

**Remarks by H.E. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the 77th session of the General
Assembly
Second International Day for Countering Hate Speech
Monday, 19 June 2023**

Madam Special Adviser,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour to join you to mark the **second** International Day for Countering Hate Speech.

My deep thanks to the Permanent Mission of Morocco and the Office of the SG's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide for organizing today's event.

It would be my wish that we **would not have to observe** this day.

It would be my wish that hate speech were **a thing of the past**.

Hate speech is **an attack** on human dignity and one of the **most toxic** forms of **misinformation**.

We must address it because we know that hate **speech** leads to hate **crimes**.

It is not an exaggeration to say that countering hate speech is a **key component** of **atrocities prevention**.

Hate speech is fueled by **ignorance** and **prejudice**.

It is a tool to dehumanize the so-called "**other**".

It pulsates with lethal speed around social media platforms and across our global digital ecosystems, feeding a **global rise** in violence.

Sadly, there are companies that are making **millions** from advertising that is interspersed with online manifestations of hate speech.

Algorithms can be enablers of sustainable development. But —too often— they are enablers of **misogyny, xenophobia, and racism**.

Add the narrow interests of professional **hatemongers**, a growing belief in one's own infallibility, and onward goes the **march into disaster**.

Into violence towards **minorities**.

Towards those worshipping at synagogues, mosques, temples and churches, or not worshipping at all.

Towards those who heard the first word from their mothers' lips **not** in the language of the majority.

Towards those working to defend human rights or upholding the peaceful transfer of power.

As new channels reach **wider** audiences, tech companies are **struggling** to take action.

How can we, the international community, step up our response?

This is a question of responsibilities. **Shared** responsibilities.

Marking this International Day encourages us **all** to do our part – by identifying hate speech **early**, confronting it **directly**, and halting it **immediately**.

The UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, launched three years ago, offer us a firm step in the right direction.

They recognize hate speech as a **precursor** to atrocity crimes, including genocide and crimes against humanity, and call for coordinated action to address **the drivers**.

However, I urge Member States to do so with **full respect** for human rights.

We must cherish the freedoms of expression, press, religion, and belief that are **integral** to well-functioning, vibrant societies, **without tolerating discrimination** under the protections they provide.

Here, we have to strike **the right balance**.

And, to tackle the misperceptions that form the basis of hate speech, we must place **education** at the core of our efforts.

To enlighten the public and to fight fatuities, we need help from **all stakeholders of goodwill**: governments, civil society, the private sector, the media, academia, and faith leaders.

"There are two ways of exerting one's strength," to quote Booker T. Washington: "One is **pushing down**, the other is **pulling up**."

As we meet today on “Juneteenth” – a day that celebrates the end of slavery in the United States in 1865 – let us **pull each other up**.

Let us live up to our shared values of tolerance, acceptance and inclusion.

Let us work to advance human rights, equally, **as history demands**.

I thank you.