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|  | **Document CWG-COP-22/INF/9** |
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| Contribution by SWGfL |
| IMPACT OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS ON CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION |
| **Purpose**This contribution outlines the activities and progress made over the past 12 months by the Correspondence Group on child online protection (CG-COP), emphasising its direct connection to the outcomes of the 2024 COP Council meeting. It summarises key milestones, including the creation of the Special Correspondence Group, its Terms of Reference (ToR), meetings, and the drafting of the Gap Analysis report.**Action required**This document is transmitted to the Council Working Group on child online protection **for information**.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References** *Terms of Reference for the ITU-T Study Group 17* [*Correspondence Group on child online protection*](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-SG17-240902-TD-PLEN-2512/en) *(CG-COP)* |

1 Finalisation of the Gap Analysis Report

– Finalise the draft Gap Analysis Report based on comprehensive feedback from stakeholders.

– Present the finalised report to the Council Working Group on child online protection (CWG-COP) for review and endorsement.

2 Support for standards development

– Encourage collaboration with international standardisation bodies (ISO, IEEE, ETSI) to advance the development of age assurance and automated content moderation standards.

– Promote the prioritisation of privacy-conscious technologies to address emerging threats like end-to-end encryption.

3 Enhanced stakeholder engagement

– Leverage ITU’s platform to consolidate fragmented global initiatives in child online protection.

– Convene workshops and forums to address technical and policy challenges collaboratively.

4 Council commitment

– Provide ongoing support for the activities of the CG-COP and its recommendations to address gaps in child online protection standards.

# Background and sequence of events

1 2024 COP Council meeting outcomes

– During the 2024 COP Council meeting, the growing need for comprehensive global standards to protect children online was a major focus. The Council acknowledged gaps in current standards and the increasing risks faced by children in digital environments.

– A resolution was adopted to establish the Special Correspondence Group on child online protection (CG-COP) under ITU-T Study Group (SG) 17, with a mandate to address these gaps and propose actionable solutions.

2. Establishment of the CG-COP

– In early 2024, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the CG-COP were finalised, outlining the group’s primary objectives:

• Conduct a detailed analysis of existing standards and identify gaps in child online protection.

• Collaborate with stakeholders, including governments, industry leaders, and NGOs, to align efforts and propose solutions.

• Develop reports and recommendations to guide ITU-T SG17’s work.

– The ToR included commitments to submit regular reports to SG17 and engage with external bodies via Liaison Statements.

3 Correspondence Group meetings

– The CG-COP held three key meetings in 2024:

**• First meeting (March 2024)**: Reviewed the ToR, established objectives, and set the work plan.

**• Second meeting (April 2024)**: Explored contributions from stakeholders on emerging challenges, including age assurance and content moderation.

**• Third meeting (June 2024)**: Reviewed the draft Gap Analysis report, incorporating feedback and aligning with the "4 C's" framework (content, contact, conduct, and contractual risks).

4 Drafting of the Gap Analysis Report

– The Gap Analysis Report (CG-COP-C2) is the primary deliverable of the group, identifying critical gaps in existing standards:

**• Age assurance systems**: Highlighted the absence of comprehensive standards for age verification, estimation, and inference.

**• Automated content moderation**: Emphasised the need for unified standards to detect harmful content while preserving user privacy, particularly in encrypted environments.

**• Emerging technologies**: Addressed challenges posed by end-to-end encryption (E2EE) and its impact on detecting child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

– The report recommends collaboration with international standardisation bodies (ISO, IEEE, ETSI) and prioritising adaptable, privacy-conscious solutions.

# Summary of key activities

1 Global collaboration and stakeholder engagement

– Fostered collaboration among diverse stakeholders to address pressing challenges, such as balancing privacy with child safety.

– Participation in events like the Global Age Assurance Standards Summit strengthened partnerships and aligned efforts globally.

2 Advancing technical solutions

– Proposed the development of unified hash-matching standards to enhance automated content moderation capabilities.

– Advocated for privacy-conscious moderation technologies to address E2EE-related challenges.

3 Promoting standards for child online protection

– Raised awareness of the need for consistent global standards to protect children online while safeguarding their rights to privacy and digital engagement.

# Recommendations for 2025 and beyond

1 Finalisation of the gap analysis

– Finalise the Gap Analysis Report based on comprehensive stakeholder feedback and present it to the CWG-COP.

2 Advancing standards development

– Support the completion of ISO/IEC 27566 and related standards for age assurance systems.

– Develop global standards for automated content moderation technologies tailored to COP use cases, ensuring ethical and scalable implementation.

3 Strengthening stakeholder collaboration

– Leverage ITU’s platform to consolidate fragmented initiatives and foster a unified global approach to child online protection.

– Convene multi-stakeholder workshops to promote knowledge sharing and address emerging challenges in child safety.

# Conclusion

The creation of the Special Correspondence Group on Child Online Protection was a direct outcome of the 2024 COP Council meeting, reflecting the Council’s commitment to addressing critical gaps in child online protection. Over the past year, the CG-COP has made significant progress through its meetings, stakeholder engagement, and the drafting of the Gap Analysis report. As the group prepares to finalise its recommendations, the Council is encouraged to review these developments and provide ongoing support to strengthen global efforts in safeguarding children in the digital age.

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