eNACSO European NGO Alliance
for Child Safety Online

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Online child protection moving up the global agenda - but is it understood?

Failure to understand the real challenge of protecting children on the internet has reduced the impact of global internet discussions, according to European child rights NGOs.

While welcoming a higher than ever profile for children's issues at the UN's 3rd Internet Governance Forum[1] (3-6 December), the European NGO Alliance on Child Safety Online (eNACSO) has criticized a low level of understanding of children's right to protection among some other key stakeholders.

Children are major users of the internet, including on the move through mobile phones. Child protection cannot be treated as an add-on and must be integrated throughout evolving technological, legislative and policy developments related to internet technologies.

Speaking in the Forum plenary session, eNACSO representative John Carr emphasized the responsibility of industry in making the internet a safer place for children. Parents must not be left on their own to put in place complex technical solutions to keep their children safe.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child gives children a right to protection from all forms of violence and abuse – on and offline. Children must also be able to express themselves freely in the online space and without risk to their privacy. All key stakeholders including governments, industry, law enforcement and civil society have a responsibility to reach balanced solutions.

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The European NGO Alliance on Child Safety Online (eNACSO) is a network of 13 children's rights NGOs from 13 EU Member States, with expertise in online child protection. It started work on 1st September 2008 and aims to ensure that child protection and children's rights concerns are taken into account in European and global discussions related to the internet and related technologies. For more information visit www.enacso.eu

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[1] The UN Internet Governance Forum is a 4-day multi-stakeholder meeting discussing a range of issues related to internet governance. This year's is the 3rd annual forum and is taking place in Hyderabad, India. www.intgovforum.org