



**Testimony of Vidhya Ramalingam
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Before the
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
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I. Introduction

Chairman Deutch, Ranking Member Wilson, and members of the Subcommittee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I appreciate your leadership to ensure better understanding of the threat posed by international terrorist groups, and welcome the opportunity to discuss the threat posed by white nationalist terrorists globally.

My name is Vidhya Ramalingam, and throughout my career, I have worked to understand and deter individuals from white nationalist extremism. Ten years ago I moved to Europe to undertake a mission to meet with white nationalist extremists in Scandinavia, to understand how they operate and what motivates individuals to join these groups. I spent time with individuals who espouse white nationalist ideologies, including those with violent pasts and those who went on to perpetrate violence.

Shortly after, when a white nationalist terrorist murdered 77 people in Norway, I led the European Union’s first inter-governmental initiative on this form of terrorism and extremism, initiated by the governments of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and the Netherlands, and launched by the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs. In this role, I worked across ten European countries to design policy, initiate projects, and build capacity to respond to white nationalist terrorism and extremism.

Today, I appear before the committee as Founder of Moonshot CVE, a company with a bold mission to disrupt and ultimately end violent extremism globally.¹ We design new technology and methods to directly engage violent extremists, and those at-risk of perpetrating violence. We work regularly with the U.S. Department of State to deliver strategic communications programs to respond to a broad range of violent extremist and terrorist threats online.

¹ This written testimony has been prepared with support from Ross Frenett, Ludovica Di Giorgi, Danielle Soskin, and Liam Monsell of Moonshot CVE.

Since our inception in 2015, Moonshot CVE has worked with governments across the globe to deliver programs to disrupt terrorists of all kinds. My team and I have supported the Global Coalition Against Daesh, deployed programs to undermine Boko Haram recruitment in Nigeria, trained counter-extremism activists in Libya, and have worked to prevent al-Qa'ida affiliates from recruiting in South East Asia. Our work to counter radicalization to white nationalist extremism and terrorism has included partnerships with the Governments of the United Kingdom, Australia, and a recent initiative launched with the Government of Canada which will engage with white nationalist extremists across Canada.²

II. A persistent threat

White nationalist extremism is dedicated to the overthrow of democratic governance and destruction of values intrinsic to the American way of life. It poses both a domestic and a global terror threat to the United States and its allies, in which global attacks have immediate ramifications here in the United States. It is an ideology based on the notion that the “white race” is threatened with extinction, promoting efforts to defend and protect the white race from alleged dispossession. It is an ideology that relies on the dehumanization of other races, and conspiracy theories that position particular ethnic and religious groups as “enemies.” Conspiracy theories underpinning this ideology include the belief that the white race is under attack from Jewish interests across industries and the government, which is referred to as the Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG). The virulent anti-Semitism that sits at the heart of this ideology is one of the many things it shares with jihadist organizations such as ISIS.

Crucial to the coherence of this ideology are several influential texts, including the 1978 racist dystopian novel *The Turner Diaries*, which inspired the Oklahoma City bombing and other attacks; and the “White Genocide Manifesto”, published in 1988 by a white nationalist extremist in prison, which is regularly referenced by white nationalist terrorists across the globe.³ Ideologues use the concept of white genocide, the idea that miscegenation and migration are fostering the end of white society, to stoke fear and incite violence. Many ideologues also purport that a race war, referred to as Racial Holy War (RaHoWa) is inevitable and should be fought by white nationalist extremists.

My testimony today covers groups, individuals, and violence inspired by a range of ideological strands which fall under the umbrella of white nationalist extremism. For consistency, I will use the term “white nationalist extremism and terrorism” to discuss these groups and international responses. However, the Subcommittee should be aware that international governments, intelligence agencies, and police use varying terminology for these ideologies and acts of terrorism, including the terms “right-wing extremism and terrorism” and “far-right extremism and terrorism.”

² Public Safety Canada, “Federal support for innovative online initiative to prevent radicalization to violence”, *Public Safety Canada*, November 6th, 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2018/11/federal-support-for-innovative-online-initiative-to-prevent-radicalization-to-violence.html>

³ J.M. Berger, “The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism’s Deadly Bible”, *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague* 7, no. 8 (2016), accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ICCT-Berger-The-Turner-Legacy-September2016-2.pdf>

Throughout history, there have always been groups and organizations dedicated to advancing the interests of white nationalist extremism. These have included groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, plus hundreds of others from North America, Europe, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. Law enforcement responses, weak leadership, and in-fighting facilitated the penetration and fragmentation of many of these groups over the course of several decades. The move toward a decentralized approach to coordination of violence was deliberate and necessary for these movements, as organizational loyalty declined and white nationalist extremists were forced into loosely affiliated networks and coalitions.

As early as the 1980s, these movements were moving toward a new strategy that would encourage what was termed “leaderless resistance,” where individuals were to operate independently from one another and carry out violence to serve white nationalist extremist interests.⁴ This approach is not dissimilar from tactics adopted by ISIS and affiliated groups, which have encouraged and embraced so-called “lone wolves” to independently carry out low-tech acts of violence across the globe. The shift to loosely affiliated global networks poses challenges to law enforcement efforts to track, monitor, and disrupt planned violence.

Though white nationalists were early adopters of the internet, the mainstreaming of new social media platforms over the past 15 years has further expanded possibilities for white nationalist extremist cooperation online. New social media platforms facilitate the dissemination of ideas, the recruitment of new members, and the socialization of individuals into violence. White nationalist extremist groups understand how to manipulate the public and private spheres of the internet to their advantage. They are increasingly brazen in their efforts to disseminate information on their beliefs and activities publicly, using platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Reddit, Gab, Discord, 8chan, 4chan, and many others. This new global community does not confine itself simply to the digital realm, but deliberately creates an environment that fosters and encourages offline action, including lone actor terrorist attacks.⁵

III. White nationalist terrorist attacks

On March 15, 2019, attacks by a white nationalist terrorist on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, left 50 people dead. The violence in Christchurch joins a growing list of similar attacks across the globe, and is the latest manifestation of a long-standing, but evolving, global threat.

White nationalist and neo-Nazi terrorism has a long and bloody history post-World War Two. In France, the *Organisation Armée Secrète* killed hundreds in a campaign of bombing and assassinations during the late 1950s and early 1960s. In Italy, members of *Nuclei Armati*

⁴ Edwin Bakker and Beatrice de Graaf, “Lone Wolves: How to prevent this phenomenon?”, *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague* 1, no. 2 (2010), accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Bakker-deGraaf-EM-Paper-Lone-Wolves.pdf>

⁵ Europol, “European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2017”, *Europol*, 2017, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: https://www.europol.europa.eu/tesat/2017/5.RIGHT-WING_TERRORISM.html

Rivoluzionari bombed Bologna Centrale railway station in 1980, killing 85 people and wounding over 200. That same year, the Oktoberfest bombing in Munich left 13 dead and 213 wounded. Here in the United States, the horrific Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 led to the deaths of 168 people.

Over the past decade, the international community has been confronted repeatedly with the grim reality of white nationalist terrorism. In 2009, the Aryan Strike Force became the first terrorist organization in the UK to successfully manufacture ricin. Norway was hit by violence in 2011, when terrorist Anders Behring Breivik carried out the deadliest attack propagated by a white nationalist terrorist in recent history, murdering 77 people, mostly children, in twin terrorist attacks on government buildings and the island of Utøya. In 2011, German police uncovered the National Socialist Underground (NSU), a terrorist group which carried out a series of murders, bombings and bank robberies. In 2013, Ukrainian-born terrorist Pavlo Lapshyn's wave of terror in the United Kingdom began with a single racially motivated murder, and ended with a series of attempted bombings against mosques. In 2016, Thomas Mair shot and killed Member of Parliament Jo Cox. Mair had links to international white nationalist extremist networks and targeted the politician for her stance on immigration and multiculturalism. Canada experienced violence in 2017, when Alexandre Bissonette shot and killed six individuals and injured 19 more, at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City in Sainte-Foy, Quebec. Last year the Prime Minister of Spain and the President of France were both the targets of white nationalist assassination plots.⁶

Here in the United States, the three deadliest white nationalist attacks in the last decade have all been on places of worship. In 2012 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, six people were murdered at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin. In 2015 in Charleston, South Carolina, nine people were murdered at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 2018 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 11 people were murdered at the Tree of Life synagogue. Just this Saturday, one person was murdered in an attack on a synagogue in Poway, California. At the time of writing this testimony, a manifesto suspected to have been posted by the attacker claims that he drew direct inspiration from the perpetrator of the New Zealand attack.

The scale of violence from white nationalist terrorism across the globe remains difficult to quantify. Legislative frameworks vary and are often ill-designed to cope with white nationalist violence as terrorism, particularly as group membership wanes and perpetrators are increasingly part of loosely affiliated networks. White nationalist violence is therefore often charged as hate crime or other types of crime.

Overall instances of white nationalist terrorism are increasing. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) records a rise in white nationalist terror incidents over the past decade.⁷ The number of white

⁶ Daniel Koehler, "Violence and Terrorism from the Far Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat", *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague*, February 27th, 2019, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Koehler-Violence-and-Terrorism-from-the-Far-Right-February-2019.pdf>

⁷ Institute for Economics & Peace, "Global Terrorism Index 2018: Measuring the impact of terrorism", November 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2018/12/Global-Terrorism-Index-2018-1.pdf>

nationalist extremist individuals receiving support in the UK's Channel program, a government-run early intervention program, has increased by 300% since 2012, as compared to an 80% increase in referrals related to Jihadism.

III. Key trends

Attack tactics

White nationalist perpetrators rely on an evolving playbook of tactics to carry out attacks. Europol confirms that many members of the white nationalist terrorist scene have been found in possession of a significant amount of firearms, ammunition or explosives. There is evidence from Europe and South Africa of white nationalist extremist groups organizing training camps to improve combat techniques.

While the use of homemade explosive devices continues to be common, many perpetrators have chosen low-sophistication methods, such as armed assault, or the replication of tactics encouraged by ISIS, such as vehicular attacks. Vehicular attacks by white nationalist extremists include the ramming of a car into crowds in Charlottesville killing one person in 2017; the use of a van to attack worshippers at a London mosque killing one person in 2017; and the use of a van by a white nationalist extremist in Toronto to kill 10 people in 2018.

White nationalist extremists have developed more sophisticated communications strategies surrounding attacks. This has included the self-publication of written manifestos, published and distributed shortly before attacks are committed, including a 1,515 page manifesto by Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik; a four page manifesto by American terrorist Dylann Roof; a 74 page manifesto by Australian terrorist Brenton Tarrant; and most recently a manifesto suspected to have been published this weekend by the perpetrator of the attack on a synagogue in Poway, California.

The perpetrator of the New Zealand attack pioneered a new communications tactic. Taking advantage of the availability of live video streaming technology, he used a camera strapped to his forehead to stream a live video of his attack using Facebook Live. This act turned the attack into a powerful piece of digital propaganda itself, with millions of internet users watching and sharing the video globally. Facebook has reported that it deleted 1.5 million uploads of the video within the first 24 hours of the attack. Given the history of replication of tactics among white nationalist terrorists, governments and technology companies alike need to be prepared for the possibility that this style of attack could be attempted by white nationalist terrorists in the future.

A globally connected movement

White nationalist terrorism has always been international, with fighters and ideologues moving across borders. The New Zealand perpetrator, an Australian citizen, was not the first white nationalist terrorist to travel across borders to carry out an attack. In 2013, Ukrainian-born terrorist Pavlo Lapshyn arrived in the UK and within five days had murdered an 82-year old Muslim grandfather. He later planted three bombs near mosques in the West Midlands. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine drew in white nationalist foreign fighters on an unprecedented scale,

with neo-Nazis and white supremacists from Brazil, the UK, Ireland, Italy, France, Sweden and dozens of other countries flocking to join the fight.⁸

The internet did not create this global movement, but it supercharged its evolution. The current wave of white nationalist terrorism is intrinsically connected with the emergence of internet cultures. White nationalist extremists use technology to organize and recruit, and like jihadists, the rise of social media has provided a rich opportunity for these groups to support one another across borders. They are active on major platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook, and on more niche forums such as 8chan and 4chan. Social media platforms have been used to communicate violent intent prior to and during attacks. The New Zealand shooter left posts on Twitter indicative of his intent prior to his attack, and provided users on 8chan with links to a live feed of his attack, which he then streamed on Facebook Live.⁹

In addition to exploiting public social media platforms, white nationalist extremists have readily adopted closed messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram, and gone so far as to create their own platforms where it suits them.¹⁰ If one is not already embedded within the extremist community, the closed and encrypted nature of these platforms makes white nationalist extremist groups harder to find and access. Encryption technologies provide the protection needed for white nationalist extremist groups to coordinate physical attacks or demonstrations, as has been similarly demonstrated with jihadist groups organizing themselves, disseminating propaganda, and glorifying terrorist attacks. Following the banning of the National Action terrorist group in the UK, a leader of the group created the WhatsApp group “Triple KKK Mafia” to accompany another WhatsApp group “Inner”.¹¹ In these encrypted channels they discussed “race war” and murdering their opponents.

These online connections have real world impacts. Before his 2011 attack, Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik’s manifesto set out a world-view borrowed from authors around the globe, in which he argued for the violent annihilation of ‘Eurabia’ and multiculturalism. Explicitly praising and drawing on the works of his “hero” Breivik, the New Zealand perpetrator published his own manifesto before his attack. In this, he praised Luca Traini from Italy, Anders Breivik from Norway, Dylann Roof from the USA, Anton Lundin Pettersson from Sweden and Darren Osborne from the UK. This international cast of characters that inspired the New Zealand perpetrator is a potent reminder that this threat is anything but domestic; it is truly global.

⁸Tom Parfitt, “Ukraine crisis: the neo-Nazi brigade fighting pro-Russian separatists”, *The Telegraph*, August 11th, 2014, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/Europe/ukraine/11025137/Ukraine-crisis-the-neo-Nazi-brigade-fighting-pro-Russian-separatists.html>

⁹ Kevin Roose, “A Mass Murder of, and For, the Internet”, *The New York Times*, March 15th, 2019, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/technology/facebook-youtube-christchurch-shooting.html>

¹⁰ Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, Audrey Alexander, and Nick Kaderbhai, “Literature Review: The impact of digital communications technology on radicalization and recruitment”, *International Affairs*, 93(5), 2017: 1233-1249.

¹¹Graham Macklin, “‘Only Bullets will Stop Us!’ – The Banning of National Action in Britain”, *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 12(6), 2018: 104-122.

A unique online subculture

Much like jihadists, white nationalist extremists are adept at repurposing and hijacking otherwise neutral forms of new media and have constructed an immersive global ecosystem of mutually reinforcing memes, music and games. They have adopted a tactic in online messaging forums known as “shitposting,” which is a rhetorical tactic used to provoke emotional reactions and derail productive discussions online. This style of communication, along with a catalogue of custom memes and iconography, is transnational in nature and helps to connect white nationalist extremists across the world.

Music in particular plays a crucial role in drawing individuals towards white nationalist extremism. The genres consumed vary from traditional white power rock music to remixes of popular music with white power lyrics, with underlying messages of white supremacy, vilification of perceived traitors, and incitement to violence. Music and violence go hand in hand; notably, the New Zealand perpetrator chose a white nationalist extremist soundtrack to accompany the livestreaming of his attacks. This served to reinforce the sense of community he felt with other white nationalist extremists, and helped to popularize the tracks he selected within this community.

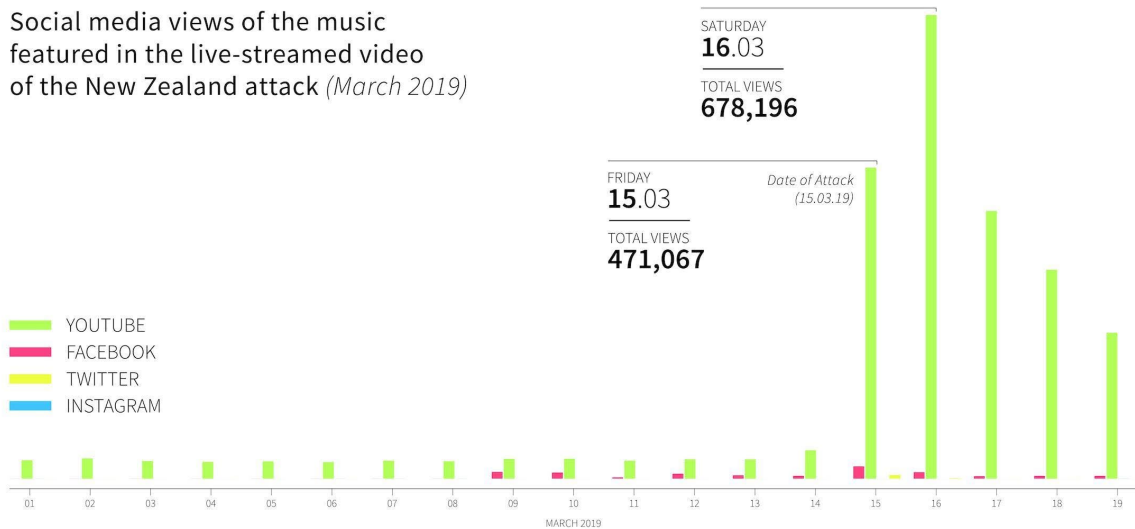
In addition to music, online gaming is increasingly utilized by white nationalist extremists to socialize individuals to violence. In addition to creating communities within mainstream video games or on gaming applications such as Discord, they have also created their own custom games. In the days after the New Zealand attack, several video games were developed depicting the massacre. In one white nationalist extremist game, the user plays as the New Zealand perpetrator as he walks through various levels of the mosque shooting Muslims and other religious and ethnic groups.

Accessibility of white nationalist extremist content

White nationalist extremist content remains highly accessible not only on social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, but on search engines, such as Google, Yahoo and Bing. Since 2016, Moonshot CVE has monitored the ways in which search engines are used to access violent extremist and terrorist content across the globe. We consistently find that the scale of audiences searching for white nationalist extremist content exceeds the scale of individuals using search engines to access jihadist content in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and in the United States.

In the aftermath of the New Zealand attack, Moonshot CVE collected data on the spread of white nationalist extremist content consumed and referenced by the attacker. The perpetrator chose five pieces of music to accompany his livestreamed footage of the attack, including songs popularly referenced among white nationalist extremist subcultures on the platform 8chan. Following the attack, Moonshot CVE recorded a dramatic spike in views for these five music tracks, peaking at 678,196 views globally. Viewers during the period immediately following the attack were disproportionately male (90%), aged 18-24 (40.3%), and were spread across the globe, with 20% based in the US.

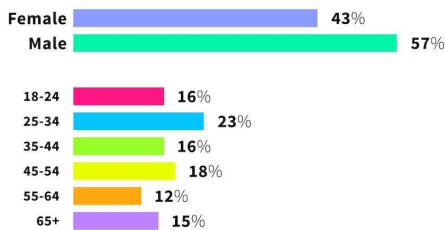
Social media views of the music featured in the live-streamed video of the New Zealand attack (March 2019)



Individuals also turned to Google to access white nationalist extremist content linked to the New Zealand attack. In the month following the attack, Moonshot CVE recorded high rates of white nationalist extremist searches across New Zealand, with the highest rates in Canterbury (50 searches per 100,000 people), Wellington (42 searches per 100,000 people) and Nelson (32 searches per 100,000 people). These rates exceeded the white nationalist extremist search traffic on Google in Australia during the same period, which capped at 14 searches per 100,000 people in New South Wales. These included searches for a Serbian nationalist, anti-Muslim and pro-genocide music video - one of the choices for the perpetrator's soundtrack - as well as attempts to access the perpetrator's manifesto.

White Nationalist Searches on Google after the Christchurch Attack

AGE & GENDER BREAKDOWN



WHITE NATIONALIST SEARCHES
Top Search Terms in New Zealand according to total number of searches

1488
SIEG HEIL
HOMEMADE EXPLOSIVES
BRENTON TARRANT VIDEO
14 WORDS
KILL BLACKS
KILLING MUSLIMS
MUSLIM MURDERERS
ANTIPODEAN RESISTANCE WEBSITE
REMOVE KEBAB LYRICS
KILLING BLACKS
REMOVE KEBAB SONGS
HFFH
ADYSSIC HATE
KKK STORE
THE RIGHT STUFF BLOG
GRVVELAND
THE GREAT REPLACEMENT DOWNLOAD
BLACK LIVES DON'T MATTER
IRON CROSS 147100



Consistently, in the immediate aftermath of white nationalist attacks, we recorded spikes in attempts to access white nationalist extremist content across the globe. In the aftermath of the 2018 attack by a white nationalist extremist on the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, we recorded a 92% increase in searches for white nationalist extremist content across the United States, and a 182% increase in searches relating to killing Jews and ethnic minorities. This observation is consistent with the increase Moonshot CVE has recorded in jihadist search traffic following jihadist attacks. Following the 2017 terrorist attack by an individual who drove a pickup truck into a crowd in New York City, Moonshot CVE recorded a 104% increase in overall jihadist searches across the United States, with a 142% increase in attempts to download ISIS media products.

A shift is taking place in the threat environment as white nationalist extremists are increasingly active on social media and digital platforms, facilitating networking and global information sharing at an unprecedented scale. As Facebook has sought to ban white nationalist extremism from its platform, Moonshot CVE identified 21,579 users based in New Zealand that are connected to prominent white nationalist extremist pages on Facebook. Of these users, 1,509 were connected to multiple pages, indicating heightened interest and involvement in white nationalist extremism. Online platforms have helped to catapult individuals, who might otherwise operate alone, into global networks. Even in countries where intelligence agencies report minimal numbers, most security agencies report a high level of chatter and information sharing in the online space.

IV. The international response

In the past several years, governments have taken action to increase monitoring efforts and implement new policies to respond to white nationalist terrorism and extremism. These actions have often been implemented in the aftermath of white nationalist terrorist attacks. The Government of New Zealand has taken rapid action following the New Zealand attack. Last week, Prime Minister Jacinda Arden announced an international initiative with the Government of France to work with social media and technology companies to curb the spread of extremist beliefs online.¹² The UK government proscribed the neo-Nazi terrorist group National Action, convicting members and supporters of National Action, and of affiliated movements the System Resistance Network and the Sonnenkreig division, on terror charges. Here in the United States, Congress has banned U.S. aid to Ukraine from being used to provide arms, training or other assistance to the Azov Battalion, an ultranationalist militia that includes neo-Nazi membership.¹³

Globally, monitoring of white nationalist extremist groups has been increasingly brought under the remit of intelligence agencies. In 2018, the General Intelligence and Security Service of the Netherlands (AIVD) released a report focusing exclusively on the threat from white nationalist

¹² BBC Staff, "Jacinda Arden leads effort to curb online extremism", *BBC*, April 24th, 2019, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-48033313>

¹³ Rebecca Kheel, "Congress bans arms to Ukraine militia linked to neo-Nazis", *The Hill*, March 27th, 2019, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/380483-congress-bans-arms-to-controversial-ukrainian-militia-linked-to-neo-nazis>

extremism, citing a “revival” of this form of extremism since 2014. In 2018, Germany’s federal domestic intelligence agency announced a 50% increase in personnel focused on white nationalist extremism in 2019.¹⁴ In the UK, the British domestic intelligence agency MI5 has brought white nationalist extremism under its remit.¹⁵ Following the New Zealand attack, the UK’s Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, which currently issues the UK threat warnings for jihadism and Northern Ireland-related terror, will now also issue threat warnings concerning white nationalist extremism.¹⁶

Governments have also called upon technology companies to take swift action, particularly following the New Zealand attack, to remove extremist content faster and more efficiently. Since 2017, technology companies have taken action to remove accounts by white nationalist extremist users and websites, including action by domain and hosting services such as GoDaddy, Google, CloudFlare, and WordPress; music streaming services such as Spotify; and e-commerce platforms such as PayPal. Just this month, Facebook implemented new policies prohibiting support for white nationalist extremism on its platforms, including Instagram.

Removal of content, and enhanced measures to ensure live streaming of violence never occurs again, are important efforts to create safer online spaces that are less likely to be abused by white nationalist terrorists. However, removal of content alone will not diminish the global threat posed by white nationalist terrorism. Those uploading this content often repeatedly repost removed content and move onto new platforms to share propaganda. Despite increasing crackdowns, attempts to access violent extremist content persist, as demonstrated by the dramatic increases in searches on Google, Yahoo and Bing, for both white nationalist extremist and jihadist content following violent attacks.

Action to counter the white nationalist terrorist threat will necessarily look different from the military measures used to disrupt other forms of terrorism and terrorist groups, including ISIS and al-Qa’ida. However, many of the broad priorities set out in the National Strategy for Counterterrorism are applicable to the white nationalist extremist threat.¹⁷ We recommend that efforts to counter the white nationalist terrorist threat focus on the following strategic priorities:

Evolve legal instruments to accommodate the changing nature of the terrorist threat:

The fight against white nationalist terrorism globally will be significantly enhanced by the designation of key individuals and groups, whom we know to be behind acts of white nationalist

¹⁴ Thomas Haldenwang, “Neuer Verfassungsschutz-Chef verspricht stärkeren Kampf gegen rechts”, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, December 21st, 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/thomas-haldenwang-neuer-verfassungsschutz-chef-verspricht-staerkeren-kampf-gegen-rechts-1.4262135>

¹⁵ Vikram Dodd, “MI5 to take over in fight against rise of UK rightwing extremism”, *The Guardian*, October 28th, 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/28/mi5-lead-battle-against-uk-rightwing-extremists-police-action>

¹⁶ Vikram Dodd, “UK to start issuing far-right terrorism alerts”, *The Guardian*, March 19th, 2019, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/19/uk-to-start-issuing-far-right-terrorism-alerts>

¹⁷ The White House, “National Strategy for Counter Terrorism of the United States of America”, *The White House*, October 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NSCT.pdf>

terror, as Specially Designated Global Terrorists. As we've seen from the act of violence this weekend in Poway, California, where the perpetrator left behind evidence of his admiration for the New Zealand shooter, white nationalist terrorists inspire other perpetrators across the globe, including here in the United States.

Advance technology to analyze data pertaining to white nationalist terrorists online:

Development of new technology is required to help process and analyze data to better understand and keep pace with the evolving tactics of white nationalist extremist individuals and groups online, and to facilitate the identification of individuals whose online behaviors indicate risk of imminent threat.

Improve routine intelligence cooperation on global white nationalist terrorism:

Given the global nature of today's white nationalist terror threat, routine intelligence cooperation and information sharing will be required to ensure the national security communities of the United States and its allies are prepared to respond to planned violence and terror. As the terrorist threat is increasingly dominated by networks of individuals and small terrorist cells which appear and disband rapidly, enhanced intelligence cooperation and sharing of best practices will be critical.

Initiate strategic communications efforts through private sector partnerships:

Given the ease of availability of white nationalist terrorist content online, undermining the recruitment of white nationalist terrorists will require efforts to deconstruct white nationalist extremist ideologies and offer safe alternatives to violent content. In 2015, we partnered with Google to launch the Redirect Method, which uses publicly available online advertising tools to match those searching for violent extremist and terrorist content with safer alternatives. The Redirect Method was initially deployed to engage with ISIS supporters online. We're now working with Google to draw on best practices from our fight against ISIS, to design deployments of the Redirect Method to engage with white nationalist extremists online.

Efforts to repurpose advertising technology can radically improve the availability of content which discredits extremist narratives, or simply offers alternatives, to those seeking dangerous content. We have worked with governments, including a recent partnership with the Government of Canada, to deploy this strategic communications tactic to reach white nationalist extremists globally.¹⁸ Here in the United States, we built a partnership with the Gen Next Foundation, a community of private sector leaders which leverages a venture philanthropy model, to carry out strategic communications to undermine white nationalist extremists and jihadists online. This domestic program was entirely driven, tested and funded by the private sector.

We encourage greater collaboration between governments and the private sector to move beyond simply content removal, and deliver proactive strategic communications campaigns to

¹⁸ Public Safety Canada, "Federal support for innovative online initiative to prevent radicalization to violence", *Public Safety Canada*, November 6th, 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2018/11/federal-support-for-innovative-online-initiative-to-prevent-radicalization-to-violence.html>

divert those at-risk of white nationalist extremism and facilitate behavior change. Engagement by the private sector will be greatly assisted by the designation and proscription of white nationalist terrorists by governments, as this will help apply pressure to social media companies to take action.

Support real-world and online intervention efforts:

There is significant potential in taking traditional methods of social work and applying them in the online space to intervene in the radicalization process, as has been demonstrated in recent pilot tests run in the UK. These pilot programs involved trained intervention providers directly messaging people expressing extremist views online and engaging them in sustained conversations, and saw 64% of conversations with white nationalist extremist individuals lead to sustained engagement.¹⁹ We have worked to connect those supporting white nationalist extremism online with real-world support programs, aiming to offer assistance in disengaging individuals from movements and reintegrating them into their communities. There are long-standing disengagement programs which have pulled hundreds of white nationalist extremists out of violent movements, and record low recidivism rates, across Europe. There are nascent programs, such as Life After Hate, here in the United States. These types of preventative tactics can be deployed in the pre-criminal space, and complement hard security measures.

V. Conclusion

White nationalist terrorism is a growing transnational threat. Dedicated to the violent overthrow of our way of life, inspired by a deeply anti-Semitic ideology, and empowered by the internet, this movement may not be as deadly as ISIS, but it shares many of its characteristics.

To respond effectively, we need to recognize that this threat is global in nature. We need to adjust our laws accordingly and to see the internet not as a barrier to the prevention of terrorism, but as an opportunity to enhance existing counter-terrorism efforts by facilitating identification of terrorist networks, engaging with those vulnerable to terrorism, and changing their behavior.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you today this growing concern for governments, technology companies, and communities across the globe.

¹⁹ Jacob Davey, Jonathan Birdwell and Rebecca Skellett, "Counter Conversations: A model for direct engagement with individuals showing signs of radicalisation online", *Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)*, 2018, accessed April 28th, 2019, available at: http://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Counter-Conversations_FINAL.pdf