography” can undermine the gravity of the crimes it refers to and that the term “child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material” in the context of this joint statement is preferred to refers to the conduct criminalised under Article 9 of the Budapest Convention and Article 20 of the Lanzarote Convention, in place of the term “child pornography. This terminological choice is not intended to alter the substantive meaning of the term “child pornography” as provided for in these Conventions.

is fully synthetic and does not depict a real child (for example fully AI-generated child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material depicting a non-existent child).

Therefore, the procedural powers provided for in the Convention on Cybercrime and its Second Additional Protocol, and the preventive and protective measures and procedural safeguards in the Lanzarote Convention as well as the international co-operation provisions of these treaties can be used to investigate and prosecute such offences.

The realism and quantity of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material generated or altered by AI has significantly increased since the adoption of these treaties. Parties are encouraged to review any reservations entered under Article 9 paragraph 2.c of the Convention on Cybercrime and Article 20 paragraph 3, first indent of the Lanzarote Convention in order to assess whether such reservations remain appropriate in light of technological developments, including the emergence of AI-generated or altered child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material.

In addressing offences involving child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material generated or altered through artificial intelligence, Parties may consider, among other measures:

- prioritising the investigation of materials depicting a real child, with a view to identifying and protecting victims and implementing relevant procedural safeguards to protect against secondary victimisation; and in this context, strengthening international co-operation to identify victims and perpetrators, facilitate the participation of victims in criminal investigations and proceedings, in accordance with child-friendly justice principles and multidisciplinary approaches, and ensure access to specialist helplines, support and compensation;
- strengthening legislative or other measures to ensure the timely detection, reporting, removal or rendering inaccessible of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, including AI-generated or altered materials, both where authorities have access to such data, in order to prevent its continued criminal use or the further victimisation of victims, and through effective mechanisms for the removal of such material where authorities do not have direct access to the data; and strengthening specialised and continuous training for relevant professionals to identify, report and respond to situations where a child is a victim of such materials;
- strengthening engagement by and with the technology sector and service providers to develop safe technologies and enhance technical detection and response tools to facilitate the prevention, detection, removal, investigation and prosecution of offences involving AI-generated or altered child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material; and ensuring the accountability of service providers where services or tools enable, without right, the generation, alteration or dissemination of such material and lack reasonable and adequate technical safety measures and other safeguards;

- ensuring that sanctions for offences related to child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material, including where it has been generated or altered by AI, are effective, proportionate and dissuasive, taking into account the serious impact such materials have on persons that have been victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse in childhood, and wider society, including corporate liability and confiscation of proceeds generated, directly or indirectly, from such materials;
- ensuring that children who use technologies, including AI, to generate, alter or share child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material are addressed primarily through appropriate measures to address such harmful behaviour, including educational measures, therapeutic assistance, diversion or restorative justice approaches, in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child, without prejudice to criminal prosecution as a last resort where appropriate;
- reinforcing legal frameworks, other measures and victims' rights in accordance with applicable international standards, to broaden access to justice and avoid re-victimisation of persons who have been victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse in childhood, including where their likeness is used or altered through AI to generate new child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material depicting them;
- raising awareness among the general public, parents, educators, and among other persons who have regular contact with children, about this ongoing threat, preventive measures available, how to report it and how to protect victims.

The T-CY and the Lanzarote Committee underline the value of continued dialogue and cooperation between the two Committees in order to address emerging technological developments related to online sexual offences against children including child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse material.